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Sketch of the career of Hon. LEONARD J. FAREWELL.

The first settlers in any new country pass through an experience which no succeeding generation will ever be able to fully appreciate. The time is already past when the youth of the present, even, have any appreciation of the vicissitudes, dangers, and trials which the pioneer fathers and mothers were compelled to undergo to gain a foothold in the states west of the great lakes. Every new settlement wrote a history of its own, which differed from others in the nature of its surroundings, but the aggregate of the experience of all, was one never a gain to be repeated in the same territory or country. The mighty woods and the solemn prairies are no longer shrouded in the mystery; and their effects upon the minds of the early comers, are sensations which will be a sealed book to the future. It is therefore not without a weighty reason, seated in the curiosity, if not the affection of the race, that the old settlers hold annual reunions, and compare notes with each other as to their mutual privations and isolations from the former outer world. Year by year the circle is narrowing. All that is most vivid and valuable in memory is disappearing. Gray hairs and bowed forms attest the march of time. Fresh hillocks in every cemetery, to which each year contributes its quota are all the marks that are left of a race of giants who grappled nature in her fastnesses, and made a triumphant conquest in the face of greatest privations, disease, and difficulty. The shadows that fall upon their toombs as time recedes are like the smoky haze that enveloped the great prairies of the early days saddening the memory and giving to dim distance only a faint and phantom outline, to which the future will look back, and must often marvel at the great hearth that lie hidden under the peaceful canopy.
Biography.

It is for this reason, therefore, that no personal sketch of pioneer settlers, however rudely drawn, or immature in detail, can be classed as the work of mere vain glory. On the contrary the future will treasure them, and as the generations recede, they will become more and more objects of interest and real value. The memory of the pioneers is one that the world will never consent to let fade. Its transmission is a priceless gift to the future, and the addition of a fresh sketch from any quarter, must be esteemed a welcome contribution.

American life has this peculiarity very strikingly developed, that each youth is generally the arbiter of his own fortune, — that family names and mere wealth count a little, and often that little is a detriment to its possessor. Nearly every great man who has risen from obscurity to prominence has the same private history. He was born in poverty raised in the rugged school of want and privation, where the great lesson of self reliance is practically taught. He inherited from a noble paternity the ambition and the will to achieve great and useful ends — to acquire an honorable distinction — to faithfully discharge the most important public trusts — and to leave to his family and the country the memory and example of a spotless reputation, and an honored name. This fortunately, is the highest distinction in America, where men do not receive the credit for something done by their great grand-fathers, but must make up their own account, and stand or fall upon their own personal record. It is the distinction between a supposed hereditary succession in virtue talent, and ability, and the actual acquirement of these qualities by labor sagacity, honesty and example.

The subject of this sketch was no exception to the American rule. The rugged road of poverty and orphanage was his lot. But he came from a solid and reliable stock. His father was Captain James Farewell of Massacousetts, and his mother, whose maiden name was Rebecca Cady was born in Vermont, two states whose population have done as much and probably more than any other, of the continent. From this union two children were born, George and Leonard J. Farewell, both in Watertown, New York — the latter on the 5th day of January, 1819. The mother died in 1824, and the father in 1830, so that at the early age of eleven years, he and his brother were left alone in the world. The younger, George Farewell, removed to the west at a very early period, and died in Chicago, March 29th 1844. He was a young man of conspicuous ability, and great promise, and his early loss was long and deeply lamented. The elder brother remained in his native village or country until a later period to fit himself for the battle of life, into which he was destined to take an active and quite prominent part, as this sketch will sufficiently show.
The first efforts of the young man to gain a livelihood, was in the capacity of a clerk in a dry goods store, in which he remained about one year; but feeling, what every American boy should feel, the importance of learning a useful trade, he then became an apprentice to a tin smith, and followed that occupation until the age of nineteen, diligently improving all leisure hours, in not only fitting himself to become a competent clerk, but in mastering the elements and secrets of business success. Having thus prepared himself, and obeying an impulse common to the young men of that time to penetrate into the mysterious wilds of a new country and with a capital so modest that it would astonish many of the youth of the present he emigrated to the west to seek an opening for trade, where he might establish himself. His first venture was at Lockport, Ills., with a small stock of hardware, and a few tools of his trade, and for the time and place, soon established a thriving business—but the country was then new, the settlement slow, the point isolated and the field for trade not large enough for one of his enterprising mind. In January 1840, he sold out his stock and store, and removed to the then new village of Milwaukee, in the Territory of Wisconsin, and embarked in business on a larger scale. By judicious advertising—a critical knowledge of his trade, great industry, and a careful management, in a few years he was at the head of one of the largest wholesale houses in the west. Ten years later owing to impaved health from a too great confinement to indoor life, and having secured a large fortune for those days, he withdrew from the cares of mercantile traffic to embark in enterprises of a different kind. No event of importance marked this career of successful trade, or to vary its monotony, except that in 1846, he made a six months trip to Cuba and the West India Islands, in pursuit of health and recreation, and to gain a more comprehensive knowledge of the country, and the magnitude of its surroundings.

