

# ANNALS OF IOWA.

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## EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT.

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### GENERAL FITZ HENRY WARREN.

Hon. Edward H. Stiles, sometime reporter of the decisions of the Supreme Court of the State, presents his recollections of this distinguished statesman and soldier in this number of *THE ANNALS*. He revives almost forgotten memories in a way that is very interesting reading. Throughout the fifties, and well into the sixties, Gen. Fitz Henry Warren was one of the best known and most distinguished Iowans aside from the Congressional delegation and our governors. He was a man of a rare personality, erect, tall, with a soldierly and commanding figure, a striking and handsome presence, whether seen in social life, in the Senate, on the rostrum, or mounted and at the head of his magnificent regiment. Then, he was scholarly, widely learned, a clear, vigorous, incisive and often sarcastic writer, who during his time had no superior, nor, indeed, an equal in Iowa. At the outbreak of the civil war he was a correspondent of *The New York Tribune*, at Washington. As Mr. Stiles so lucidly sets forth, he believed an immediate movement upon Richmond would speedily end the rebellion. Letters and editorials appeared in that great paper with the striking heading—"On to Richmond!" He certainly wrote the letters and doubtless many of the editorials. Finally, the movement was started only to meet with defeat in the battle of Bull Run. As the Union forces were disastrously and ingloriously discomfited, the loyal people of the country felt outraged at the course of *The Tribune*, which seemed to be responsible for precipitating this untoward result. Of this battle Gen. Sherman wrote years afterward that "it was

one of the best-planned battles of the war, and one of the worst fought." It was a case in which some one had to be made a scape-goat. Public opinion pointed to Horace Greeley, editor of *The Tribune*, as the author of the calamity to the Union cause—the name of Fitz Henry Warren not appearing in the correspondence—and rival journalists aided to the best of their ability in "piling up the agony." Although it came to be understood that General Warren represented *The Tribune* in Washington, Mr. Greeley heroically accepted for himself and his journal the fullest measure of responsibility. He wrote, "If I am needed as a scape-goat for all of the military blunders of the past month, so be it."

General Warren was soon relieved from his place on the staff of *The Tribune*. Afterward, in the time of Charles A. Dana, he became an editorial writer on the *New York Daily Sun*. Like his distinguished chief, he wielded a most caustic pen, and many politicians and some statesmen became victims of his withering sarcasm. But these often fierce philippics are now only remembered by those who have survived from that stormy period of our national politics. In the files of *The Tribune* and *Sun* they will be scanned by historians of the future as throwing light upon those times.

As a legislator, General Warren was useful, influential, and highly respected, though he served but a single session in the senate. He "fell from grace" with his party by going over to the support of President Andrew Johnson. After his return from his mission to Guatemala he resided for the most part in the east, leading a very quiet life the remainder of his days. Our fine steel portrait of General Warren originally appeared in Captain Stuart's Iowa Colonels and Regiments.

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