OVER forty years ago Theodore Roosevelt wrote to Lyman C. Draper: "Pardon my writing you again. I appreciate thoroughly the impropriety of asking anyone for information which by any possibility he may himself use. . . . I thought that in your remarkably complete collection of mss. you might have material for which you yourself had no use." Roosevelt in his search for unpublished source material on the westward movement was not the first author to direct his inquiries to Madison. Scholars, writers, and collectors knew that since 1852 a quiet, unassuming little man had housed in Madison his ever growing collection of historical manuscripts. Dr. Draper had as a young man developed a deep and abiding interest in western history. He became absorbed in its sources and conceived the idea of collecting and writing biographies of the early border heroes of whom legends were recited around firesides and in contemporary literature. With a careful precision he sought beyond the legends, however, for more substantial evidence. Thanks to his indefatigable efforts, from nooks and crevices and chimney corners, from trunks and store rooms and treasure chests, from law offices and record offices came letters, certificates, diaries, account books, memoranda, files of newspapers, daguerreotypes, pamphlets, and printed circulars. Still he was not content but, studying the material he had accumulated, he found new clues to start him on further investigations that led him from New York to Mississippi and up and down the Ohio and Mississippi valleys, skillfully questioning and accurately noting down information in the little books he carried in his knapsack. Surviving Revolutionary heroes and their descendants and acquaintances in every walk of life contributed their reollections. When a collection of manuscripts was too precious to be given up or loaned to him he would spend sometimes weeks at a time copying material the originals of which have frequently since been lost, leaving only his copy in existence. Upon his return from a trip he would be reminded of missing links of evidence and would carry on an extensive correspondence, eliciting and carefully preserving replies to his detailed questionnaires. It can be guessed that little time was left to make use of the material so carefully gathered. Fearful lest he might overlook some detail, and lured aside by new enthusiasms and lines of investigations, he put off year
after year the writing of the biographies he had projected and which were the ostensible reason for his eager research.

This seeming procrastination has another explanation. During these years as first secretary of the State Historical Society, Dr. Draper with equal wisdom and industry had been laying the broad basis that has made its library the Mecca of historical scholars. In a letter written to Governor Washburn in 1873 he pictures the conditions under which he struggled to achieve this end. "I came here a little over 21 years ago, on the personal invitation of Gov. Farwell, Col. Larabee, and Judge Orton. For two years I labored for the society, in getting it started, and showing what could be done, for no pay whatever—using up some of my own means and providing stationery and postage. And since then my salary has ranged from $500 to $1200. I have never clamored for large pay—contented to live in an economical way, if I could only be useful, and do our goodly State service. Though repeatedly tempted to go to other states . . . I gave no encouragement. To you who know little of me, let these facts, I pray you, have some influence in convincing you that I am laboring here, with as little selfishness as we poor mortals usually evince. Whatever tends to add to our Society's usefulness, gratifies my heart, in my old age, to an extent that language is inadequate to express: I cannot but think that similar feelings must fill the hearts of all who participate in this noble work."

At Dr. Draper's death in 1891 it was found that he had left to the historical society of which he had been the virtual founder his priceless collection of manuscripts. They were bound into a group of almost five hundred volumes, now known as the Draper Manuscripts. Only a brief survey of the subjects covered in this collection can be made here. Earliest in time are the Preston Papers, with an original diary of the Sandy Creek expedition of 1756 and correspondence concerning Indian skirmishes as early as 1742 in the mountain valleys of western Virginia. The Sumter, Brodhead, King's Mountain, Joseph Brant, Pittsburgh, and many other groups deal with the frontier aspects of the American Revolution. Here too are the papers of the heroic George Rogers Clark, including an early diary, his correspondence, his own account of the capture of the Illinois country, and quantities of material on his associates in this event. Here is information on other leaders in early trans-Allegheny migration and settlement: Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton, James Robertson and John Sevier, Samuel Brady and Lewis Wetzel, Robert Patterson and John Cleves Symmes. The papers of Josiah Harmar and William Henry Harrison are among those that cover the continuing Indian warfare in the west after the Revolution. Quantities of material concern Indian tribes; most noteworthy are the collections pertaining to Joseph Brant and Tecumseh, of whom Dr. Draper contemplated making special studies. His own notes on interviews fill thirty-three volumes. The War of 1812, including Lieutenant Nathan Heald's own account of the evacuation of Fort Dearborn
Lyman C. Draper.
and the massacre of many of its inhabitants on the site of the present city of Chicago, marks chronologically the end of the Draper Manuscripts.

