

but from what has already been accomplished there can be no doubt that the next decade will witness an increase in libraries and library interests in Iowa which has had no precedent in the past. This will be an ample reward for those modest but persistent workers who have kept their faces steadily to the front, even from the days of small things when progress seemed almost imperceptible.

THE POCKET GOPHER.

This little rodent (*Geomys bursarius*) is one of the most curious of the animals which originally existed in our State. While it may be many years before it becomes extinct in Iowa, our observations lead us to believe that its numbers are yearly diminishing. This is due to many causes, the chief of which may be the fact that all the conditions of its existence have been changed by the settlement of the country. Then, it is well known that it is injurious to meadows and often to fruit trees. It piles up heaps of earth and gravel in the meadows, especially the clover fields, to the great injury of the mowing machines, saying nothing of the hay destroyed, and it often eats away the roots of orchard trees. A tree will occasionally fall to the ground when examination will show that its roots have all been devoured by the pocket gopher. The damage thus caused leads many farmers to destroy them by means of poison or by shooting them. These little animals are about the size of a rat, but thicker and much more solidly built. "They are characterized by the enormous external cheek pouches lined with fur, not communicating with the mouth, and extending in some cases along the neck as far as the shoulders." They have powerful fore limbs and strong claws with which they do a vast deal of digging under ground. Their jaws and teeth are also so strong that it would be dangerous to attempt to handle one of them. Many years ago the writer

heard the late Granville Berkley, the pioneer lawyer of Webster county, which then included the county of Hamilton, relate an interesting incident concerning these animals. A great flood came in the Boone and Des Moines rivers sometime in the fifties—possibly the memorable one of 1851. The rivers rose so high as to flood the little promontory at the junction of the two streams, leaving a large gopher mound near the point completely surrounded by water. The flood drove out of their holes a dozen or more gophers, huddling them together as the waters rose higher and higher. The animals became infuriated and soon began a deadly fight among themselves. The more powerful easily killed the weaker ones, and at last but one was left, and it was so bitten that it speedily died. Mr. Berkley's vivid description of this gopher fight was always listened to with much interest and accepted as true. While a most unusual incident it seemed quite probable to those who knew something of the habits of the pocket gopher.

THE FLOYD MONUMENT.

The Floyd Monument Association, the headquarters of which is at Sioux City, Iowa, with a membership extending to several other states, has been earnestly working for several years to secure the erection of a fitting monument at the grave of Sergeant Charles Floyd, of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, who was buried just below that city, August 20, 1804. Many facts have contributed to render this pioneer grave one of the most noted localities within the limits of the Louisiana Purchase, and for several years there has been a growing sentiment in favor of the erection of this monument. The subject was treated at some length in the 2d volume of the present series of *THE ANNALS* (pp. 305-314), by Hon. George W. Wakefield of Sioux City. That article fully sets forth

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