REMINISCENCES OF THE EARLY DAYS OF MINNESOTA.

BY HON. H. H. SIBLEY.

In reviewing the "early times of Minnesota," I labor under no slight embarrassment, from the fact that I have been a somewhat prominent actor in the affairs of the Territory and State since their organization respectively, so that it is simply impossible for me to avoid thrusting myself forward more frequently than good taste would dictate. I shall abstain from more than a passing allusion to political affairs, for the sufficient reason, that I could not relate my version of them without affording good ground of offense to some who regard them from a different stand point. I shall omit for the same reason, the details of the horrible Indian outbreak of 1862, which culminated in the slaughter of nearly a thousand of our citizens, together with the military measures for its suppression under my immediate command, which resulted in freeing our State from the presence of the Sioux or Dakota and Winnebago tribes of savages. These topics will be treated more fairly, and with less of prejudice and passion when the chief actors shall have passed away and the events judged by the light of impartial history.

Having thus voluntarily circumscribed my field of narrative, it has occurred to me that a portion of this essay may with propriety be devoted to a description of the location and habits of life of the Dakota bands who were the possessors of this country in 1834 and subsequent thereto, and to some details of my hunting adventures in company with them, which, I trust will not prove wholly uninteresting. You will perceive that I have paid little or no attention to the chronological

order of incidents, not deeming it important to be precise in that particular.

The region embraced within the limits of the present State of Minnesota was first explored by Indian traders, Jesuit Fathers and French military officers, in the order in which they are placed. The enterprise, love of adventure, and hope of gain, of the first class, and the pious zeal and devotion of priests of the Catholic church, animated them respectively to extend their researches and explorations through all the principal avenues of communication in the Northwest, long before the great wave of immigration, which has within comparatively a brief period covered the land, had overtopped the Alleghany mountains.

At the time that the English and French were waging bitter war with each other for the supremacy on the frontiers of eastern Canada, men of both nations were wending their way, through perils of every conceivable description, up the great lakes and rivers which opened to them a passage to the boundless woods and prairies of the great West. We are apt to pride ourselves that the stock to which we belong produces keener and more daring explorers than can be found elsewhere, but to those who have made themselves familiar with the adventures of the men of another race, who, in the 17th and the early part of the 18th centuries, voluntarily encountered the dangers incident to voyages of thousands of miles through unknown inland seas and water courses, bordered by tribes of cruel and blood-thirsty savages, the boast will not pass current as a fixed and indisputable fact.

In what particular year the two first white men of whom we have any account crossed from the head of Lake Superior to the waters of the Upper Mississippi, cannot be stated with precision, but it was probably in 1659, more than two hundred years ago. They were Frenchmen. Other travelers succeeded them, at longer or shorter intervals, until, at length, the trade with Indians was established throughout the Northwest, and the banner of the Prince of Peace was unfurled among the wild beings who hitherto had gloried alone in their prowess in war, and in the chase.

THE PIONEERS OF MINNESOTA.

It is not my intention to recapitulate what has been written of the adventures of the discoverers of this region, or of their immediate followers. The annals of the Historical Society of this State contain what could be gathered of their history. I shall confine myself chiefly to events which have occurred since my advent to this country, thirty-nine (39) years ago. Most of those who were prominent at that time, and even subsequently, have disappeared from this earth. And here allow me to say, that the pioneers of Minnesota as a class, were far superior in morality, education and intelligence to the pioneers of most of the other Territories, and they have left a favorable impress upon the character of the State. They were by no means free from the vices and frailties of poor humanity, but on the other hand, they were, for the most part, distinguished for charity to the poor and friendless, hospitable even to a fault, and enthusiastically devoted to the interests and the prosperity of our beautiful Minnesota. Although, generally speaking, men of limited school education, there were exceptions to this rule, individuals being found among them of respectable literary attainments. And they were for the most part religiously inclined. Men who like Cooper's Leatherstocking are brought face to face with Nature in her deepest solitudes, are led naturally to the worship of that Great Being whose hand alone could have created the vast expanse of wood and prairie, mountain, lake and river which spread themselves daily in endless extent and variety before their eyes. They were not particularly given to respect law, especially when it favored speculators at the expense of the settler. At the land sales at the Falls of the St. Croix, in 1848, when the site of the present city of St. Paul and the tracts adjacent thereto on the east side of the Mississippi were exposed to public sale, I was selected by the actual settlers to bid off portions of the land for them, and when the hour for business had arrived, my seat was invariably surrounded by a number of men with huge bludgeons What was meant by the proceeding I could of course only surmise, but I would not have envied the fate of the individual who would have ventured to bid against me.

ARRIVAL IN MINNESOTA.

I arrived at the mouth of the Minnesota River on the 7th of November, 1834. The trip from Prairie du Chien was performed on horseback in company with ALEXIS BAILLY since deceased, and two hired Canadians. There was but one house between the two points named, a distance of nearly 300 miles. The building was a log hut about three miles below Lake Pepin, which long since fell in ruins. The occupant was a respectable Indian trader named ROCQUE.

Our journey was without incident worthy of note, except that we were nearly drowned a few miles above Prairie du Chien, in crossing the Mississippi river in a wooden canoe, which was capsized by the antics of a wild horse belonging to one of the party, swimming by the side of the clumsy and over laden transport. A Winnebago Indian engaged to guide us, as there were no roads on the west of the river in those days, but he abandoned us in the night after leading the party more than fifty miles too far westward, leaving us to find our way as best we could. When I first caught a glimpse of Fort Snelling, and descended the hills to Mendota, then called St. Peters, I little anticipated that the hamlet was to be my abiding place for 28 years.[1] There were a few log houses at St. Peters, occupied by persons employed in the fur trade, and the post itself was the depot of the fur trade for a vast region.

THE FUR TRADE.

The district over which I had the control, as a partner with the American Fur Company of New York, extended from Lake Pepin to the Little Falls on the Mississippi and north and west to Pembina, all of the Minnesota valley and to the heads of the streams which are tributary to the Missouri river. There was a large number of trading stations within these extensive limits, which required the employment of many traders, clerks, and voyageurs. The latter were composed entirely of French Canadians, who were regularly engaged or enlisted, for three years, in Montreal, at a stated price per annum, in livres, the old French currency.

1 GEN. SIBLEY became a resident of St. Paul in 1862.

There being no law, discipline had to be enforced among these men with the strong hand, although, as a general rule, they were obedient and trust-worthy. Until the voyageurs had completed their first term of three years, they were called Mangeurs du lard or pork eaters, a term equivalent to greenhorns, and they had to pass through a severe probation, for they were made the subjects of innumerable practical jokes by the hivernants or winterers,who, having served their apprenticeship assumed to rank very much higher than the pork eaters.

The rations issued to the common men at that early period, consisted of two ounces of beef or buffalo tallow, and a quart of hulled corn per day, with two or three loads of ammunition, which was entrusted to the most successful hunter among them, to be expended in securing game for their joint benefit.

The labors of these voyageurs, especially during the winter season, were excessively severe, as they were compelled to carry packages of fifty or a hundred pounds weight, frequently for days together, in visiting distant Indian camps, and to return laden with buffalo robes and the skins of other animals. Sometimes it occurred that they were overtaken by the snow, and were fain to take shelter under a drift, there to remain until the storm subsided. And yet under all such circumstances of toil and exposure, these men were ordinarily cheerful and unmurmuring, and withal, faithful to their trust.