It was most fitting that Dr. Draper's rich collection should have been opened for public use at the time it was. The fact of the disappearance of the American frontier had just been officially announced. At the University of Wisconsin a young professor of history, Frederick J. Turner, was formulating his frontier hypothesis. The first attempt was being made at writing a more than local history of the westward movement. The American people, with no more west before them, paused to view the early stages of their advance. The Draper manuscripts had an important place in this new history writing. Their contents were eagerly explored; the characters and events they portrayed were brought to light and fitted into their historical settings. In the succeeding years their usefulness may have somewhat diminished but certainly has not disappeared. For the new interest in biography, the ventures in unexplored fields, or the revamping of old material they still contain rich sources of information and each year new students come to utilize their valuable treasures.

The Draper Manuscripts because of their rarity and popularity have tended to obscure the larger collection of manuscripts in the Wisconsin Historical Society's library—those that pertain more directly to the history of the state. This collection constitutes perhaps half a million pieces; it ranges in size from single items to extensive groups of personal papers, and in time from the earliest white occupation of Wisconsin to the present. There is no romantic tale connected with its acquisition but rather a record of careful, systematic, patient effort on the part of the Society, and of generous cooperation on the part of historical minded citizens of the state.

Innumerable interesting pieces are here, each with its own significance and value. When the Indian tribes of the northwest rose up in 1763 under Chief Pontiac to drive the whites from the region, the Menominee of Wisconsin protected the lives of the soldiers stationed at Green Bay and guided them to safety. The certificate of gratitude for the Menominee's faithfulness, signed and sent to them from Niagara by the British agent, Sir William Johnson, is among the oldest original manuscripts in the possession of the Society. Cherished and guarded for generations by the chiefs of the tribe, it was eventually presented by them to the historical library, where it is still to be found. Wisconsin school children have enjoyed Henry W. Longfellow’s poem, “Four Lakes of Madison,” which he wrote especially in honor of that city, but few of them have seen the original, in the poet’s own handwriting. In a letter in a collection of papers recently presented to the Society a young Wisconsin man, who later married Longfellow’s daughter, describes his first visit to the poet’s home. “He is a beautiful old gentleman . . .” he wrote. “He received me as naturally and pleasantly as if I were equally great and questioned me about my trip abroad.” Jefferson
Davis is best known in history as the president of the Southern Confederacy, but Wisconsin people like to remember that when he was a young soldier he was stationed first at Fort Winnebago (Portage) and later at Fort Crawford (Prairie du Chien). Years after the Civil War Davis wrote a letter giving the details of a trip that had led him past the site of Madison in 1829, making him one of the first white men ever to have passed that way. "To incorporate any portion of the Territory, within the present limits of Illinois, in the new State will only lay the foundation of future dispute," wrote the "Great Pacificator," Henry Clay in 1842 apropos of Wisconsin's discontent with the boundary line fixed between it and its southern neighbor. "There are some things which, although wrong when done, must be acquiesced in; and perhaps the northern extension of the boundary of Illinois is among them."

In 1832 during the Black Hawk war scares a small group of men fortified themselves near Blue Mounds and prepared for a possible siege. The list of men there and memoranda "of Passing Events" concerning communication with the outside world and plans of defense are still preserved among the papers of Ebenezer Brigham who commanded the fort. Judge Joseph T. Mills, of Grant County, while on a visit to Washington in the late summer of 1864, was privileged to have an interview with President Lincoln whom he described as a "tall slightly stooping gentleman approaching with long, rapid strides—large feet with large slippers—with the arms of a Briareus." Judge Mills' record of the conversation which followed in which Lincoln vigorously defended his emancipation policy is recorded in a small diary. These items are suggestive of the variety and type of material contained in the manuscript collections.