The tide of emigration which set towards the then far west, as early as 1835, and had been checked by the financial crash of 1837, revived again, and since about 1840, has known little abatement. This gave prominence to real estate transaction, and vast tracts previously valueless as private property, were at once eagerly sought, and the scramble was generally designated in the country as the “land fever.” All along the margin of the quiet lakes, and the principal rivers, farms were taken up, villages projected or laid out, roads opened, and the silence of the native wilds was invaded by the advanced guard of that endless throng, the head of a moving column which has now reached the Pacific Ocean, while the closing files are still in Germany and Northern Europe, making ready for the march.

In 1847, foreseeing the certainty that the country would speedily be
occupied. Mr. Farewell visited Madison, the Territorial capital of Wisconsin, and effected a large purchase of village property embracing and including its then unoccupied water power; and having completed the arrangement, in September of the same year he made a trip to Europe, which lasted a year and a half, visiting England, Ireland, France, Italy, India, Turkey, Egypt, and many other countries, returning to the United States in the spring of 1849. He contributed while absent a series of travel from time to time to the Milwaukee Sentinel, which attracted much public attention.

The real estate purchased at Madison, embraced nearly half the site of the then village, and if the additions subsequently made are included, to more than half of the present site of the city. A brief sketch of the condition of this then remote hamlet, and its surroundings, will best indicate to the reader the nature and extent of the enterprise upon which he had embarked, and will not be out of place here.

Wisconsin was originally settled from the eastern side, and its south west corner—one stream of emigrants coming by the lakes, and mainly through Milwaukee, and the other by way of the Mississippi river, generally by way of Galena, in Ills. They pressed steadily inland, but owing to the lack of roads and means of communication, it was many years before the central portion of the country was reached and occupied. A few counties only had been organized along the south line of the territory, and scarcely any of the townships had as yet received a name—while many of the sites of present cities had not even been entered at the United States Land office. Madison the capitol, was isolated from competing villages on all sides, by a space averaging more than forty miles. The site was almost in a state of nature—with but a small clearing in its central part about the Capital Park. It was crossed by a single township road, blazed through the forest, and branching upon the surrounding prairies. It was without mills, manufactures of any kind, or markets. With the exception of game and fish nearly all the supplies of its population were purchased and transported from long distances. Forest and prairie, as yet unbroken, margined the lakes and streams. The landscape was unmarked by fence, field, or improvement—the low lands undrained—and the work of man was scarcely as yet visible anywhere over this wide region, at present teeming with a dense population.—Truly "the harvest was plenty, but the laborers were few" Sush was the Madison of 1849.

But with the advent of Mr. Farewell a speedy change come over this scene of solitude and isolation. Among his first works was the improvement of the water power, and the erection of a saw and grist mill, so that flour had no longer to be imported from a distance of forty miles, and
lumber was brought within reach of the settlers; and these works embodying all the known improvements of that time, yet remain as monuments of the enterprise of their builder and a perpetual blessing to the community. His efforts at once infused new life into the settlement. Real estate, hitherto, almost without value, began to be sought for, and to improve in price. Streets were cleared of their forests—roads were laid out to the surrounding prairies—bridges were built—the low lands drained—road ways carried through them, and lined with shadetrees, and buildings and improvements of all kinds began to rise among the trees, and dot the distant prairies. He matured a comprehensive system of advertising the advantages of the country abroad, and scores of thousands of pamphlets, filled with valuable information were spread all over the eastern states and Northern Europe. He impressed upon all about him the vigor of his own comprehensive purposes, and pointed out to doubters the vastness of the latent resources and the certainty of a rapid and constantly increasing development, which in a short time must cover the whole continent with the fruits of new enterprise.