The detachments of the voyageurs or engages came from Montreal in bark canoes, by way of the lakes to La Pointe on Lake Superior, and up the Brule River, from which the canoes and baggage were carried across to the waters of the St. Croix, and thence the canoes descended to the Mississippi. They were placed in charge of clerks, who also were hired for three years. There were some posts on the Minnesota River, the traders in charge at which had a reputation for sternness and severity towards their men, which had extended even as far as Lake Superior, so that the voyageurs on their way to this region were always cautioned by their countrymen employed at La Pointe to avoid, if possible, being placed under their control. This fact was also so well known at Mendota, that, on the arrival of the detachment, the clerk in charge would be directed to point out the most intractable and disobedient of the men,

and these were forthwith dispatched to the dreaded points, there to undergo a course of discipline for their bad conduct, that was the reverse of pleasant. It happened occasionally that they attempted to desert, but they were invariably overtaken by some of the traders or clerks, or by the Indians, and conducted back to the post, where they were made to do additional penance for the trouble they had given in their apprehension.

A few of the more important trading posts were enclosed by a high picket fence of the nature of a stockade, which was loop-holed for musketry. Of such were the stations at Lake Travers, and at Lac qui Parle. As a general rule, the Indians were respectful and friendly, but sometimes, when a hunter had failed to pay for the goods given him on credit the previous year, and had made a dishonest disposition of the proceeds of his hunt, he would be refused further advances, which was a serious matter for him, and not only gave offense to the individual himself, but to his relatives. The ill-feeling thus engendered would occasionally find vent in actual violence, as was the case when my old and lamented friend Joseph R. Brown was shot in the shoulder and severely wounded by a Sisseton Dakota Indian at Lake Travers.

The greatest punishment which could be inflicted upon a band of Indians for evil deportment of any kind, was the stoppage of their credits of ammunition and clothing, as they were more or less dependent upon these supplies, for the subsistence of themselves and their families. This was less the case with the upper bands, who lived principally upon the buffalo, for they could furnish themselves with food as well as necessary clothing, by means of their bows and arrows, which the lower bands could not do.

THE EARLY TRADERS.

When I made my first visit of inspection to the principal posts in 1835, Joseph R. Brown was in charge at Lac Travers near the head of the Minnesota river, Joseph Renville, at Lac qui Parle, Louis Provencalle, at Traverse des Sioux, and Jean B. Faribault at Little Rapids. Joseph Laframboise was stationed on the Coteau de Prairie at the Lake of the Two

Woods, and Alexander Faribault on the Cannon river. There were other prominent traders among whom may be named Alexis Bailly, N. W. Kittson, James Wells, Hazen Mooers, Philander Prescott and Francois Labathe. Martin McLeod, Franklin Steele and Wm. H. Forbes came into the country in 1837, and H. M. Rice in 1839 or 1840. The latter was at the head of an extensive trade with the Winnebagoes and Chippewas. Of the traders among the last mentioned tribe, with whom I was personally acquainted, were Wm. Aitkin, Allan Morrison, Clement Beaulieu and Donald McDonald. Messrs. Borup and Oakes removed to St. Paul in 1849, from Lake Superior, where they had been for many years at the head of the trade with the Chippewas of that region. This long list has been sadly curtailed by the great reaper, for there survive, of all these individuals, only Alex. Faribault, N. W. Kittson, Franklin Steele, Wm. H. Forbes, H. M. Rice, Clement Beaulieu, D. McDonald and Chas. H. Oakes. Labathe and Prescott were killed by the Indians on the first day of the outbreak in 1862, and James Wells met a similar fate in the following year, while hunting on the Coteau de Prairie.

Joseph Laframboise who died several years since, was a capital mimic, spoke with fluency four or five different languages and he was withal an inveterate practical joker. He and Alex. Faribault were wont to amuse themselves at the expense of Labathe, who was simple-minded, honest sort of a man, and by no means a match for his tormentors.

A standing jest at his cost, was his experience at a tea party at Fort Snelling. The trio mentioned was invited by Capt. G. of the army to take tea and spend the evening at his quarters, and the invitation was accepted. It was in the month of July, and the weather intensely warm. The party in due time were seated around the table, and the cups and saucers were of the generous proportions ignored in these modern and more fashionable days. It should be premised that Indian etiquette demands on all festive occasions, that the visitor shall leave nothing unconsumed of the meat or drink placed before him. The large cup filled with tea was handed to Labathe and the contents disposed of. The poor fellow at that time could speak nothing more of English than the imperfect sentence

"Tank you." When his cup was empty, Mrs. G., who was at the head of the table, said in her suave and gentle manner, "Mr. LABATHE, please take some more tea." LABATHE responded, "Tank you, madam," which being interpreted by the waiter to mean an assent, he took the cup and handed it to the hostess, and Mr. LABATHE was forthwith freshly supplied with the hot liquid. LABATHE managed to swallow it, sweltering meanwhile with the fervent heat of the evening, and again he was requested to permit his cup to be replenished. "Tank you, madam," was the only reply the victim could give. Seven great vessels full of the boiling tea were thus successively poured down his throat, LAFRAMBOISE and FARIBAULT meantime almost choking with suppressed laughter. For the eighth time the waiter approached to seize the cup, when the aboriginal politeness which had enabled LABATHE to bear up amid his sufferings gave way entirely, and rising from his seat to the amazement of the company, he exclaimed frantically, "LAFRAMBOISE, *pour l'amoir de bon Dieu, pour quoi ne dites vous pas a madame, qui je ne'n veut point davantage.*" ("LAFRAMBOISE, for the love of God, why do you not tell madame that I do not wish for any more tea?") LABATHE never heard the last of that scene while he lived.

The old man ROCQUE, mentioned as residing near Lake Pepin, afforded another instance of the inconvenience of not being able to speak English. He knew one compound word only, and that was roast beef, which he called "Ros-bif." He accompanied a Dakota delegation to Washington City on one occasion, and when asked at the public houses what he would be helped to, he could only say *Ros-bif!* So that the unhappy old gentleman, although longing for a chance at the many good things he would have preferred, performed the round trip on "Ros-bif."

Having referred to Indian etiquette, I may as well narrate what was told of the performances of the Winnebagoes, of all Indians the most impudent. Twenty or thirty of them on their way to Washington before the era of railways, under the direction of their agent and interpreter, discovered, or suspected a conspiracy between the landlords along the route and the stage drivers, by which their rations were materially curtailed, inas-

much, as before they had half finished their meals, the horn would be blown as a signal for their immediate departure. Becoming disgusted at such proceedings, after two or three untimely interruptions of that sort, they made it a rule, when they were repeated, to empty all the dishes on the table into their dirty blankets, then resume their seats in the stages and discuss matters at their leisure. Fish, flesh, vegetables, sugar and everything else they could lay hands on, shared a common fate, in spite of the remonstrances of the angry Bonifaces, the Indians coolly claiming that what had been placed before them had been paid for, and therefore belonged to them.

THE DAKOTAS AND THEIR PRINCIPAL CHIEFS.

The division of the Dakotas or Sioux, known as the M'day-wakantons or People of the Lakes, consisted in 1834 of seven distinct bands, whose summer residence was in villages, the lodges being built of elm bark laid upon a frame work of poles. These villages were situated at Wabasha prairie near the spot where the flourishing city of Winona now stands, at Red Wing and Kaposia on the Mississippi, three of the bands on the lower Minnesota river below Shakopee, and the Lake Calhoun band on the lake of that name. These bands could bring into the field about 600 grown warriors. The Wakpakootas or People of the Shot Leaf were in villages on the Cannon river, or rather on a lake through which it runs, a short distance from the present town of Faribault, and at a few other points. They numbered about 150 warriors. The lower Wakpatons or People of the Leaf, were located at the Little Rapids, Sand Prairie and on the banks of the Minnesota not far from Belle Plaine. The lower Sissetons occupied the region around Traverse des Sioux, Swan Lake and the Cottonwood extending to the Coteau de Prairie. The Upper Wak-paton villages were on the shores of Lac qui Parle, and those of the Upper Sisseton on Big Stone Lake and Lac Travers. All of these bands except the Upper Sissetons, were implicated in the massacres of 1862, and strange as it may appear, the very bands that opposed the movement, and denounced it from the beginning, and afterwards proved their sincerity by engaging as U. S. scouts for the defence of the frontier against the raids of their hostile kindred, have

been treated with greater inhumanity and neglect by the government, than fell to the lot of the guilty. After long and persistent efforts in their behalf by citizens cognizant of the facts, the authorities in Washington have at length made a scanty provision for them.