In the month of August, 1834, a runner arrived at the newly established Presbyterian mission school at Yellow Lake in northwestern Wisconsin, bound on an unusual errand. For three days he had been speeding from Leech Lake in Minnesota with a proposal of marriage from the missionary there, the Reverend William T. Boutwell, to the young woman who taught the infant Chippewa class at
the Yellow Lake school. Boutwell had been disappointed that spring in not receiving assistants from the East and dreaded the prospect of carrying on his work unaided for another season. He describes his dilemma and the solution thereof in a letter to a brother missionary in Wisconsin. “What was duty? I will tell you what I deemed my duty after much & earnest prayer to God for wisdom & grace to direct, & what I have done. I cast my eye over the land & asked, is there a helper? I dispatched a messenger to Yellow Lake with proposals to Miss Hester Crooks, a daughter of the gentleman who is now the agent of the American F[ur] Comp[any]. She has been educated in the Mack[inac] Sch[ool] & for two years previous to coming into this country has been engaged in teaching infant schools.” He further relates in his letter that the messenger returned with an acceptance whereupon Boutwell picked up his effects, proceeded to Yellow Lake, and took Hester to the mission at Fond du Lac in Minnesota. There on September 11 the Reverend Sherman Hall pronounced them man and wife. The bride and groom set out on the homeward journey to Leech Lake where they were soon established in a log hut which, the young missionary says, “to me was a palace though it afforded neither chair, stool, table or bedstead.” Their food, he says, was the fall’s catch of “nearly 6000 fish. These are our dependence for the winter as I have not a sack of corn or rice.”

Other aspects of early Protestant missionary life in the Lake Superior region are found in a series of diaries kept by Edmund F. Ely from 1833 to 1854. Wisconsin readers will be particularly interested in his accounts of his trips to La Pointe, where the church built on Madeleine Island during these years is still standing and where what was probably the first book produced wholly in Wisconsin—Fred-

Village of La Pointe, Madeleine Island.
Chequamegon Bay, 1898.
(Large building is old American Fur Company Trading Post)
erick Ayer's Ojibway Spelling Book—was completed in 1833. Some recently acquired letters of Florantha T. Sproat, the wife of another missionary teacher, were written from the same mission. By the time of her arrival in 1838 the problem of Christianizing the red men was complicated by the machinations of white traders, whose greed stirred up the Indian's resentment against the whole white race and hardened him against missionary efforts. She writes, however, that in spite of this, "The missionaries are most of them devoted to their work; hardships and trials have served only to make them the more persevering and determined in their labor of love." Among the fellow workers she mentions are Mr. and Mrs. Leonard H. Wheeler, whose letters supplement Mrs. Sproat's descriptions and carry the story of the Lake Superior missions into the establishment of the Odanah school and through the Civil War period.

In the lead mining region of southwestern Wisconsin a young Methodist preacher labored in the forties to sustain the Christian faith. Matthew Dinsdale had a double adjustment to make, for he had come to his first parish directly from England, and in a series of letters back to his relatives and friends there, he aptly describes life in the new American settlements. A collection of photostatic copies of letters from such well known early churchmen as the Reverends Stephen Peet, Aratus Kent, Jeremiah Porter, and many others, written to the American Home Missionary Society headquarters, are of incalculable aid in portraying not only the establishment of religious organizations in pioneer Wisconsin but for the many phases of frontier life that they incidentally reveal. Much of the correspondence of Cutting Marsh, who served as missionary of a Scottish society to the Stockbridge Indians, has been published but thirty-nine volumes of the diaries he kept have been little used. Another set of diaries, dating from 1843 to 1888, kept in the German script, by the Reverend John G. Mueller of the Evangelical Church, forms an all too rare record of foreign speaking congregations. The state is fortunate in possessing the papers of two of its prominent bishops—Jackson Kemper and Samuel Fallows of the Episcopal and Reformed Episcopal churches respectively. The scope and nature of their services suggest the wide range of material to be found in their papers.