It may be truthfully said that from the time of his location the fortune of whole counties began to improve, and that previous to that time stagnation and absence of improvement were the most marked characteristics of the community. The present city has no important interest or structure, or association which he either did not originate, or contribute to its success. He not only built the mills to which allusion has been made, but started the first woolen factory; the first machine shop and foundry. He was a partner in building the Capitol House—the principal Hotel. In the Water Cure Establishment, now so widely known and patronized. In the Gas Works, and he tried earnestly to secure to the city public water works. He erected the "Bruen Block" the best built one in the city. He established the Madison Museum and subsequently donated its collection to the state University. He aided in organizing the State Historical Society, now unequalled in the extent of its accumulations in any western state. He helped to organize the State Agricultural Society—the system of graded common schools, and the state University, and contributed more or less to the establishment of several religious societies. It was he who set the example of first grading and filling streets and building side and cross walks, and he built the first plank road, and also stocked the Lakes with new varieties of fish. Need it be added that in projected railroad enterprises he embarked heartily, and that the evidence of his enterprise and enthusiastic labors are impressed on everything of a public kind either in structures, literary or benevolent associations—or all that the city most values and most treasurers? Since he ceased these labors, from which circumstances compelled him to withdraw, no master
spirit has arisen to continue them, and what has been gained, has followed mainly from the solid foundation originally laid down. Even the Lakes owe their name to his selection. But it is not necessary to enlarge upon such an enumeration. Every, old settler in Dane County will bear cheerful witness to the greatness of his efforts, and attest to the truthfulness of this description. The stamp of his hand work will not speedily be erased.

The appearance of Mr. Farewell upon the political stage was an anomalous event in his career, brought about by causes over which he had no control. It is nothing unusual in this country to see men taken from every station in life, and elected to official positions, but this has most generally followed from pressing personal effort, or the work of a party caucus in forestalling the aspirations of others, or having in view the carrying out of a special policy or purpose in the selection, for the furtherance of some scheme, or the direct benefit of party managers. The cases are rare indeed, where it can be said with truth, that the office sought the man — when there was neither effort to secure a nomination, but on the contrary a strenuous opposition to receiving it—and when partisan interests were merged in a spontaneous and enthusiastic effort to confer an honor by the best men of all parties.

The career of Mr. Farewell, as a merchant, had, unconsciously to himself, laid the foundation of a popularity of which he had no conception. His business arrangements had been comprehensive and reached to all parts of the state, and he was not only widely known by reputation but had warm personal friends in every section. His genial address, noble generosity, and frank, outspoken manhood had laid up a fund of good will and genuine esteem on the part of multitudes, that waited but its time to find the means of expression. Among other things which might be mentioned as forming a ground work of a solid friendship, it is deserving of mention, that during nearly his whole mercantile career, great numbers of emigrants were constantly arriving at Milwaukee, unacquainted with the English language often victimized by sharpers, or suffering from sickness or the lack of means. Often they had been unable to pay their passage on the steamers, or the charge on their household goods. When cases of this kind came to his notice, he had made it a rule to go in person, or send some intelligent and trusty foreigner, who could converse with the newly arrived, and render the necessary assistance. His large warehouse was freely opened for their reception, provisions furnished, and often money advanced to the most necessitous, who received the most kindly aid, either in being forwarded to their destination, or in obtaining employment in the city or country until able to help themselves. How many hundreds of the poor wanderers, now men of wealth and standing, still bless the
name that relieved them in their hour of sorest need. Nor was the generous kindness forgotten, when opportunity came to test their remembrance.

It is not worth while, in this connection to give much detail of the political reasons which, in the year of 1851, placed his name before the people of Wisconsin as a candidate for the office of Governor. The democratic party was largely in the ascendant, having near twenty thousand majority, and, to outer appearance, a candidacy in opposition was a mere formality. By how few was it seen that causes were even then in operation which were destined within a few years to effect its permanent and total overthrow. The whig party of that day was but a weak and feeble minority. It had few elements of strength, and less sagacity in its management. It regularly put tickets in nomination in a kind of hopeless way, but with no expectation of success. The candidates were well enough, but the organization was without vitality. In the state convention of 1851, however, it received an impetus by the unanimous nomination of Leonard J. Farewell, for the office of Governor, that not only astonished its leaders, but aroused the opposition to the consciousness of a real weakness. Every old settler in the state will recall the shout of enthusiasm with which the selection was everywhere greeted. The Free Soil party, which was an offshoot from the democratic, had previously acted on the question, and now united to swell the rising tide. The public effect was electric. Party lines and party drill were wholly ineffective to check the new revolution, even in the democratic strongholds. A single name presented at the right moment, sufficed to break the political fetters—and to use the common expression of the time, the people decided to vote by ballot. The canvass was a noble example of a community rising superior to mere partisan prejudice and electing their favorite over every form of opposition.