The bands which have been enumerated, were all known and are still called by the Missouri River Dakotas, Isantis. They all raised corn to a considerable extent, and when the war of 1862 commenced, many of them owned large, well-fenced, well-cultivated fields, and comfortable houses. The authority of the chiefs in the olden time was very great, but from the date of the first treaties negotiated with the government it began to decline, until finally the chief was merely considered to be the mouthpiece of the soldiers' lodge, the members of which constituted the only real power in the bands.

Old WABASHA, long since dead, was the leading hereditary chief of the People of the Lakes, and in all inter-tribal affairs of importance his word was law, not only with his own particular band, but with all those belonging to the same division.

LITTLE CROW, Senior, chief of the band at Kaposia, was also highly respected among his people. He was very anxious that they should be taught to rely for subsistence upon the products of the soil, rather than upon the precarious fruits of the chase, and he set them a good example by working industriously in his own field. He was accidentally wounded in drawing his loaded gun from a wagon at his village, and he caused me to be notified a few hours afterwards. I forthwith applied to Dr. TURNER, post physician at Fort Snelling, to accompany me to see the wounded chief, and he consented. ALEX. FARIBAULT went with us as interpreter. Upon arriving at the village, we found LITTLE CROW recumbent in his lodge, and the doctor having examined the wound, pronounced it not only a dangerous but probably a fatal one. When the opinion was announced to the old chief, he smiled and said the doctor was right, for he would be a dead man before the close of the following day. He then directed the lodge to be cleared of all but ourselves, and sent for his son "TO-WAI-O-TA-DOO-TAH," the LITTLE CROW who led the savages in the murderous outbreak of 1862. When he entered, the father told him to seat himself, and listen atten-

tively to his words. Addressing him, he told his son frankly that it had not been his intention to make him chief; that, although he was his eldest born, he had very little good sense, and moreover was addicted to drinking and other vicious habits; "but," said he, "my second son, on whom I intended to bestow the chieftainship at my death, has been killed in battle with the Chippewas, and I can now do no better than to name you as my successor." He proceeded to give him counsel as to his future course in the responsible position he was about to assume as the leader of the band, which would have reflected no discredit upon a civilized man similarly situated, except that he did not suggest a change of religious faith to that of the whites. On that topic he remained silent. After referring to the differences existing between the two races, he told his son that the Dakotas must accommodate themselves to the new state of things, which was coming upon them. The whites wanted their land and it was useless to contend against their superior forces. The Dakotas could only hope to be saved from the fate of other tribes, by making themselves useful to the whites, by honest labor, and frank and friendly dealing in their intercourse with them. "Teach your people to be honest and laborious," continued he, "and adopt such of the habits of the whites as will be suited to their change of circumstances, and above all, be industrious and sober and make yourself beloved and respected by the white people. Now my son, I have finished all I had to say to you. Depart to your own lodge, remembering my final admonitions, for to-morrow I shall die." The entire address was so solemn and impressive that we all listened with the deepest interest. The old chief then told us he hoped we would befriend his son and his band, and when we rose to depart, he shook us by the hand, expressed his gratitude for our visit and bade us farewell. He died the next day.

The old chief evinced, on one occasion, some of the chivalry of the olden time, although in a manner somewhat revolting to the tastes of civilized men. Two of his favorite sons joined a war-party, which proceeded up the St. Croix River in search of Chippewas, and in a skirmish near the Falls, both of

them were killed, but the bodies remained un-mutilated, the Chippewas having been driven off with the loss of one man killed and another wounded. The father of the young men, who had remained in the village, was speedily notified of the occurrence, whereupon he gathered all the wampum and silver work belonging to the members of his family, and taking his double-barrel gun, which he highly valued, he made a forced march, with others of his band, to the spot where the action took place. The bodies remained where they had fallen. Under his direction, the blood was washed from the features and replaced by war paint, new clothing put upon the bodies, the hair was combed, plaited and strung with small silver brooches, silver bands enclosed their arms and wrists, and a large quantity of expensive wampum was hung about the necks. When these details had been attended to, the corpses were arranged in a sitting posture secured to the trunks of trees, and the old chief deposited his double-barrel gun by their side, took a parting look at his dead children, shook them by the hand and returned to his village. Some of the Chippewas in two or three days afterwards, came back and appropriated the scalps and the valuables, and left the bodies uncared for. Having heard of these singular proceedings of the old chief I asked an explanation of Little Crow when next I saw him and he did not hesitate to give it. He said he had opposed the formation of the war party, but the young men were so bent upon avenging the death of some of their friends, who had been killed by the Chippewas, that he finally withdrew his objection. "My two sons," continued he, "joined the party, and were killed. While I grieve deeply at their loss, they fell like brave men in battle, and the enemy was entitled to their scalps. I wished the Chippewas to know by the treasures lavished upon the bodies, that they had slain the sons of a chief." Some weeks subsequently, he returned in person, collected the bones, and had them properly interred near the village.

Little Crow, Junior, soon forgot the parting injunctions of his father. He was a drunkard, a confirmed liar, and was possessed of very few redeeming qualities. Yet he was a man of great energy and determination. He was the leading spirit

of the pagan Indians, bitterly opposing all changes of dress and habits of life. He was no friend to missionary operations, but clung to the superstitious observances of his fathers. The latter part of his life is known to most of you. He encouraged the Indians in the prosecution of their bloody work in 1862, was the acknowledged head of the war party, and finally, in 1863, while engaged with a small band in a raid upon our frontiers, he was shot dead by a Mr. LAMSON, his son who was with him only escaping to fall into the hands of a detachment of the troops under my command near Devil's Lake, a few weeks later. It is my conviction that no outbreak would have happened, had either WABASHA or LITTLE CROW, Senior, been living at the time.

HUNTING INCIDENTS OF EARLY DAYS.

In the autumn of 1840, the men of the nearest Dakota villages were desirous of going to hunt far to the southward, in a district of country 40 miles wide and more than 150 miles long, extending nearly to the Mississippi and southwest to the Des Moines River. This was called the Neutral Ground, from the fact that it had been purchased by the government from the tribes of Dakotas and Sacs and Foxes for the purpose of arresting hostilities between them by interposing a district which it was understood was not to be ordinarily occupied by the contending parties. The Dakotas were, however, unwilling to visit that dangerous region unless accompanied by a few white men, whose presence in their camp might be some protection against an attack by the Sacs and Foxes.

I agreed to accompany them, with ALEX. FARIBAULT, WM. H. FORBES, and a couple of the Canadian voyageurs in my employ. A camp was soon formed of about 70 lodges, or rather more than 100 men with their families. We provided ourselves with a large buffalo skin lodge for our own use, which was new and as white as snow. Gen. JOHN C. FREMONT, then a simple Lieutenant in the U. S. Topographical Engineers, was a visitor at my house in Mendota about that time, he having lately come across from Fort Pierre, on the Missouri, with I. N. NICOLLET, so well known as one of the leading scientific explorers of this region.

FREMONT desired to be of our party, and it was arranged that NICOLLET should continue his course down the Mississippi, while FREMONT, after having remained in our company as long as he felt inclined to do so, should be safely conducted to Prairie du Chien. JACK FRAZER, of whom some of our citizens have read, a mixed blood Dakota, was to be of our party also. The two Canadians drove horse carts laden with articles requisite to make us comfortable. Thus provided, and all of us well armed, we set out on our journey.