These groups of manuscripts are some of the little known and little used sources of information on early Wisconsin. For the years when to most of the world this region was an almost uninhabited wilderness, when the few traders here found little worthy of record in their daily lives, when difficulties of transportation kept all but the most adventurous and hardy of travellers away, the records of these observing and cultured workers who came here to study the people and make a permanent home among them are of untold value.

Among the institutions transplanted into Wisconsin with its New England and Middle Atlantic settlers was the common school. Before the state was established records show that communities, on their own initiative, were cooperating to build school buildings and employ
teachers. Records of early school meetings, old district registers, teachers' certificates, teachers' contracts, contemporary letters, diaries, and reminiscences await the pleasure of him who would write the story of those early schools. But the district school was merely a beginning; by 1850 ambitious schemes for secondary and collegiate education were fast materializing. Minutes for 1838 of the "Board of Visitors of the Wisconsin University to be located at or near Madison" are among the John Catlin papers. The records for the Madison Female Academy are extant for the years 1846–52. At

the end of the year 1846 residents of Appleton were petitioning for a charter for a college. About the same time Increase A. Lapham and John H. Tweedy and others in Milwaukee were laying the foundations of the Milwaukee Seminary. The papers of George Gale of Trempealeau County show early references to Galesville University. Accounts of student life have been preserved in letters written home from some of these early colleges. There were none of the elaborations of Freshmen Week when Isaac N. Stewart arrived at the University of Wisconsin. "Mr. Sterling gave us a warm and gentlemanly reception and gave us a room to put our trunks in," he wrote. Young Charles Fairchild, too, sent letters to his sister depicting his college experiences on the hill. In the same collection are letters from his elder brothers while attending Carroll College. The Rasmus B. Anderson papers contain letters written during the years

Old Mission at Stockbridge Built in 1834.
when Albion Academy was educating youths who were to become leaders in the Northwest. E. H. Merrill and O. H. Ingram wrote letters from Ripon College in later years; Peter S. Loy from Lawrence. John Anderson sent back to La Crosse vivid descriptions of the gay life at Cornell in the eighties and received in turn replies from his friends concerning their experiences in various colleges. A search through other sets of correspondence would doubtlessly bring to light many other letters giving first-hand impressions of Wisconsin's pioneer institutions of learning.

Log Schoolhouse at Weston, 1897.

The story of Wisconsin's lumbering industry has never been adequately told. In recent years there have been produced a variety of reminiscences, recalling persons and episodes connected with life in the camps, on drives, or down the rivers. Collections of lumber and river songs are finding their way into print. Paul Bunyan has expanded from the subject of an evening's tale to a national hero. Except, however, for such pleasant and romantic aspects of the industry, and a few studies on special phases and periods, the subject is still unsurveyed. It is true that the industry offers inherent difficulties from its very magnitude and the absence of any records on some of its operations. On the other hand, in addition to printed material, there must still exist quantities of manuscript material that, if made available, would throw light on the personnel, wages, regions of work, amounts of cut, methods of logging, equipment,
machinery, progress of work, finances, marketing, and dozens of other aspects of the industry.

Immediately following the Indian cessions of 1837 logging and lumbering began in earnest in the region that was represented as "one immense pine forest." In the papers of Moses M. Strong of Mineral Point may be found much information on the lumbering industry on the turbulent Wisconsin River. Cyrus Woodman had lum-

Old Third Ward School, Racine.

ber holdings on the Wisconsin, Yellow, Black, Pere Marquette, Saginaw, and other Wisconsin and Michigan streams. His is the only group of manuscripts of any extent that have been preserved in this state dealing with lumbering on Lake Michigan. The diaries of John H. Knapp, the senior member of the Knapp, Stout and Company that for years dominated the lumber industry on the Red Cedar River have been made available for public use. These twenty-three small volumes give a most interesting picture of this captain of industry from his early entries describing his trips to inspect the mills in the pineries to the days when, a retired man of wealth, he had the leisure to enjoy the finer things that he had never lost sight of
through all the busy years. The greatest single collection is that of the Ingram, Kennedy Company of Eau Claire. An idea of the information contained in this correspondence may be gleaned from a single letter from one of the members of the firm to another, wherein are discussed finances, taxes, the scarcity of men owing to the Pike’s Peak gold rush, wages, milling machinery, boom improvements, amounts of logs cut, prices of provisions, and weather conditions with their probable effect on logging. This collection consists of about twenty thousand pieces of correspondence besides many volumes of letter books, time books, day books, scale books, inventories, and miscellaneous material.

