

this number of THE ANNALS relating to the career of the founder of Salubria in Van Buren county. It is well worth perusal; first because the subject of the sketch was no inconsiderable factor and force in the history of religious thought in these United States and a decided influence in public discussion in our pioneer life in Iowa, and second, because Abner Kneeland was a man of marked ability and force of character. He lacked many of the qualities that make for personal or political success. He was too prone to talk straight out precisely what he thought. If he had any doubts about the foundations of belief or conduct he did not deal mincingly with them or keep still in order to retain position and his stipend. He nearly always turned the contents of his skillet into the fire and there was a blaze. His work was for the most part iconoclastic rather than constructive. He was one with such men as Paine and Priestley, who broke lances against the stiff-backed notions of theology of the last half of the eighteenth century. But while he was disposed to be belligerent in the advocacy of views that greatly perturbed his contemporaries, he had an unsullied character. Those who knew him intimately found a man of sweet and gracious disposition. *

IOWA'S EXPERIMENT IN GOVERNMENT.

We seldom appreciate the full significance of events to which we are party, and in the midst of which we live daily. They become commonplace and are passed by without interest and accepted without comment. Since 1898 the people of Iowa have been making a momentous experiment in the art of government. In that year our General Assembly worked a revolution in the methods of controlling and administering the charitable, reformatory and penal institutions which are maintained by the State. The various separate boards of trustees theretofore in charge of them had

not conducted their affairs to the complete satisfaction of the public, and the legislature after an extensive investigation and consideration instituted the radical reform of placing the management under the sole care of three men to be known as the "Board of Control of State Institutions."

There was something truly Roman in the rigor, firmness and precision with which the revolution was authorized and has been carried out. No State in the Union had up to that time ever attempted such a concentration of power in the hands of a board for the management of so many institutions scattered here and there over the State and having intimate relations to the daily life and welfare of the people of the entire State. The framer of the law had no models on which to pattern the statute providing for the new order. Nevertheless the legislature after carefully considering the defects of the old order and the dangers of the reforms proposed reorganized the administration in a thoroughgoing fashion. Immense power was placed in the hands of the Board of Control. The control and disposition of all funds, the appointment and dismissal of the heads of the thirteen institutions were given it absolutely. The risks of wreck under such a system were vastly enhanced but on the other hand the chances of efficient and economical administration were equally enhanced. The success or failure of the law, like most things in the art of government, depended upon the character of the men placed in charge. If good men and true were appointed all would be well; otherwise not.

The successful working of the present law here in Iowa is we believe quite generally conceded. It has been watched with keen interest by the people of other states. The State of Minnesota in 1901 enacted our law with but few verbal changes and some additions. It has been introduced in the legislatures of other states and vigorously urged. In Kansas and Washington similar laws have been put in force, although their central board does not have so much power as has ours. We are fortunate in being able to give an

account of some of the practical results achieved by the present Board of Control in Iowa. Judge L. G. Kinne who has been on the Board since 1898 presents in this number of THE ANNALS an interesting exposition of the methods of administration that have been put into operation. It will prove a valuable source of information to all who care to study the real workings of Iowa's important administrative reform. *

A SERVICEABLE CHECK LIST OF IOWA'S PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.

Students of our local and State history, our law makers, and especially our librarians in Iowa and elsewhere have good cause for congratulation over the successful issue of a "Check List" of Iowa's Public Documents, prepared by Miss Lavinia Steele, and recently authorized to be published by the Executive Council. Only those familiar with the innumerable difficulties confronting a compiler of a finding list can appreciate the dreary aggravations endured in preparing such a useful compilation. Our libraries contain no complete collections. The titles must be sought for here and there and the trials of Dr. Dryasdust were agreeable compared with those constantly undergone by the seeker after complete lists of illy preserved and fast disappearing documents but little thought of heretofore.

The arrangement is simple. Institutions, departments, offices, boards or commissions, et al, are given dictionary fashion in alphabetical order. The bulk of the titles are presented in tabular form. First comes the date when the office or institution was created by law, and other desirable information as to the first and later modes of publication. Then the tables show when the document was published, whether it appears in the "Iowa Documents," etc., etc. Besides these Miss Steele has prepared some very serviceable

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