The view presented by so large a party of Indians on the march was rather imposing. Each of the families was possessed of one or more ponies, and these animals were attached to poles, one end of which was fixed on each side of the Indian saddle, like the shafts of an ordinary vehicle, while the other ends trailed upon the ground; there being a sort of basket made of interlaced leather thongs attached to the poles, upon which were placed the skin lodge, and others of the heavier articles, with a young child or two on the top of the load. The horses were led by the women, the elderly men taking the lead, while the other members of the families old enough to walk, assumed their appropriate places in the procession. One family followed another in single files so that the line was extended to a great length. When they arrived at the banks at a stream required to be crossed, the women were expected to carry over the baggage on their shoulders. These streams are generally rapid but seldom more than waist deep, except in seasons of high water. It was a favorite amusement for certain "lewd fellows of the baser sort" who indeed comprised most of the young men, to station themselves along the banks when a crossing was in progress, and make impertinent allusions to the ancles of the softer sex, which were somewhat exposed, the current acting upon their garments in the same manner as a strong wind upon the crinoline of our fashionable ladies. The mothers and other female relatives of the young girls, excessively enraged at such freedom of observation, made it a point to drive off the intruders, by a heavy discharge of sticks and stones. The camping spot was designated by the soldiers, and upon the arrival at the ground of the families, the ponies were unloaded and turned out to graze, poles cut, and the

lodges raised in an incredibly short time by the women, the men meantime, or such of them as were not engaged in hunting, quietly smoking their pipes. The man's business is to furnish the tenants of the lodge with food and clothing, and the females must do all the rest. In fact, a woman would feel ashamed to see her husband performing any of the labor or drudgery about a camp.[1]

A few days after our departure FREMONT, FARIBAULT, FRAZER and myself left FORBES and the Canadians to continue the march with the Indians, and struck off to the west of the route, hoping to fall in with buffalo. We were on horseback, and having reason to believe that game would be found in abundance, we took nothing in the shape of provisions with us, except a few pounds of wild rice. We promised to rejoin the main body in ten or twelve days. I shall not dwell upon the details of our trip. We found that game was exceedingly scarce, and although FARIBAULT and myself each killed a huge male elk, we took but the tongues and a small portion of the meat, expecting to be able to kill animals for daily consumption, but we were sadly disappointed. We hunted industriously the next day, but saw nothing, and for three entire days we had nothing to eat but wild rice boiled, without salt or other condiment. Now wild rice is a good addendum to substantial fare, but as the only food for a hungry man, it barely serves to keep the wheels in motion. On the morning of the fourth day, JACK FRAZER came across a venerable old stag, lying in the long grass by a rivulet, probably too infirm and advanced in age to make an effort to escape, and shot him. There was little but skin and bone, nevertheless, what with the marrow bones and the small quantum of flesh upon the carcase, it was a decided

1 NOTE.—I give Indian life as it really is, not as represented by the poet Longfellow in the following passage—Hiawatha p. 399, Edinburg Ed.:

"Over wild and rushing rivers,
In his arms he bore the maiden;
Light he thought her as a feather,
As the plume upon his head-gear;
Cleared the tangled pathway for her,
Bent aside the swaying branches,
Made at night a lodge of branches
And a bed with boughs of hemlock,
And a fire before the doorway
With the dry cones of the pine tree."

improvement upon the wild rice. The prairie was set on fire by some miserable savage, and we were awakened after midnight by the roaring of the flames, and it was not without much exertion that we saved ourselves and our animals from destruction. In fact, a led horse belonging to FRAZER had strayed from the camp and was burned to death. This pursuit of pleasure under difficulties became somewhat tedious, and we turned our horses' heads in the direction of the line of march of the Indians, and rejoined them the next day. We continued with them hunting daily, until we reached the Upper Red Cedar River, a branch of the Lower Iowa, which brought us to the northern border of the neutral ground. At this point, FREMONT, disgusted with the toils and exposures of that mode of life, of which at a later period he was destined to experience a full share, proposed to depart for Prairie du Chien, a distance of more than 150 miles. I agreed to accompany him, taking with me JACK FRAZER and the two Canadians with their horse carts. I promised FARIBAULT and FORBES, who were left behind with the Indians, that I would rejoin them if possible within twenty days.

Our journey was by no means an agreeable one. The streams, which are numerous in that region were high, and for the most part skimmed with ice, which made the process of swimming them uncomfortable in the extreme.

After some adventures, among which may be mentioned a narrow escape from a visitation by a large war party of Sacs and Foxes—we arrived safely at Prairie du Chien, where FREMONT and FRAZER and myself parted company. I returned with my two Canadians driving their horse carts, and accompanied by an old hunter named REED, who proved to be a right good fellow, as well as a capital shot. When I reached the Indian camp on the Red Cedar, I was met with cordiality by my friends FORBES and FARIBAULT, as well as by the Indians. As I had been absent 28 days, they were all apprehensive that I and my companions had fallen victims to the Sacs and Foxes, whose trail had been discovered by the Dakotas, or been drowned in crossing the swollen streams. We left the Indians to themselves after the lapse of two or three days, and returned to our homes at Mendota, having been absent 70 days.

About noon of the first day's march the sun shone with such fervor that the snow disappeared from the burnt prairie with marvelous celerity, and we had to abandon our sleds in turn, and pack what we could upon the backs of our horses, we leading them by the lariats. As we had considerably more than two hundred miles to perform on foot over the frozen and rugged surface, the prospect was not remarkably bright. Still we got along very well. We fell in with two herds of elk on the route, numbering at least five hundred in each, but we only killed a few of them, as I always made it a rule to abstain from useless slaughter. We arrived at Mendota in due time, having been absent seventy days, and were warmly welcomed by our friends in the village and at Fort Snelling, all of whom had been anxious on our account, there having been rumors afloat that we had been cut off by the savages.

The following year (1841) we made another expedition to the same region on a much larger scale, but I do not propose to weary you with a detailed recital of all the incidents that occurred, for I was absent from the first of October until the first of March succeeding, a period of five months. It may be interesting, however, to describe the mode of inaugurating a movement of this kind, and of making soldiers among the Indians. This, with a few brief details connected with the excursion, will close the narrative of hunting adventures in which I was a participant, although I could extend it to an indefinite length, so much time was I accustomed to spend every year in such sports.

As usual, a feast was announced to be given at Mendota on a day designated, to which I was called upon to contribute two fat oxen and a large quantity of corn. Invitations were extended to the men of the several villages, and there appeared to partake of the good things, at least one thousand men, women and children, the two latter not having been included in the bill. After the gorging process had gone through with, and the pipe smoked, several hundred small sticks painted red were produced, and were offered for the acceptance of each grown warrior, the object of the assemblage having previously been made known by one of the principal men present. It was understood that whoever voluntarily received one of these

sticks was solemnly bound to be of the hunting party, under the penalty of punishment by the soldiers. About one hundred and fifty men accepted, and thereupon were declared duly enrolled. These men then detached themselves from the main body, and after consultation, selected ten of the bravest and most influential of the young warriors to act as soldiers, having absolute control of the movements, and authorized to punish any infraction of the rules promulgated for the government of the camp. It was then announced by the soldiers that in six days thereafter the buffalo skin lodges should be pitched on a spot in the rear of Mendota, and there must be no default in appearing on the part of any one. The interval was employed in preparations. At the appointed time, all were present but one family, the head of which declined to proceed. As soon as this was made known, five of the soldiers went to the delinquent's village, 12 miles distant, and reappeared in a few hours with the man's lodge and its appendages, packed on the backs of his horses, himself and family following with downcast looks. The poor victim seemed to be utterly amazed at this summary proceeding, and the soldiers kindly let him off without further infliction, but warned him that a second attempt to evade his obligation would be visited with exemplary punishment. He gave them no more trouble, but quietly assumed his place in the ranks.