The following extracts from an address to the people, issued in Milwaukee, and signed by hundreds of business men of all parties, many of whom had been long competitors of Mr. Farewell in Mercantile life, will best indicate the feeling of the time and was a noble tribute from his old neighbors and friends, and worthy of being treasured here.

"TO THE ELECTORS OF THE STATE OF WISCONSIN."

Fellow Citizens: The undersigned, citizens of Milwaukee, without distinction of party, actuated by what we regard the best interests of the state, take the liberty, in this public manner, without concealment or disguise, to state to you the reasons which impel us, and we hope, will induce you to vote for Leonard J. Farewell, for Governor of the state at the coming election.
First, Mr. Farewell is a practical, thorough-going business man. We believe that at the present crisis such a man is especially needed at the helm. The finances of the state are in a doubtful condition, and they ought to be looked into. The Wisconsin and Fox River improvements are notoriously mismanaged. The funds for its prosecution are being wasted, while the works are poorly constructed, and are carried on without vigor, without economy, and with most vexatious delay. The School Fund of the state, which should be held in sacred trust for our children as their most precious inheritance, has been loaned out to party favorites in many instances, upon insufficient* and doubtful security. A thorough investigation is needed and these great interests should be placed under the supervision of an honest, efficient, independent man, who will be under no party obligations to cover up past delinquencies and bad management. The strict integrity and signal ability with which Mr. Farewell has conducted his own business, is the best assurance that he will manage faithfully the affairs of the state.

*Third, Mr. Farewell is a man of the people. It is his pride that he worked faithfully at his trade as a mechanic. Being one of the people, brought up among them, intimately associated with them in business, and in the intercourse of life, he knows their wants—he can understand their condition—his sympathies are with them in their toils and struggles, and we, the people, mean to show by or own votes, that we appreciate modest worth, and pay willing tribute to honorable and successful labor.

Fourth, Mr. Farwell is no mere partisan. Liberal and expansive in his views—of great independence and farce of character, he is not and never has been what is called a strong party man, thoroughly identified in feeling and interest with this state of his adoption; he has a great stake in its prosperity, and will, we are persuaded, if elected, rise above mere party considerations, and act with reference to the interests of the whole people.

Fifth, Mr. Farwell is a man of high and sterling character. Possessed of more than ordinary natural ability, he has improved his talents by study and converse with the world. He has excellent practical sense, is clear headed and sagacious. All admit that he has great firmness, decision and energy. His generosity and public spirit are proverbial; more than all, he is an honest, highminded and honorable man. Perfectly fair in all his dealings, no one accuse him of wronging a man out of one cent; no one can lay a mean act to his charge. His moral character is without reproach.

Fellow Citizens: such a man we believe Mr. Farwell to be. The choice of Governor is submitted to your candor and patriotism, and we
will not fear the result. The people are rising in their might all over the state, and the peoples candidate will be triumphantly elected. The day of election is at hand. Be up and doing, and remember that every vote cast for Leonard J. Farwell will be a vote for the dignity, the honor and the prosperity of the state."

The Governor alone of all the state ticket was elected.

Thus then we have the example of a youth who made his way to the west in complete poverty—who settled in Wisconsin as a humble mechanic—who in a little over ten years thereafter had not only acquired a fortune, but without any of the ordinary machinery of party, or any personal management of his own, had by the general voice of the people, been clothed with the highest honor. It is doubtful if the history of any state can furnish a case of an executive officer, in opposition to his own private wishes, similarly elected, or a canvass in which so little that was merely partisan and selfish any where manifested itself.

Of the public career of Governor Farwell it is not necessary to dwell at any considerable length. The structure of the government was then immature, the population scanty, and the policy of development as yet undefined. Much that is now history had not then entered the public mind even by suggestion. To lay the foundation of the new republic deep and wide, to establish a policy of comprehensive statesmanship which should provide for the present, ensure the future, and prove enduring as time, was the most important duty of the executive. How well and wisely this was done is attested by the development of the state, in all its varied interests, and the wide spread prosperity that is now visible in all its parts. An examination of his every official act, will show that in every public measure of his administration, he followed the plain, simple rule of strict honesty, and open fair dealing with all men. A concise epitome of his messages would be highly interesting as showing the chief subjects occupying the public mind of that time, but it would swell this sketch beyond the limits assigned to it, and must for that reason be omitted. Only one of his measures need be alluded to. The plan which he originated and which was approved by the legislature, of putting two hundred thousand new emigrants into the state within two years at a cost not exceeding ten thousand dollars was carried out to the fullest extent, and paved the way for most of those who now occupy the soil. This system of emigrant agencies, adopted by other states, has already planted millions of population in the north west—and there is still, no cessation to the movement.

