

ANNALS OF IOWA

EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT

"YOUNG AND FAIR IS IOWA"

An interesting historical romance entitled "Young and Fair Is Iowa," with authentic setting of events and personages of the period covering the first three state administrations, will be appealing to readers who appreciate the breathing of life and action into characters prominent in those early days. The author, the Rev. Dr. M. M. Hoffman, of Dyersville, has rescued these eminent individuals from their places in the dim and misty past and made them real again; injecting just enough of romantic color into the movements of fictional personalities to flavor the whole with dramatic interest.

The title of the book, which is from the Loras College Press, Dubuque, is most appropriate, for through its pages walk characters whose names have graced the narratives and incidents included in every tale or record having to do with early Hawkeye statehood. No violence is done basic elements of historical accuracy, although there is injected controversial highlights of political and religious nature having incidental value only. Along with these the author provides a dash of tragedy, introducing the story with a frontier hanging. Then come events of the Mexican war, the gold rush to California in 1849, and dark days of the depression of 1858-59, giving zest to varied experiences of the attractive heroine.

Such well known public figures of that period as Senators George W. Jones and Augustus C. Dodge, Judge Thomas Wilson, Bishop Mathias Loras, Governor Stephen Hempstead, and half a hundred others, really more than necessary, appear most naturally in the romantic life of the fictional leading characters, many scenes quickly

passing from experiences of sentiment to those of stark tragedy. A pleasure-loving, impressionable, though talented young admirer from the east, with open atheistic avowals, pays ardent court, but quickly finds the conflicting cultural and religious backgrounds a decided impediment. The young French woman's deeply cherished religious ideals and loyalty to church standards causes a breaking of their friendly association, and both are married to others. Later occurred the tragic deaths of the young woman's husband and likewise of her former admirer's wife, from widely removed causes. Following the youth's return to Dubuque from service in the Mexican war, after months of hospitalization in recovery from serious wounds suffered at Chapultepec, and his ultimate conversion and acceptance of the rites of the church, they were happily reunited in association and were married.

The scenes are largely laid in old Dubuque and along the Mississippi, utilizing as a background events developing from the influx of settlers from New England and the old South, coming into the sparsely settled but growing communities of Iowa, with their conflicting racial traits and standards, groups such as made up the border life of every new state. Dr. Hoffman again demonstrates his ability as an author and cleverness as a historian, as well as skill in using a novel in disclosing the discipline of the church, as evidenced by its adherents in this tale when controversial aspects are debated.

INDIANS CLAIM MILLIONS YET DUE

The proud boast of a century and longer that not an acre of Iowa land was taken from the Indians owning it without payment therefor, is now challenged. Whatever may have been the course pursued in other states, the government of the United States made treaties with the Indian tribes, purchasing the Iowa lands outright and opened them for settlement.

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