We allowed the Indians to precede us three or four days, and overtook them on the Cannon river, when alike with the Indians, we became subject to the control of the soldiers. At the close of each day, the limits of the following day's hunt would be announced by the soldiers, designated by a stream, a grove or other natural object. This limit of each days hunt was ordinarily about ten miles ahead of the proposed camping place, and the soldiers early each morning went forward and stationed themselves along the line, to detect and punish any one who attempted to pass it. The reason for the adoption of such a rule was that in a large camp, the young men, unless restrained, would over run the country for a great distance in advance, and frighten away the game, so that a supply of food would with difficulty be obtained from that source. The penalty attached to the violation of any of the rules of the

camp was discretionary with the soldiers. In aggravated cases they would thresh the offender unmercifully. Sometimes they would cut the clothing of a man or woman entirely to pieces, slit down the lodges with their knives, break kettles, and do other damage. I was made the victim on one occasion, by venturing too near the prohibited boundary. A soldier hid himself in the long grass, until I approached sufficiently near, when he sprang from his concealment, gave the soldier's whoop, and rushed upon me. He seized my fine double-barrel gun, and raised it in the air, as if with the intention of dashing it against the ground. I reminded him that guns were not to be broken, because they could neither be repaired nor replaced. He handed me back the gun and then snatched my fur cap from my head, ordering me back to camp, where he said he would cut up my lodge in the evening. I had to ride ten miles on a cold winter's day bare-headed, but there was no recourse, as it is considered disgraceful in the extreme to resist a soldier while in the discharge of his duty. When I reached the lodge I told FARIBAULT of the predicament in which I was placed. We concluded that the best policy would be to prepare a feast for the soldiers, to mollify them. We got together all the best things we could muster, and when the soldiers arrived in the evening, we went out and invited them to come and appease their hunger in our lodge. The temptation was too strong to be resisted. They entered, and soon devoured all that had been provided for them. We then filled their pipes and presented each of them with a plug of tobacco, at the same time intimating that as they had been well treated, it would not be a kind return to have our beautiful white lodge cut into ribbons. They agreed not to interfere with it, and kept their word. The soldier who had worn my fur cap during the day returned it to me, but I did not venture to make use of it until it had undergone a long process of fumigation.

When we reached the big woods of the Red Cedar, the lodges were permanently established for the winter, and were surrounded by high pickets, which were not imbedded in the earth, but placed so as to rest upon transverse poles, supported by upright forked posts. The branches of the felled trees were then piled around the base of the pickets, forming a *chevaux*

de frise, which rendered an attempt to pull down any portion of the defences, both difficult and dangerous. Spaces were left between the pickets to answer the purpose of loop-holes for musketry. Upon the whole, the fort as it was called, was so constructed, as not to be easily stormed by an enemy. The women and children being thus placed in security, under the guard of a few men who were too old and infirm for active service, the hunters were left at liberty to follow their vocation untrammelled.

The presence of FARIBAULT being required at his trading post on the Cannon river, he departed in company with two young Indians, leaving me alone with the two hired men. I made it a practice to hunt with the Indians every day, except on Sunday, when I remained in my lodge. The Dakota mode of hunting deer is to form an extended line with intervals of eighty or a hundred yards between the hunters, and then advance at a rapid pace, completely scouring the country on their way. Any one falling in the rear has but a poor chance for success. When an animal is killed, the carcass remains on the spot until the return of the owner, after the conclusion of the day's hunt. The skin is then taken off, and with a portion of the hind quarters, is the property of the man who shot the deer or elk, and the remainder is equitably divided among such as have been less successful, or to the widows and orphan children in the camp. The rule is, that while there is any food on hand, it must be distributed to all alike. There was a great abundance of game in the country where we were encamped, so that from twenty to thirty deer were an average day's hunt besides the elk, bear, and other animals killed with fire arms, and beaver and otter taken with traps by the men who were past the age when they could endure the exhausting exercise of deer hunting.

I left the camp at an early hour one day to "still hunt" in a direction different from that to be taken by the Indians. I was successful, and returned to my lodge bearing upon my shoulders the greater part of a young buck. I soon ascertained that there was quite a commotion in the camp. One of the women came to inform me that all the men except five old fellows, who could not travel, had gone down to the forks of the Red Cedar, more

than forty miles distant, where they intended to remain and hunt for three or four days, and she further stated that a strange Indian had been seen behind a tree outside of the camp, taking observations. This intelligence startled me not a little, for I at once suspected that a scout had been sent forward by some war party of the Sacs and Foxes to reconnoitre, preparatory to an attack upon the camp. Seizing my rifle, and followed by two huge wolf dogs, my constant companions, I sallied forth and examined the spot where the Indian was said to have been seen. As there was snow on the ground, a trail could be easily followed. There was no mistake, for there was the moccasin track of a man, and from the appearance he had but recently left the place. I followed the trail for nearly two miles, when it occurred to me that even should I overtake the stranger, I would have no right to shoot him, and it was by no means probable that he would surrender without a fight. I therefore abandoned the pursuit, and went back to the camp with a foreboding that it would be attacked during the night. I called the five old men together, and explained to them the condition of things, and that the salvation of the women and children depended upon their vigilance and courage; that the night must be spent in watching. They assented to my suggestions and we all made such preparations as were in our power to meet the threatened assault. There was one main entrance which I determined to hold in person, with the assistance of a half breed boy, the Canadians having been despatched to a trading house below for some needed articles. The four small entrances were to be guarded by the old men, who were passa bly well armed.

Taking our stations, we awaited the denouement of the affair. About 8 o'clock in the evening the women reported having seen men moving in the woods on one side of the camp. I forthwith mustered all hands and directed a general discharge of the firearms in that direction, so as to produce an impression that we were on the alert, and had more men in camp than there really were. I fired five shots from my double-barreled gun, rifle and pistols, and all the others followed suit, so that there was quite a respectable display of force. No further alarm was given until three o'clock next morning, when every

one of the numberless Indian dogs in the encampment commenced barking and made a rush to the outside of the stockade. I firmly believed that the decisive moment had arrived, and so thought all the tenants of the lodges, for the old men began to sing their dismal death songs, the women screamed, and the children cried, so that together with the howling and barking of the dogs, there was such a concert of anything but harmonious sounds as never before greeted the ears of a civilized being. I sent the boy to still the tumult if possible, telling him to say to the old men and the women that their loud demonstrations of alarm were certain to invite an attack. The bipeds and quadrupeds were finally silenced, and I must confess that I was rejoiced when the dawn appeared. I went forth at sunrise to examine the surroundings, and found in the snow the tracks of many moccasined feet, and following the broad trail I was led to the place where the enemy, some fifty or sixty in number, had tied their horses to the trees. They probably were deterred from venturing an attack by the strength of the defences and the certainty that they could not effect an entrance without the loss of more men than they were willing to sacrifice. I selected a young active looking Dakota boy who might be fifteen years old, and asked him if he was man enough to follow the trail of the hunters to the forks, and he replied, proudly, that he was. "Hasten, then," said I, "and tell the men to return without delay." He sprang away at a rapid pace, and communicated my message to the hunters, and shortly after midnight of the same day we heard gladly the reports of guns at intervals to indicate their approach. The distance accomplished by the boy in eighteen or twenty hours, going and returning, was considerably over eighty miles. I reproached Little Crow, who was with the party, for the recklessness displayed by him and the others, in leaving so large a number of defenceless women and children in an enemy's country, in an unguarded camp. He acknowledged it was very foolish to do so, and promised that such carelessness should not be repeated. In the morning a number of the fastest runners were dispatched on the enemy's trail, but they were too well mounted and had too long a start to be overtaken.

