

P R E F A C E .

WHEN we look upon the broad expanse of a mighty River, after contemplating its width and depth and the velocity of its current, which pours its world of waters into the bosom of the great deep, the mind naturally floats up the majestic stream in search of the great fountain whence it flows.

When we traverse an ancient empire and behold its walls, its pyramids and other products of almost infinite labor away back in the darkness of unrecorded time, the mind wanders up the current of past ages, until inquiry burdens the imagination with countless questions: demanding when, by whom, and for what purpose these prodigies of human skill and industry were performed. We carefully trace the broad river through all its windings, from its influx to the ocean to its farthest mountain stream and remotest headspring, and instead of a mighty kingdom of overflowing waters, disgoring a perpetual flood, we find, far up some ragged mountain, a cleft rock, weeping a pearly stream, no bigger than an ox might drink; and deep in some tangled dell a spring boils up, whose modest stream, half hid by moss or leaves, struggles for the association of its affinities, till it meets its mountain sister. United they rush on with redoubled energy to meet in kind embrace ten thousand thousand sister streams, which, from as many sources, find their devious ways to meet and form this mighty river.

If the history of a nation could be as accurately traced through the course of time, as the channels of a river, we should find their head spring and fountain source in some secluded dell in a vast wilderness, where a few solitary individuals, like the far off mountain spring, unknown to the great

world, were silently cutting a channel for a population to flood the country. The pioneers, or headsprings of civilization, more transitory and evanescent than the gurgling brook or silent rill, in almost every nation have passed away unnoticed and unknown; with no historic stone to mark the scene of an embryo world for actual life, or tell the names of those who felt its travail throes.

To erect some humble, but enduring monument at the birth-place of civilization in the County of Winnebago; to notice its progress, some of its obstructions and conquests, in its early struggles to become part of the broad flowing stream of humanity in Wisconsin; and to place in the annals of history the names of some of the heroic pioneers through whose energies the recent hunting grounds have been reduced to fruitful furrow-fields, the wigwam exchanged for elegant dwellings, marts of trade, seminaries of learning and houses of worship, is the prime object of the following pages; while, as a secondary consideration, we would spread a truthful picture of the natural advantages, unrivalled prosperity and hopeful prospects of this section of the Great West; that those of less favored regions, who are seeking the advantages of a new field of enterprize, may have something better than vague and uncertain report to direct them in their search for a new home. And while the design of this work is to give in a truthful manner, a description of the County of Winnebago, it seems but just, to give a brief sketch of the great State of which Winnebago County is a small, but integral part.

The immense resources of the Great West, the genial nature of its climate, the variety and fertility of its soil, its admirable facilities for commerce and its rapid progress in improvements, population and wealth, have long been a subject of deep interest to the older States and to European countries.

For several of the preceding years, the troubled state of Europe, and shortened crops in the Eastern States, have made the West more conspicuous, as the granary of the

world, than ever before, and placed Wisconsin in the front rank of the first column of the bread-supplying States. A deep interest has been awakened in the mind of the agriculturist, the mechanic, the speculator, the scholar, the statesman, the patriot and the philanthropist. Active enquiry and investigation demand reliable information upon a subject of so vast importance as the sources of wealth in Wisconsin. Multitudes are visiting, and will continue to visit the State to select for themselves a location, congenial to their taste, and favorable to the interests of their several vocations. To aid the traveler in the pursuit of his object, we have given a brief sketch descriptive of each county, showing where government land, timber, or minerals may be found; the present and prospective condition of the various sections; and such other information as we deemed valuable to the stranger who wishes an accurate statement of the present condition of Wisconsin in a condensed form. If the work shall prove an actual benefit to our country and our race, we shall rejoice that we have performed the labor.

MEMORANDUM

TO : [Illegible]

FROM : [Illegible]

SUBJECT : [Illegible]

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