His appointments to office were necessarily few, but were happily made. Among them we may mention Hon. Harlow B. Orton, as Private Secretary. Hon. John H. Lathrop, chancellor of the University, to prepare an
essay showing the physical condition and prospective wealth of the state. The Hon. James R. Doolittle, to conduct certain state suits, which was his first public appearance. Prof. Edward Daniels, State Geologist, and H. A. Tenney, Esq., Assistant, with many others and for different labors. It was a period when men of strong active minds, and zealous purposes were especially needed in the then new condition of affairs and the selections were at that time a matter of considerable perplexity.

Notwithstanding that during his entire administrative terms every department of the state government, and both branches of the legislature, were in political opposition to the executive, there was no measure of importance suggested or recommendation made that was not promptly adopted. The usual display of ill feeling and party jealousy in such contingencies, was in no case manifested, and probably no official ever enjoyed more fully the confidence and esteem of both friends and political opposers. The Governor refused a renomination to the office on any terms, having important private interests suffering from the lack of his personal supervision, and no taste for a continuation of public honors, however flattering.

On the 20th of September 1858, the bachelor days of Mr. Farwell were closed. He was united in marriage with Miss Francis A. Corss, daughter of Gen'l A. N. Corss, of Madison, formerly of Watertown, New York. To this amiable and accomplished lady, and to her family, no tribute would be esteemed too high by any one honored with an intimate acquaintance. She possessed every grace of true womanhood, and every quality that most adorns and dignifies the sex in an unusual degree. No one knew better how to make a home happy or more strongly attracted the personal regards of all with whom she came in contact. She died in Washington D. C. April 15th, 1868, after a lingering sickness resulting from a railroad collision, leaving three children—a daughter and two sons—and her early departure was widely and deeply mourned by a great circle of friends and acquaintances.

After leaving the executive chair, Mr. Farwell at once resumed the management and care of his large real estate interests, and pushed forward new improvements with his wonted energy. Among other things worthy of note, were his exertions to secure a direct connection with Chicago by the Beloit and Madison Railroad, and also, to promote a road by way of Watertown. In this last enterprise, he became largely involved by becoming an endorser for its loans, which at a later period, during the panic of 1857, gave a fatal blow, during several years, to his restless career of noble and unselfish public usefulness. The new State Capitol, the Hospital for the Insane, and the Central University Edifice, are public works for which the place is deeply indebted to his efforts.

The financial revulsion of 1857 proved too much for even his sagacious
financial abilities, as he had endorsed heavily, and the stocks and securities of the Watertown and Milwaukee road suddenly became nearly worthless in the eastern market. Finding the catastrophe inevitable, he made every effort to meet all mere personal obligations by paying his creditors in valuable real estate, which a part of them accepted. Having decided to make no assignment, the balance of his property was left to be equally divided, and had time been given, would have more than sufficed to cover every claim. No event in the history of Madison was productive of as general regret among all classes of persons, as this suspension. It was regarded properly, as a public calamity, and no one has since been found to restore anything like the old vigor to the growth and improvement of the city.

Returning to his farm, deeded at an early period to his wife, he sought the consolations which quiet and repose often bring to overwrought mental activity. It was one of the most attractive spots in all the beautiful lake region about Madison on the north shore of Lake Mendota. Originally and for ages the site of an Indian Village, dotted with many mounds, and marked by ancient earth works, high above the clear waters of the lake, in view of bold headlands, islands, prairies, groves, and the distant city, the panorama spread out on all sides from this tasty but humble dwelling was of most exquisite beauty and attractiveness. The site of the Insane Hospital having been selected on a tract of land adjoining, he was appointed chairman of the Commission and for several years superintended the erection of the buildings and preparation of the grounds. In the hope of drawing him away from his pleasant retreat, and inducing him to take a part in public affairs, he was elected to the legislature in 1859; but official life had lost all charms for him. His ambition had been to build up the country and the city, and that work measurably over, he regarded his mission as completed. The empty honors of political distinction had nothing about them to incite his ambition, or induce a change of life. They are too unreal and unsubstantial to merit the attention most men waste upon them.