Before leaving home, I learned that a party of white men

were about being despatched to the Little Red Cedar River to erect buildings for a government agency, the neutral ground having been transferred by the authorities to the Winnebago tribe of Indians. Being desirous of ascertaining the location, I started on what I supposed to be a Sabbath morning, with my two noble hounds, and after a brisk walk of twenty miles through the woods, I stumbled upon a clearing where there was a log hut, and eight or ten men employed in labor of various kinds. I had allowed my hair to grow very long, and for some time past had worn no other covering on my head, and being bearded like a pard, and dressed in Indian costume, with two enormous dogs at my heels, the men crowded about me, wondering where such a wild man of the woods had come from. A gentleman named THOMAS was in charge of the party, who was quite well known to me. I introduced myself by name, but THOMAS failed to recognize me, and evidently suspected I was assuming a character to which I had no claim. Finally, I satisfied him of my identity and he gave me a hearty welcome. As we entered the cabin, I expressed my surprise that he permitted his men to labor on Sunday. "Why," said he, "this isn't Sunday, but Thursday." It was difficult for me to believe I had so far erred in my reckoning, for I was in the habit of noting down from time to time on my memorandum book any incidents worthy of mention, with the dates. It was a fact, nevertheless, that I had been keeping Thursday instead of the Sabbath. Mr. THOMAS pressed me to remain until the next day, but I declined, and took up my march to the camp, which I reached late at night.

In the latter part of the month of February, I bade adieu to the Indians and wended my way to Prairie du Chien, and thence on the ice of the Mississippi to Mendota. I had not had any communication with my friends for four months, and my safe arrival was a great relief to them.

During my residence in the Indian camp, I had been treated with deference and respect, and no attempt was made to annoy me, except in one instance, when some miscreant, probably in a bit of ill humor with the whole camp, kindled a fire in the middle of the night, under the cart which stood very near my lodge, and which contained two kegs of gun-powder of fifty

pounds each. The dense smoke awaked both myself and the Canadians and we rushed out to discover the cause. The floor of the cart was on fire immediately under the kegs, and a delay of a few minutes would have been followed by an explosion which would have blown us and the tenants of the soldiers' lodge close by to atoms, and occasioned great destruction in the other parts of the camp. We removed the powder in haste, and then extinguished the fire. Efforts were made to ferret out the author, but without success, nor was I able to fix suspicion upon any one.

The havoc made among the game may be estimated, when I state, that more than 2,000 deer, 50 or 60 elk, many bears, and a few buffaloes, had been destroyed before I separated from the Indians. To these may be added five or six panthers. FARIBAULT shot a young one before his departure, and narrowly escaped death or severe injury from its enraged mother, which was about springing upon him when one of my hounds seized her from behind, and arrested her course. She shook herself free from her antagonist, and dashed away into the forest, fortunately without injury to the dog in the struggle.

BOUNDARY CHANGES—EARLY LAW MATTERS.

It may seem paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true, that I was successively a citizen of Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and Minnesota Territories, without changing my residence at Mendota. The jurisdiction of the first named terminated when Wisconsin was organized in 1836, and in turn Iowa extended her sway over the west of the Mississippi in 1838. When the latter was admitted as a State with very much diminished area, the country lying outside of the State boundaries, was left without any government until the establishment of the Minnesota territorial organization placed us where we now are.

It was my fortune to be the first to introduce the machinery of the law, into what our legal brethren would have termed a benighted region, having received a commission of Justice of the Peace from the Governor of Iowa Territory, for the County of Clayton. This County was an empire of itself in extent, reaching from a line some twenty miles below Prairie du Chien

on the west of the "Father of waters" to Pembina, and across to the Missouri river. As I was the only magistrate in this region and the county seat was some three hundred miles distant, I had matters pretty much under my own control, there being little chance of an appeal from my decisions. In fact some of the simple-minded people around me, firmly believed that I had the power of life and death. On one occasion I issued a warrant for a Canadian, who had committed a gross outrage, and then fled from justice. I despatched a trusty constable in pursuit, and he overtook the man below Lake Pepin, and brought him back in irons. The friends of the culprit begged hard that he should not be severely punished, and after keeping him in durance vile for several days, I agreed to release him if he would leave the country, threatening him with dire vengeance if he should ever return. He left in great haste and I never saw him afterwards.

In my own county of Dakota, at a later period, we had some bright and shining lights among those who held commissions as magistrate. One case of assault and battery was tried before a justice at Mendota, who was a very worthy, upright Frenchman, but indifferently versed in the English language. One of the leading members of the bar was imported from Ramsey county for the defense. He made a powerful and logical argument for the prisoners of at least an hour's duration I was sitting in my office next door to the court room, when the justice entered hastily, and said to me in French: "That infernal lawyer has been talking to me until I am tired, and I have not understood one word in ten that he has said," and he then asked me what he should do. I told him he had heard the evidence, and should be governed thereby in his decisions, and not to pay any attention to the speech, and I believe he did decide properly. When I told the counsel afterwards that he had thrown much eloquence and erudition to the winds, he was astounded, "for," said he, "the justice never took his eye from me while I was speaking, and I flattered myself upon having produced a profound impression."

Another justice, not a hundred miles from Kaposia, was called upon to decide between two adverse claimants, who agreed to waive the right to a jury trial. After hearing the

evidence, the magistrate decided in favor of the plaintiff, whereupon the defendant accused him of partiality and injustice, and the dignity of the bench came very near being seriously compromised by a fisticuff between the court and the party who considered himself aggrieved. An appeal was taken to the District Court by the defendant, and when the writ was served upon the justice ordering him to produce a transcript of his docket and other papers in the case, instead of complying with the mandate of the court, he sat down and committed to paper a long and elaborate address to the judge, setting forth that the appellant had abused him, that he was a mean scamp generally, and concluded by stating to his honor that *he* had erred in granting the appeal, and if he wanted the papers in the case he might look for them, as he, the justice, would have nothing further to do with it. That paper ought to have been secured for the Historical Society. It was duly dispatched to the judge and I heard it read by the clerk, and I much doubt if ever a document produced a greater sensation in a court room than that did. It was subsequently abstracted from the files, doubtless by some one who had a laudable desire to become learned in the law.

I had the honor of being the foreman of the first grand jury ever empanelled on the west of the Mississippi River, in what is now the State of Minnesota. The court was held at Mendota, Judge Cooper being assigned to that district. His honor delivered a written charge of considerable length, and really it was an able and finished production. Unfortunately, out of the twenty odd men who composed the jury but three, if I recollect rightly, could speak English, the rest being Frenchmen, who were to a man profoundly ignorant of any language but their own. As a matter of course, they were highly edified while engaged in listening to the Judge's charge.

Major Joseph R. Brown, lately deceased, who has been already mentioned, resided at an early day at Grey Cloud Island on the Mississippi, in the county of St. Croix, now Washington. He too was a Justice of the Peace, and on one occasion was called upon to decide between two Canadian Frenchmen named Parant and LeClaire, who claimed the same piece of land at Pig's Eye, a few miles below the city of

St. Paul. BROWN was in a dilemma, as he doubted his authority to decide questions of title to land, yet he was unwilling to allow the dignity of his official station to be lowered in the estimation of the simple people around him, by avowing a want of jurisdiction in the premises. He therefore listened to the evidence *pro* and *con*, and having ascertained that the claim had not been staked out, he cut the Gordian knot of legal uncertainty, by deciding that the land would be awarded to the party who should first arrive on the ground, and stake it out. The decision was accepted as being in accordance with law, and neither of the men being the owner of a horse, a foot race of more than eight miles ensued between them. LECLAIRE being the fleetest runner, succeeded in placing his land marks in the presence of witnesses, before the arrival of his panting competitor. The latter made no further contest, and LECLAIRE proceeded to pre-empt the tract, and lived upon it for several years, and finally died there. This is by no means the only instance in which superior rapidity of movement was the means of securing a valuable pre-emption, but it is believed to be the sole case in the history of the Northwest, in which speed of foot was made to decide a legal question in obedience to the fiat of a magistrate.

MISSIONARY OPERATIONS.