The activities of a lumbering camp operated by Alfred K. Hamilton in what is now Langlade County can be reconstructed from an inventory kept for the season of 1878-79. On November 25 there are listed as being at the camp 11 sets of sleds, 6 ox yokes, 10 cant hooks, 5 swamp hooks, 22 logging chains, 1 anvil, 1 grindstone, besides bits, augurs, and other tools. “Household goods” consisted of 2 heating stoves, 46 plates, 20 bowls, 22 knives, 22 forks, 18 spoons, 2 lamps, 2 skimmers, 4 baking tins, 1 bread pan, and 1 wash basin. To these were to be added certain enumerated articles that had been used on the spring drive, presumably down the Wolf River, and were now stored in a barn near Oshkosh. A farmer had guarded the camp during the summer and had produced in the clearing around it a considerable crop of vegetables which are listed. On November 27 the foreman was started out to camp with a cook, three other men, and three horse teams loaded with groceries. Great quantities of beef, pork, and flour formed the nucleus of the supplies sent up, while such items as 122 pounds of tea (no coffee is listed), 2 barrels of syrup, 1 barrel of dried apples, 15 pounds of ginger and lesser quantities of other spices indicate that delicacies were not to be omitted from the winter menu. One hundred pounds of smoking tobacco was supplied with a view to the long winter evenings, and with equal foresight 40 pounds of candles were provided for lighting. The item “2 Box Kirks Bar Soap 60 lb. ea.” presaged a busy winter for the one wash basin in camp. Further entries from time to time during the winter show additional purchases, telling in most instances the price and source. Some brief but valuable memoranda at the end sketch the weather conditions that determined the winter’s work: by December 12 all the horse and ox teams and men had been sent off to camp; two days later enough snow fell to enable the crew to commence work, but a later dearth of snow necessitated the flooding of the road for an ice road; a snowfall on February 11 permitted a month’s logging with sleds, followed by two weeks’ logging on travois, and on March 28 the camp was disbanded. The horse teams reached Fond du Lac on April 1, and the ox teams three days later. These items cover only seven pages of a small memorandum book, yet what a surprising amount of information they furnish. Lumbering was at one time Wisconsin’s leading industry. The disappearance of the northern
Logging Scene, near Draper, Sawyer County.
pineries is being accompanied by the decadence of the woodsmen who were a part of them. The American lumberjack will soon become a legendary figure like the Canadian voyageur.

Diversions were scarce on the frontier. The crowded summer days left little zest for evening's entertainment, even if there were any amusements to look forward to. Small, poorly heated houses and candle or kerosene lights did not invite the reading of the few available pieces of literature. In the homes of the good Yankee settlers Sunday was a day of church-going but not of lighter pleasures. Yet for many a lonely farmer's wife it was practically the only opportunity offered of contact with the outside world. Diary after diary records the prosaic week-day life that was lighted up only by the Sunday sermon. A pioneer school teacher's journal shows her evident enjoyment in the variety afforded in "boarding round." As settlements grew more compact and roads were improved, occasional week-day meetings became possible and societies or clubs came into being. Whatever the title and avowed aim of these early organizations, their real basis was the need for human companionship. In Waukesha in 1839 over a hundred women signed the constitution of a "Female Reform Society" whose object was nothing less than "the prevention of licentiousness" by certain enumerated methods, principally that of educating the public to the "dangerous ways of the destroyer," "pointing out his numberless lures and acts." The club's records show that at first the monthly meetings were devoted to sewing, reading, conversation, and prayer, but as time advanced their activities were narrowed to the two last named. In 1858 the young men and women of Beaver Dam established a "Sons of Temperance" society. The title of the organization is self-explanatory but the minutes which have been preserved show a regrettable lack of concern on the subject of the liquor evil. The picturesque festivities—the turnvereins, saengerfests, and kirmisses—of the foreign groups that have made their home in Wisconsin, have often been described. With improvements in communication and increase of wealth and leisure came new opportunities for enjoyment. The "Industrial Art Association" held its first exhibition in Mineral Point in 1858, awarding a premium to a Wisconsin artist, John Wilson. A group of young men of Milwaukee early in 1848 organized a private library association with a membership of 121 and a fund of fifteen hundred dollars. The record book of this "Young Men's Association" for the next twenty years attests the high standards maintained by the group and suggests what a cultural influence it must have had for those who were privileged to membership. The guest book of a hospitable Madison family contains the signatures of Lew Wallace, William Dean Howells, Margaret Sangster, Matthew Arnold, James Whitcomb Riley, Lord and Lady Bryce, and many other names familiar in literary and diplomatic circles. In Wisconsin cities lectures, concerts, and the theater made the winter a season to be anticipated. These various types of activities are illustrative
of the possibilities for a story of the methods of entertainment used by Wisconsin people in the nineteenth century.