In the spring of 1863, he was appointed by President Lincoln an Assistant Examiner of Inventions, a position he held for near seven years, when he resigned it, to re-embark in the same business in Chicago. During the rebellion he took an active part in all measures to preserve the National Capital, and at the close of the great battle of Gettysburg, was detailed to the field, and passed many days in attendance on the wounded. He was Vice President of the association for the relief of Wisconsin soldiers, and in that capacity was able to render great service to thousands of the sick and disabled. Wherever a good deed could be done, or a word of cheer be said that might animate the desponding, he was never at a loss to find duties to perform.
And now an event happened of such great historical interest that it ought not to be omitted even in this a mere personal sketch. He was at Ford’s Theater on that fatal night of April 14th, 1865, a spectator of the assassination of President Lincoln, and the escape of the assassin Wilkes Booth. An instant presentiment of threatened danger to the other high officers of the government, came over him, and rushing to the Kirkwood House, he was just in time to save the life of Andrew Johnson from the knife of the conspirator Atzerodt, who was then in the building watching an opportunity to strike. For this service Mr. Johnson sent for him and tendered any position in the government he might desire, notwithstanding a radical difference in political views, but the well meant offer was kindly declined, as it was felt that a sentiment of mere gratitude ought not to be urged as a reason for official promotion. The part taken by Mr. Farwell, on the spur of the moment, called forth a great many enquiries from persons and public bodies, and led to a correspondence with Senator J. R. Doolittle, in which the facts are minutely detailed, and copies sent to various societies at their request. Believing that it has not been published in Wisconsin, and that it will prove of interest, a copy has been taken of that furnished the State Historical Society at Madison, and will be found subjoined.

It has not been the purpose of this sketch to introduce Ex-Governor Farwell as a great man according to the modern standard. Nor a self made man of the class usually noticed as such. In his day and time, as is sufficiently indicated, he has filled the mechanic’s bench with the same attention and success that he has filled the highest official positions. To do well in all relations in life is the highest glory of an American citizen. The world generally confounds notoriety with greatness, and looks more to sound than solid substance. The test of a true manhood lies in neither success nor failure, and it may be as manifest in one case as the other. The youth who from small beginnings, works his way, unassisted, and by mere force of character and will, to eminence and distinction, may be esteemed to have accomplished all that mankind regard as great and noble. Mere pecuniary success is not only no test of real merit, but often the reverse of it. The so called “self made” man, subjected to the test of criticism, is often found to be a person of very ordinary acquirements, with neither varied knowledge, aptitude, nor experience, outside of his peculiar calling.

What is claimed for Governor Farwell, is, that while possessing the better traits of a self made man, he also possesses in an eminent degree all the higher qualities that compass and make up the sum of a true manhood. He was gifted with that rare magnetism of mind, and geniality of address that impresses its influence on all about him. If in the pursuit of wealth, it was from no vulgar love of accumulation or display, but
to obtain the means for increased generosity, and more extended usefulness. His ambition did not lie in the mere counting of additional dollars, nor make a merit of a plethoric bank account, but in the poor and lonely he could aid, the youth he could encourage to become useful members of Society, and the misery of the aged and infirm he could alleviate. Money for its own sake, had no attraction for him; but along his pathway there are living multitudes to whom his memory is a pleasure. He was not born an orator and yet could impress his convictions widely upon all he addressed. He was not gifted as a writer, but no man could suggest more subjects, or more thoroughly inspire the writings of others. He was not a scholar, in the highest sense, from lack of early opportunity, yet never failed in any field requiring scholarly attainments. He was not in the ordinary sense a statesman, and yet laid deeply and firmly the foundations of a great and prosperous state, and left his impress on all its material features, while many more pretentious have left only the record of an official name. To whatever he gave attention it was done earnestly and with a purpose which never flagged. Whether upon the workman's bench, in mercantile life, or the highest official positions, the same effort to excel, the same critical knowledge of details, and an honest purpose, are equally manifest. In each it was the result of careful forethought, governed by matured judgment wisely applied. He had great aptitude for any field of labor, and a wonderful compression of the springs of human action. He knew how to employ and combine the results of talent displayed by different minds, and make them work to a common end. But chiefly and better than all, he was the possessor of a great, genial and loving heart, above the littleness of mere selfishness, and ever wakeful for opportunities to serve his kind; a strong common sense, and an honest and direct purpose. Few men at his time of life can look back over a long career and number so few enemies, or such troops of friends.

Since he first landed in the west, the frontier has receded from Ohio to the Pacific Ocean; and yet he is still in the full vigor of manhood, young in feeling, of excellent personal habits, with mental and physical powers unimpaired, and is doing for inventors what he has so long done for others. The youth of the present are destined to a different experience with different surroundings, for the mystery of the great west has passed away. His example is one they may well strive to emulate.