Rev. SAMUEL POND and Rev. GIDEON H. POND, both still living and highly respected ministers of the gospel in this State, came to this region in the spring of 1834, from New England, and established themselves as missionaries with the Lake Calhoun Band. They continued to labor among the Indians for many years, and their intimate acquaintance with their language, enabled them, in connection with Rev. Messrs. RIGGS and WILLIAMSON, to reduce it to a system, and in addition to other works which were printed, to furnish for publication by the Smithsonian Institute, in Washington city, an elaborate and complete Dakota Lexicon. Dr. WILLIAMSON arrived in 1835, and Mr. RIGGS a year later. They still labor for the spiritual benefit of the Indians. They first opened a mission at Lac qui Parle, with Mr. HUGGINS as assistant, who died not long since, and whose son, a pious and devoted missionary,

was killed by the Indians, in 1862, at that station. Messrs. GAVIN and DENTON were sent out by a Swiss society as missionaries among the savages, but were recalled many years since. Rev. Mr. HOPKINS had charge at Traverse des Sioux, where he was accidentally drowned in 1851. Mission stations were at a later period established by Rev. Mr. RIGGS at Yellow Medicine, and by Rev. Mr. HINMAN, of the Episcopal Church, at the Redwood or Lower Agency, which were continued until the expulsion of the Indians from Minnesota.

Rev. Father GALTIER was the pioneer missionary of the Catholic church, having been stationed at Mendota from 1840 until 1844, when he removed to Prairie du Chien, where he died several years ago. He was succeeded by Very Reverend Father RAVOUX, now Vicar General of the Diocese of Saint Paul, and a resident of the city. He arrived in 1841, remained a short time with Father GALTIER, at Mendota, and then visited the posts along the Minnesota river. He passed two winters at Chaska, then a small trading station, laboring with the Indians. He then resumed the position vacated by Father GALTIER, at Mendota, where he resided until the decease of Right Rev. Mr. CRETIN, Bishop of St. Paul, in 1857, when he removed to St. Paul. (I was on intimate terms with Father RAVOUX, and can testify that he was highly respected for his purity of character and devotion, and exercised great influence over whites and Indians.)

ORGANIZATION OF THE TERRITORY.

When the bill for the organization of Minnesota Territory was pending in Congress, there was a surprising degree of ignorance manifested even by members from the Northwest, with reference to the geographical position of the country in question. Hon. JOSEPH ROOT, of Ohio, made a vehement speech against the measure, denouncing as farcical and absurd the formation of a temporary government in a hyperborean region, where agricultural pursuits were impracticable, and where no white man would go unless to cut pine logs. Other members took a similar view of the subject. Probably such of these wise-acres, as are still in the land of the living, have had occasion to modify their opinions somewhat, since that period.

Enough had been ascertained by experiment previous to 1834, to demonstrate that our soil was peculiarly adapted to the production of wheat, barley and other small grains, but it was deemed very questionable, whether any but the small corn raised by the Indians would mature. The problem was solved by Messrs. NORRIS and HASKELL of Washington county, who were the first men to open farms on an extensive scale, and to prove that every variety of maize could be successfully cultivated.

Messrs. ORANGE WALKER and his associates at Marine, and JOHN MCKUSICK with his brother JONATHAN at Stillwater, were the pioneers in the lumbering business which has since assumed such gigantic proportions, although JOSEPH R. BROWN is believed to have been the first to descend the St. Croix with a raft of lumber.

In 1847, Wisconsin was admitted as a State, with the Saint Croix as the north-western boundary, leaving the counties west of that stream without a government. The people believed they had a right of representation in Congress, the organic act of the Territory of Wisconsin not having been expressly repealed when the State was admitted into the Union. They accordingly elected me as delegate to Washington city, in 1848, and I was only admitted to a seat, after long and vexatious delays.

When my credentials as Delegate were presented by Hon. JAMES WILSON, of New Hampshire, to the House of Representatives, there was some curiosity manifested by the members to see what kind of a person had been elected to represent the distant and wild Territory claiming representation in Congress. I was told by a New England member with whom I became subsequently quite intimate, that there was some disappointment felt when I made my appearance, for it was expected that the Delegate from this remote region would make his *debut*, if not in full Indian costume, at least with some peculiarities of dress and manners, characteristic of the rude and semi-civilized people who had sent him to the capitol.[1]

1 Were these annals only to meet the eye of the pioneer, or present population of Minnesota, it would be unnecessary to speak of the personal appearance, mental or moral attributes of General SIBLEY, where he and they are so well known, but,

There were thus in Congress, at the same time, Senators and Representatives from the State of Wisconsin, and a delegate from the Territory of Wisconsin, a case for which there was no precedent. The Territory of Minnesota was organized by act of Congress, approved March 3d, 1849, the night before the adjournment. The curious in such matters will find the first appropriation for the support of the territorial government, in a bill entitled, "A bill for the relief of James Norris and for other purposes." There was no time to add the item to the regular appropriation bills at that late period of the session, and the private bill for the benefit of Mr. Norris, passed, with the sum for the expenses of Minnesota Territory tacked to it as an amendment.

In the spring of 1849, Governor RAMSEY arrived at St. Paul, as did the Judges of the Supreme Court, Messrs. GOODRICH, MEEKER and COOPER, and the other territorial officers, when the new government was duly organized and went into immediate operation. Parties commenced to form forthwith, and a furious political war followed, many particulars of which must afford amusement to those yet living, who participated in the strife. It seemed as if the whole burden of national affairs had suddenly been transferred to the six thousand people, who composed the population of the Territory.

In the course of a canvass for delegate to Congress, an

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as they will be perused in after time, and in other lands, and inasmuch as the question was raised, it may be well to observe that the pioneers of Minnesota were justly proud of the manly bearing, mental qualities and exemplary character of the man of their choice; regarding these a kind of offset for any lack of population, or commercial importance that might be urged against their claims to recognition. Nor were they visionary. The writer of this note, not then a resident of Minnesota, spent a portion of the winter and spring of 1849, at the national capital, and can bear witness to the justness of these expectations. To say that the delegate from Minnesota did not suffer by comparison with the members of the body to which the old settlers had accredited him, would fail to do justice to their good taste. HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY would, by his stately bearing, have attracted favorable notice at the most refined courts of Europe; his literary contributions to the periodicals of 20 to 30 years ago, both in his own name and under the *non de plume* of "HAL, A DACOTAH," proved him to be a forcible and finished writer, while his letter to Senator FOOTE, which appeared in the Washington *Union*, in February, 1850, gave to the outside world the first authentic information concerning these regions, and did much to attract public attention hither. Of his personal character it would seem unnecessary to speak; above reproach, courtly and kind, he, while leading a singularly laborious life, yet finds time to identify himself with every good and charitable work, and is the staunch and sympathetic friend of the frontiersman in his hour of need.—A. G.

excited speaker while eulogizing his favorite candidate before an assembled crowd, as a man of liberal principles, unfortunately mistook the meaning of the word he used, saying he was in favor of Mr. —— because he was "the greatest libertine in the country." The proceedings of the legislative bodies were characterized at times by the same excitement which animated the people generally. The old settlers will recollect, that a considerable minority once left the halls of legislation, and went on a fishing excursion to prevent the passage of some obnoxious bill. It is creditable to all concerned, that the absorbing interest felt in these party struggles, only on one or two occasion culminated in a resort to personal violence. The pistol and the bowie knife were never regarded with favor by Minnesotians, and in that particular they proved their superiority over the population of most of the frontier States and Territories, where these weapons were too often made the arbiter in political and personal controversies.

There was quite a grand celebration of the 4th of July following the organization of the Territory, in the then village of St. Paul. All the dignitaries of the new government, and in fact the whole adult male population joined in the procession to a grove not far distant, where the exercises were to be conducted. Everything was managed in the most orthodox fashion. W. D. PHILLIPS read the Declaration of Independence, and Judge MEEKER delivered the oration. One of our citizens being asked how he enjoyed the performances, said he regarded PHILLIP's speech as decidedly the best effort of the day.

St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Stillwater, were the only villages of any importance in those days. By a sort of general agreement, St. Paul was to be the capital, St. Anthony the site of the university, and Stillwater the location of the penitentiary, and the arrangement was faithfully carried out.

It was only after the treaties of 1851 opened the vast trans-Mississippi region to the whites, that immigration received its first great impulse. From that period, the population increased with great rapidity.

