

HON. JOHN RUSSELL.

MR. SPEAKER—The committee appointed by you to draft resolutions commemorating the pure life and character and the public life of our esteemed statesman, Hon. John Russell of Jones county, Iowa, we respectfully submit the following resolutions to your honorable body:

John Russel of Jones county, Iowa, was born in the county of Fife, Scotland, on the 8th day of October, 1821, and died at his home near Onslow, Iowa, October 10, 1908, aged 87 years and two days. When Mr. Russell was nine years old his mother died leaving four children, all boys of whom he was the second youngest. With the mother gone as is often the case, families are often scattered and sometimes see great hardships, but his father managed to keep this family of small children together, taught them to read and write and furnished them with all the suitable books his limited means would allow. Was very fond of Scotch writers, Burns and Sir Walter Scott, the latter being his favorite. About the time Mr. Russell became a man there was great agitation of the Reform Bill in Great Britain and he was always to be found advocating measures of the common people gainst those of bigoted aristocracy.

To convince the people of his way of thinking he would often refer them to the happy and prosperous republic across the Atlantic. Having always loathed and abhorred artsiocatic tendencies he could not remain in Great Britain longer. He wanted to see complete political rights restored to the common people. With the spirit of liberty burning in his breast he determined to sail to this great Republic. On the 28th day of April, 1842, he sailed from Liverpool and landed in New York on the 28th day of May of the same year. Shortly after his arrival he moved to Columbiana county, Ohio, where he became acquainted with his wife, Margaret Feehan, and were united in the bonds of holy matrimony. A bright and respectable family of four children was the result of this happy union, three boys and one girl, all who are living. Mr. Russell came to Jones county, Iowa, in 1852 and bought from the government the farm on which he has lived all these years. He preferred farm life to that of the crowded city. He was a tiller of the soil.

A few years after Mr. Russell's arrival in this county the slavery question was being agitated by the two great political parties, the democratic and the republican parties. Mr. Russel espoused the cause of the latter and gave this party his loyal support during the great conflict of the Civil War.

His service to his country and state commenced in 1860, when he was elected supervisor of Jones county and afterwards chairman of the board. He filled this position with honor to himself and his party. Shortly afterwards he was elected to the House of Representatives and served during the Ninth, Tenth, Eleventh and Thirteenth General Assemblies. He was elected Auditor of State and served from 1871 to 1875. He was elected Senator during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth General Assemblies. In 1864 he was mustered into the service as a soldier of the Civil War and was one of the defenders of the Nation until the close of the war.

As a member of the House he was one of its most active and valuable members. By his honest methods and courteous ways he soon became

beloved and was elected Speaker. He possessed all the requirements of a good parliamentarian and his aim was to do justice to all, to rule impartially on all questions that might arise.

When Congress donated to Iowa the grant of land that now contains the Iowa State College at Ames, very few people ever dreamed of the possibilities of this great college. As in all great public enterprises there is always some opposition. But as chairman of the board of trustees and building committees he showed a vigor and foresight that has seldom been equaled in the management of our state institutions. He wielded great power in the House of Representatives and this power was always for the right. By his integrity and honesty he received the name of "Honest" John Russell, and was known by this name until his death.

After eight years of service in the House he was elected Auditor of State and held this office four years. He made a very efficient and painstaking Auditor and was one of the leading republicans of the state, as well as the most popular. His friends urged him to become a candidate for Governor of this great state, but after a spirited contest, his old friend, Governor Kirkwood, with his great reputation as "War Governor" defeated him, but it left no political wound. He again returned to private life on his farm in Jones county. His friends of Jones and Cedar counties wanted a strong man for the state senate. Honest John was their choice, was elected and served during the Eighteenth and Nineteenth General Assemblies.

We believe it was he, more than any other, who laid the foundations of the Iowa State College at Ames, one of the greatest educational institutions of its kind in the civilized world.

It was through his influence that the State Reformatory at Anamosa, Iowa was built.

What man in the state of Iowa has done more and done it honestly? He was a generous friend and neighbor, a pure and noble husband, a kind father and a christian of the Presbyterian faith. Honest with his neighbor, honest with his family, honest with his country and honest with his God.

Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-third General Assembly of the State of Iowa: That in the death of our distinguished friend and stateman, John Russell of Jones county, is a loss that we greatly feel, and we extend our sympathy to his children and the aged widow, Margaret Russell, who has been his companion during all the years of this successful life, and be it

Resolved: That a copy of these resolutions be spread upon the Journal of the House and that the Chief Clerk be directed to send an enrolled copy to Margaret Russell at Onslow, Iowa.

W. M. BYERLY,
HIRAM DEWELL,
ELI C. PERKINS,
Committee.

Adopted January 26, 1909.