A Half Century Ago
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The Fayette County Union, of West Union, Iowa, in
culling over the old files of its predecessor, The Pioneer, is
finding some information that is very interesting. For in-
stance, on February 27, 1855, the paper told of Robert
Powers, of Taylorsville, driving to Dubuque with a load of
game for market, and stated that the load included 1,000
prairie chickens, 1,000 quails, 1,000 rabbits, 8 deer, 5 wolves
and 2 bears. Those were the days when game was plentiful
in Iowa, and the sportsmen of to-day who go out for a few
days shooting and come back with a few dozen birds do
not know what real hunting is like. Another interesting
item in the same paper tells of the early day schools of that
county. In 1855 there were 17 school houses in the county,
but in that day they never heard of such a thing as voting
$150,000 for additions to High Schools, and other expendi-
tures of that sort, as is evidenced by the statement that those
17 school houses cost an aggregate of only $1,898.98. There
were 669 pupils attending school in the county that year,
and there were seven men and nineteen women employed to
teach them, the men receiving $15.25 per month as salary,
while the women received $7.00.

On April 15, 1855, The Pioneer announced with a great
deal of pride that “we now have a daily line of stage coaches
between here and Dubuque, and before the summer is over
we shall have a daily instead of a tri-weekly mail.” In an-
other place it tells of a proposed stage line to run from
Iowa City to St. Paul, and of no less than 25,000 new set-
tlers having pitched their tents in Minnesota. On January
23, 1855, the completion of the first bridge across the Mis-
sissippi was celebrated. It was a small wire suspension
bridge at St. Anthony’s Falls, where now stands Minneapo-
lis. Will the next 50 years bring as many changes and
improvements?—Des Moines Daily Register, March 22,
1902.