Transportation is another absorbing subject upon which much material exists. Certain aspects of it, such as the Mississippi steamboat era and the stagecoach days have been delightfully written up. A twenty-year accumulation of bills of lading for goods carried on by steamboat up to Prescott, Wisconsin is valuable for economic phases of the Mississippi traffic. The term "Military Road" is so familiar to residents of southern Wisconsin that they fail to realize that hundreds of miles of military roads were built at Federal expense in the state. The early plank roads have been the subject of much interest but no one has yet carefully mapped the routes of these early thoroughfares. Travellers' accounts are replete with comments on the highways and vehicles on which they were for safety's sake compelled to center their attention. C. C. Washburn's brother indulged in much sarcasm when in 1846 he was compelled to wait two days in Madison for a stage coach to Galena. He declared that it took longer to travel from Milwaukee to Galena than from Boston to Milwaukee. Two subjects that occupied much time and attention almost from the beginning of Wisconsin's territorial history were canals and railroads. Quantities of correspondence, estimates, and accounts have been preserved showing plans that, if completed, would have made the state a network of waterways. Fortunately railroad building began to make headway before these projects were far advanced. It is impossible to specify the available manuscript sources on Wisconsin railroads. The papers of every man of prominence contain more or less information on the speculation, the bitter rivalries, the financial schemes, and the political influence wielded by them as well as on the part they played in advancing the settlement of the state.

Morgan L. Martin has been characterized as "one of the most conspicuous and distinguished among that band of pioneer settlers who early gave a national reputation to Wisconsin." The story of the sixty years of his life in Green Bay is virtually a history of the state for that period. Indian chiefs, government agents, voyageurs, priests, army officers, judges, governors, legislators, congressmen, all fit into the pageant. Closely paralleling his career in time and service is that of James D. Doty, whose correspondence has been but lately acquired. Scarcely a person or event of prominence in early Wisconsin is not found mentioned in the papers of these two men. Letters from Lewis Cass, Henry Clay, John Quincy Adams, John Jacob Astor, Millard Fillmore, Daniel Webster, Nathaniel P. Tallmadge, and many others attest to the close commercial and political connections existing at that time between Wisconsin and the east. As member of the territorial council and of the state constitutional convention, delegate to Congress, and candidate for governor during the forties, John H. Tweedy of Milwaukee took an active part in public affairs during the lively struggle between Whigs and Democrats. In addition to matters of political and governmental concern
his correspondents wrote to him about the influx of American and foreign-born settlers, canals, railroads, land speculation, boundary disputes, local grievances, and dozens of other matters of concern in those busy years of the development of statehood. Scattering correspondence of Henry Dodge, George W. Jones, Thomas P. Burnett, and others gives only a partial picture of the bitter conflict of the lead mining southwest with the eastern part of the state. More valuable as a source of information for the views of the former are the papers of Cyrus Woodman and Moses M. Strong of Mineral Point. Internal economic and political struggles typical of the situation in the whole Middle West are reflected in the correspondence of such leaders as General Bragg, Senator Doolittle, and Governors Fairchild and Washburn. The papers of more recent political leaders—Rusk, Usher, Vilas, Keyes, Hustig, Haugen, and La Follette—have been preserved, although many of them have not been opened for public use. These collections are notable ones. A perusal of the papers mentioned in this paragraph would give one a fair representation of the political history of the state for the past hundred years. From the point of view of political parties they give intimate views of adherents and opponents of measures and throw light on the development of political tactics and the workings of political machinery. For the individual concerned they explain, as nothing else can, the motives and influences that account for his actions. Through his papers he justifies his conduct to posterity.