WASHINGTON, D. C.]
March 12th, 1866.

SIR:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of the 4th of January, enclosing a resolution of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, requesting me to obtain a full account of the circumstances, which have led your society to believe that one of its Vice Presidents, Ex-Governor Farwell, was instrumental in saving the life of President Johnson. In reply, I enclose a statement made at my request by the Governor himself.
From all I learn I am satisfied it was a part of the conspiracy to take the life of Mr. Johnson. The bitter hatred entertained towards him by the rebel leaders is known to all, and is well illustrated in the remark made by Davis to his associate, John C. Breckinridge, a short time after the assassination; referring to which he said, "If it were to be done at all it were better that it were well done: and if the same had been to Andy Johnson, the beast, and to Secretary Stanton, the job would then be complete."

By the sagacity, presence of mind, courage, and devotion of Gov. Farwell, our own distinguished fellow citizen, Mr. Johnson was apprised of his danger, and his life secured, if not absolutely saved from destruction. This, the evidence of the trial conclusively shows.

From the published account, it appears that one of the conspirators, George E. Atzerodt, who has since paid the penalty of his crime with his life, had on the morning of the 14th of April taken a room at the Kirkwood House, on the floor above that occupied by Mr. Johnson; that he was in the room during the day and was there visited by Booth; that at the time President Lincoln was shot, his horse was standing saddled and bridled near the hotel; that late at night he returned the horse to the stable, and with some unknown person lodged at the Pennsylvania House; that he not only disposed of a revolver next morning in Georgetown, but there were also found in the Kirkwood House, another revolver, a bowie knife, and an overcoat belonging to Booth. In view of these and other facts the Judge Advocate, in summing up the evidence on the trial of the conspirators, in regard to the part of the plot which Atzerodt was to execute, says: "Atzerodt near midnight returns to the stable of Naylor, the horse which he had procured for this work of murder, having been interrupted in the execution of the part assigned to him at the Kirkwood House, by the timely arrival of citizens to the defence of the Vice President; and creeps into the Pennsylvania House yet unknown."

From the enclosed statement, it will be manifest to all that Gov. Farwell was the most conspicuous and efficient of those citizens, by whose timely arrival the murderous design of Atzerodt was frustrated.

Providence has further use for Mr. Johnson at this, the most critical period of our history, in working out the destiny of our country; and it is a matter of congratulation to ourselves and our state, that a former Governor of Wisconsin was successfully efficient in saving the life of the Nation's Chief Magistrate.

Very respectfully yours,

J. R. DOOLITTLE.

Hon. Lyman C. Draper,
Secretary Wis. Historical Society,
Madison, Wis.

Hon. James R. Doolittle,
U. S. Senate,

Dear Sir:

I have received your favor of the 22nd ult. requesting on behalf of the Wisconsin State Historical Society, a statement of my connection with the occurrences that took place in this city on the night of the assassination of President Lincoln.

It is a mournful task to recall the terrible scenes that I then witnessed, yet in order that the expressed wishes of that society, of which, from the time of its formation, I have been a member, and in which I have always taken a deep interest, may be gratified, and a truthful account of those events, so far as I witnessed them, may find its way into history, I comply with the request.
At the time of the assassination of President Lincoln, I was boarding at the Kirkwood House, my family being then in Wisconsin. Vice President Johnson, had rooms, and was boarding at the same place, and I there came to know him, and occasionally passed an evening in his room.

Early in the evening of April 14th, 1865, I called to see Mr. J. B. Crosby, of Mass., and found that he had but a short time to stay and was very desirous of seeing the President before his return. Having noticed in the papers a statement that Mr. Lincoln was expected to be present at Ford's Theatre on that evening to witness the play, entitled "Our American Cousin," we concluded to go thither, for the express purpose of seeing him. This we did, and procured seats having the President's box in full view on our right. When the fatal shot was fired, we involuntarily turned our eyes to the box from whence the sound proceeded, and the same instant the horrible vision of J. Wilkes Booth, flashed upon my eyes, brandishing a knife, and jumping from the President's box, repeating the words, "Sic Semper Tyrannis!" I had scarcely seen and heard him before he had vanished from the stage.

As the president fell and the cry rang through the house that he was assassinated it flashed across my mind that there was a conspiracy being consummated to take the lives of the leading officers of the government, which would include that of Mr. Johnson. The cause of this suspicion and of my alarm for the safety of Mr. Johnson, was probably the fact of my having read in some newspaper, the article copied from the Selma, (Ala) Despatch, being an offer by some fiendish rebel to aid in contributing a million of dollars for procuring the assassination of Lincoln, Johnson, and Seward.

