

assembled in the open air, he delivered the address, a copy of which will be found in the present issue of THE ANNALS.

When the reader considers that only a little more than twenty-four hours had elapsed from the time the news of President Lincoln's assassination had been published in Des Moines, and that telegraph and mail facilities were not then employed to any considerable extent, he will wonder how an assemblage such as that gathered on that occasion could have been brought together; but no event of a more tragical nature had ever occurred in the history of the United States, and the news of it seemed to be carried on the wings of the wind, and every person of whatever class was imbued with the sense of his or her own personal loss as though bereaved of a dearly loved kinsman. When Mr. Palmer reached his own residence with the news of this national calamity, the Irish serving-maid in his household manifested her profound grief in sobs and tears as inconsolably as if she had lost one of her own family. And the scene of sorrow enacted in this household was also repeated in many a home in the City of Des Moines and its immediate surroundings. A third of a century has passed since that memorable assemblage in the Capital City, and yet the memory of it among those who were present will linger with them vividly until the end of their days.

GEN. NATHANIEL LYON.

The fact that this brave soldier fell while leading the First Iowa Infantry at the battle of Wilson's Creek, Mo., will always endear his memory to the people of our State. For this reason, as well as for the merit of the paper itself, we are glad to publish in the present number of THE

ANNALS, the late Dr. William A. Hammond's very interesting "Recollections of General Nathaniel Lyon." They served several years in the same command in the old regular army, before the civil war, but mostly at Fort Riley, a frontier post in what is now the state of Kansas. Dr. Hammond was then a surgeon, with the rank of 1st lieutenant, while Lyon, who graduated at West Point in 1841, had reached the grade of Captain. Dr. Hammond gives a striking analysis of the character, high qualities and marked idiosyncracies of this illustrious soldier. The Doctor, as is well known, became one of the most distinguished specialists in the treatment of diseases of the mind and brain, and therefore thoroughly qualified to understand the mental peculiarities of such a man as Lyon—and doubtless better qualified to write of him a third of a century after the soldier's death. Our late Governor Cyrus C. Carpenter made the acquaintance of Capt. Lyon at Sioux City, in 1856. They stopped several days at the same primitive hotel, where their rooms were only separated by a rough board partition. So far as his acquaintance extended Governor Carpenter bore the same testimony to Lyon's personal peculiarities and views upon the great questions then before the country as that so lucidly set forth by Dr. Hammond.

In order that these pages may show how the hero died, we extract the following from L. D. Ingersoll's "Iowa and the Rebellion," (pp. 27-28), a work of very considerable merit, but which has long been out of print:

It was while the contest (battle of Wilson's Creek, Mo., Aug. 10, 1861) was thus fiercely raging, that the Iowa First won the dying admiration of their beloved general, and imperishable renown. The correspondent of the *New York Tribune*, who witnessed the engagement, says: "When the First Iowa came up to the front it was in splendid order and with a firm tread. The Missouri First had been almost overpowered, were almost exhausted from the severe fighting in which they had been engaged for over two hours, and had they not been relieved must soon have fallen before the fourth body of fresh troops brought against them. The Iowas and Kansans now came upon the stage of action, and right well did they fight.

The former fought like tigers, stood firm as trees, and saved us from utter and overwhelming defeat. Gen. Lyon saw their indomitable perseverance and bravery, and with almost his last breath praised their behavior in glowing terms. Major Porter was all along the line, cheering his men forward, even when bullets fell like hail, and scores were dropping all around him. Companies B, under Lieutenant Graham; C, Captain Mason, who was killed soon after entering into action; F, Captain Wise; H, Captain Gottschalk; I, Captain, afterwards Major General, Herron, and K, Captain Cook, were in the very thickest of the fight. The three latter were afterwards placed in ambush by Captain Granger of the regulars. Lying down close to the brow of the hill, they waited for another attempt of the enemy to retake their position. On they came, in overwhelming numbers. Not a breath was heard among the Iowas till their enemies came within thirty-five or forty feet, when they poured the contents of their Minie muskets into the enemy and routed them, though suffering terribly themselves at the same time. Two Kansas companies afterwards did the same thing on the eastern slope, and repulsed a vigorous attack of the enemy.

"Lyon now desired the men to prepare to make a bayonet charge immediately after delivering their next fire, and the Iowas at once offered to go, and asked for a leader. On came the enemy. No time could be lost to select a leader. 'I will lead you,' exclaimed Lyon, 'come on, brave men,' and with an unnatural glare in his eyes, he had about placed himself in the van of the Iowas, while Gen. Sweeney took a similar position to lead on a portion of the Kansas troops when the enemy came only near enough to discharge their pieces, and retired before the destructive fire of our men. Before the galling fire from the enemy fell the brave General Lyon. . . . The regiment lost in this engagement, in killed, wounded and missing, 155 men."

Upon inquiring of the War Department concerning the presence of Capt. Lyon at Sioux City in its early days we received the following reply:

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE, WASHINGTON.

May 14, 1900.

Dear Mr. Aldrich:

I have your note of the 11th instant, regarding Captain Nathaniel Lyon, and replying thereto I beg to say that it appears from the records that Captain Lyon left his company June 19, 1856, for duty as Judge Advocate of a general court-martial held at the Dragoon camp near Sioux City, Iowa, where he arrived, but how long he remained is not of record.

Very truly yours,

W. H. CARTER,

Assistant Adjutant General.

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