Numberless other fields of research are to be found here. No mention has been made of the great collections that illuminate Wisconsin’s military history. The centennial of the Black Hawk War has led to a renewed interest in the skirmishes and in the chief himself. The collection of personal papers of our Civil War soldiers is constantly growing. An enormous quantity of material on civilian activities during the World War, as well as collections of soldiers’ letters and diaries await a revival of interest in that event. The Wisconsin Historical Society has taken a leading part in the publication of fur trade papers, and yet there is much unused information on the Green Bay and Prairie du Chien agencies as well as on smaller posts. Visitors to museums are always fascinated at portrayals of pioneer dwellings and their inhabitants. If they would delve into old diaries and account books they would find equally interesting revelations of the equipment that was brought to wilderness homes, of the goods sold across the counters of country grocery stores, of articles of clothing, prices, menus, as well as lively comments and bits of gossip from which can be constructed a mosaic of frontier life. Recollections of early settlers and local histories have more than a local interest, for from them is formed the story of the greater unit. Systematic efforts have been made to collect letters of immigrant groups as bases for scientific studies of these migrations from Europe. This state has been particularly active in the gathering of German letters written both from relatives in the homeland and from newly arrived settlers. Welsh, Norwegian, Swedish, Eng-
Annuity Payment at La Pointe, 1852.
lish, and other nationalities are represented in the correspondence here, although much yet exists that should be preserved. Mention has been made of some of Wisconsin's statesmen. Men who have distinguished themselves in other fields are likewise represented in the manuscript collection. The Increase A. Lapham, Stephen M. Babcock, and Rasmus B. Anderson papers all contain sufficient material for biographies.

The Wisconsin manuscript collection is valuable because it is a collection of material on those who have built up the state. Traders, missionaries, lumbermen, agriculturists, statesmen, scientists, writers, professional men—everyone who has lived here has contributed in a measure to our history. While the work of any one individual may not seem noteworthy, yet he may be representative of his time and his position in life so his diaries or letters or whatever written records he left may speak for a whole group. For this reason a farmer's comments on an early farmers' institute may be most enlightening for the impressions on the innovation. Or a German immigrant's account of a local political gathering may record the views of his countrymen on a campaign. A diary may constitute the only source of information for the date of an occurrence such as the occupancy of a piece of land or the arrival of a group of settlers. Price lists kept by country grocers before the establishment of newspapers have been found valuable for economic history. Viewed from these angles, almost every document possesses historic value, although one is justly provoked at a diarist who for years carefully records in general terms the weather and his own physical reactions to it, or the time of sunrise and sunset, totally oblivious to affairs of importance. A writer is prone to confide to his diary or to his correspondent more than he would to the printed page, so manuscript material becomes useful for currents of opinion and often for plans and designs not to be found elsewhere. Manuscript material consequently is valuable for information on beginnings, on developments, influence of leaders, episodes, views of opposing factions, and studies of personalities.

In these pages has been sketched some of the typical manuscript material in the historical library. Great quantities of valuable manuscripts still remain in private hands, neglected and perhaps forgotten. The failure to appreciate the worth of local material is responsible for much destruction. More common, perhaps, is the tendency to delay the matter of its disposal. It is hoped that these suggestions of the types of material and the uses made of them, and the examples of donors who, by presenting to the state their families' papers, have thus perpetuated more effectually than by monuments the records of their deeds, will encourage others to do likewise. The Historical Society invites the preservation of such memorials of Wisconsin's industrial, social, political, and intellectual life.
Old Mission Church, Madeleine Island.