While some seemed paralyzed with the boldness of the deed and others intent upon knowing how seriously the president was injured, I rushed from the theatre, and ran with all possible speed to the Kirkwood House, to apprise Mr. Johnson of the impending danger, impelled by a fear that it would even then be too late. Passing Mr. Spencer, one of the clerks of the hotel, who was standing just outside the door, I said to him, "Place a guard to the door: President Lincoln is murdered," and to Mr. Jones, another clerk, who was at the office desk, as I hurried by, "Guard the stairway and Gov. Johnson's room, Mr. Lincoln is assassinated!" and then darting up to Mr. Johnson's room, No. 68, I knocked, but hearing no movement, I knocked again, and called out with the loudest voice, that I could command, "Gov. Johnson, if you are in this room, I must see you." In a moment, I heard him spring from his bed and exclaim, "Farwell is that you?" "Yes, let me in," I replied. The door was opened, I passed in, locked it, and told him the terrible news, which for a time overwhelmed us both, and grasping hands, we fell upon each other, as if for mutual support. But it was only for a moment. While every sound suggested the stealthy tread of a conspirator, and every corner of the chamber a lurking place, yet Mr. Johnson, without expressing any apprehensions for his own safety, and with that promptness and energy which has always characterized him, at once deliberated upon the proper course to meet the emergency. But the moment of danger had passed. The officers of the hotel, as requested by me, had stationed guards, who in a short time were relieved by Secretary Stanton. Soon many personal friends of Mr. Johnson arrived, anxiously enquiring for his safety. In the meantime, the news of the murderous assault upon Secretary Seward and his son Frederick, had reached us, and justified our fears as to the general purpose of the conspirators. Mr. Johnson was desirous of knowing the real condition of the President, and Mr. Seward, and requested me to go and see them personally, and not to credit any story or rumor that might be flying about the city. This was no easy task. Distrust
and horror seemed to fill every mind. The very atmosphere was burdened with stories of dark conspiracies and bloody deeds. Thousands of excited citizens, soldiers and guards, blocked up every avenue to Mr. Peterson's House, No. 453, 10th street, to which the president had been carried, and in which he was dying. None but prominent citizens known to the officers of the guard, or who could be generally vouched for, were allowed to pass, and it was with the utmost difficulty that I succeeded in working my way through the crowd, and passed the guards, to the house, and then into the room in which the president had been placed. The news was all too true. There he lay, evidently in the agonies of death, his medical attendants doing all that human zeal or skill could devise, and many of his friends had gathered about him, and some were in tears.

Turning away from this sad sight, I worked my way to the house of Secretary Seward, and here, too, I found that the villains had done their work. I then returned, and reported to Mr. Johnson, the disastrous doings of the conspirators.

In a short time Mr. Johnson resolved to see the president himself. His friends thought he ought not to leave the house when there was so much excitement in the city, and when the extent of the conspiracy was unknown. President Lincoln had just been shot in the presence of a crowded assembly and his assassin had escaped; Secretary Seward had been stabbed in his chamber, and the villain had fled. But he determined to go. Major James R. O'Beirne, commanding the provost guard, desired to send a detachment of troops with him, but he declined the offer, and buttoning up his coat, and pulling his hat well down, he requested me to accompany him, and the Major to lead the way; and thus we went through the multitude that crowded the streets and filled the passage ways, till we joined the sad circle of friends who were grouped around the bedside of the dying president.

It is unnecessary to add anything more to this account of my connection with an event which forms, with the rebellion plot, the darkest chapter in our country's history.

If it is true, as regarded by many, that the life of President Johnson was saved by the arrival of citizens, at the Kirkwood, at the risk of their lives, then such risk was properly, and so far as I am concerned, joyfully incurred, and this statement may be worthy of preservation.

Trusting that this may meet the wishes of the society as expressed through you.

I have the honor to be
Respectfully your obedient servant

L. J. FARWELL.

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Rt. REV'D. WILLIAM EDMOND ARMITAGE.

William Edmond Armitage was born in New York City, September the 6th 1830; educated in the private school of D. P. Bacon; graduated at Columbia college in 1849; and in theology at General Theological Seminary in 1852—all in that City.

He commenced his early ministry in New Hampshire and Maine; came west in 1859, and was pastor of St. John's Church in Detroit seven years. He was elected Assistant Bishop of the Diocese of Wisconsin June 1866; consecrated December 6th in that year; and removed to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on the 6th of January 1867.