MORALITY OF THE EARLY SETTLERS.

It has been made a subject of frequent remark, that the

settlement of Minnesota has been singularly free from the disorders and deeds of violence, which have almost invariably accompanied the same process in other western Territories and States. Crimes of magnitude, especially such as involved the destruction of human life, have been so rarely committed, that the whole record of Minnesota in that respect, may be advantageously compared with that of any State in the Union. I attribute this mainly to the fact that Minnesota, California and Oregon were settled simultaneously, and that the gold fields of the Pacific attracted thither a host of reckless adventurers, who would otherwise have found a home among us. Thus while that class emigrated to the other side of the stony mountains in pursuit of the precious metals, the men who had it in view to gain a subsistence by honest labor, sought the fertile prairies of Minnesota with their families. It is hardly necessary to mention, that while our population is many thousands less than it would have been, but for the attractions referred to in another quarter, the State has been vastly benefited by remaining free from the presence of a large number of that description of persons who are popularly said to "live by their wits." The infusion of such an element into our population, would have resulted in a rehearsal on an extensive scale, of those scenes of sanguinary violence, which have disgraced the earlier history of so many of the border States.

PIONEER JOURNALISTS.

Public journalism, which has accomplished so much in advancing the interests of the Territory and State, was first represented by JAMES M. GOODHUE, who established the *Pioneer*, in 1849. A few numbers of the *Minnesota Register* had previously been circulated among our citizens, advocating the claims of the new Territory to public attention, but these were printed in Cincinnati. In many respects, GOODHUE was admirably fitted to conduct a newspaper. He labored earnestly and successfully, while he lived, in behalf of Minnesota. The *Chronicle and Register*, under the auspices of Messrs. MCLEAN, OWENS and HUGHES, the *Democrat*, owned and edited by D. A. ROBERTSON; the St. Anthony *Express*, by ISAAC ATWATER; the

Minnesotian, by JOHN P. OWENS, and the *Advertiser* by JOSEPH A. WHEELOCK, were established in the order in which they are named. JOHN H. STEVENS published the first paper on the west of the Mississippi, at Glencoe, in McLeod county, called the *Glencoe Register*. It was a model of a local paper, abounding in details of interest. All of the journals mentioned were edited with ability, and their columns were devoted to the object of attracting immigration to this region, by the publication of editorials and other articles demonstrating the superiority of the new Territory in an agricultural point of view. In fact, taken in the aggregate, the press of this Territory and State, in its earlier and later days, might safely challenge a comparison in typographical excellence and intellectual force, with that of any other of the Western States, and Minnesota can never cancel her obligations to her public journalists, who, however they differed in other matters, united with singular devotion and zeal in pressing the attractions of this region upon the public attention, and in advocating its material interests. But for their labors the State would be far behind her present status in population and in wealth.

MOTIVES FOR STATE PRIDE.

It has been my fortune to visit at one time or another, almost every part of our widely extended State. The area now comprised in the southern counties was my hunting ground, year after year. I have ascended the Minnesota valley to its termination, and have roamed along the shores of the magnificent lakes of the Kandiyohi region, and those northwest towards the Red River. I have traversed the prairies between Fort Ridgely and Mankato south to the boundary of Iowa, and I have stood by the far-off iron monuments which mark the line between Minnesota and the Territory of Dakota, and yet to this moment I am unable to decide which section is the most beautiful and attractive. Like the individual who finds himself surrounded by a bevy of fair maidens, equal in charms but of different styles of loveliness, and adjudges the palm to the one he looks upon, until his eye rests upon another to be dazzled in turn by her attractions, so I, after gazing at the scenery in various parts of the State successively, have asked

myself each time the question, "Where can a more inviting region be found upon the earth." Each landscape has seemed to be unapproachable in its perfection and the symmetry of its proportions, until another, its peer in all respects, has extorted the same measure of unqualified admiration.

Minnesotians are often charged with exaggeration when speaking of the advantages of their own State over their sister States. It is not to be wondered at that they should manifest an honest pride when they point to the position to which she has sprung almost as suddenly as the armed Minerva from the head of Jove. In 1850, she had a population of 6,000 souls, all told, including some of the settlements now embraced in Dakota Territory. In twenty-three years thereafter the number approximates, if it does not exceed 600,000. The last decade has witnessed the commencement of our railroad system until it has expanded into gigantic proportions. Our people are the very embodiment of energy and enterprise. We have a healthy climate, a soil of surpassing fertility. Our men won for themselves and for the State during the late war of the rebellion, a distinction which will last as long as the republic exists. Our fair women manifested equal devotion, in submitting with cheerfulness to the sacrifices demanded of them during the continuance of the fearful contest, and in sparing no labor to provide for the comfort of the soldier in the field, or sick or wounded in the hospital. The entire record is a glorious one, which will not pale by comparison with that of any other State.

Nor should we be unmindful of the fact, which affords the strongest assurance of the indomitable character of our citizens, that after the departure to Southern fields of thousands of our choicest spirits, the most formidable Indian war known in the history of the Northwest burst suddenly and unexpectedly upon our frontier settlements, and that it was closed by the utter defeat of the hostile savages, and their capture or expulsion from the State, in a little more than one month after the first outbreak, by Minnesota men, without any aid from the general government, or from a single soldier outside of the limits of our own State. Why, then, should we not be proud of Minnesota and her people?

CONCLUSION.

It is scarcely possible for such of my readers, as are not old settlers, to appreciate the change made within the last two decades in this Territory and State. Even as late as 1850 there were neither bridges nor ferries, and few common roads other than the foot trails of the red man who then asserted his ownership of all the country west of the Mississippi except the military reservation at Fort Snelling. There was indeed no apprehension of danger from the Indians, for they were generally friendly, treating white visitors to their camp with uniform kindness and hospitality. But otherwise the traveler was compelled to endure all of the privations, and at certain seasons of the year perils from fire and flood incident to a country in its primeval condition. The prairie fires especially in those parts of the Territory where the grass was long and dry were very much dreaded, for it was difficult to escape from them, when they were driven by a strong wind. The old voyageurs were frequently thus overtaken, and although loss of human life seldom resulted, it was not uncommon for a person to sustain personal injury, and a loss of animals and other property. In contrasting such a state of things with the present facilities for travel, exemption from danger, and the luxuries to be obtained in all the inhabited portions of the State, you may be enabled to form some faint conception of the amazement with which the transformation is regarded by the old settlers. To me, I must confess, it seems more like a pleasant dream than a reality.

The retrospect, however satisfactory and indeed brilliant, in view of the rapid advance of the State in population and wealth, is not without its sad and melancholy aspects to such of the old settlers as yet remain. We miss from our companionship many a noble specimen of manhood who struggled and fought with us for the prosperity of our beloved Minnesota. They have gone the way of all the earth, and those of us who still live are daily admonished that our course also will soon be finished. It is a source of great comfort, as the shadows of death approach to encompass us, to be assured that the destinies of the commonwealth we have loved so long and so well will be left in the hands of a generation competent and deter-

mined to control them, with the aid of a good Providence in the interests of morality and religion for the welfare of our children and of the State and nation, and reflectively, of the whole human family.

ST. PAUL, 1873.

NOTE TO THE FOREGOING.

The committee on publication will be pardoned for adding to Gen. SIBLEY'S valuable and interesting reminiscences, some personal account of his parentage, early life, civil and military services, etc. Our request to Gen. SIBLEY for the foregoing paper included the above, but the motives for reserve referred to in the beginning of his article has deterred him from complying with that request, we have, therefore, anticipated what we deem to be a general wish, and have briefly sketched some of the leading points of Gen. SIBLEY'S life:

SOLOMON SIBLEY, father of the author, was a prominent pioneer of the northwest. He was born at Sutton, Mass., October 7, 1769, and having chosen law as his profession, removed to Marietta, O., in 1795, thence to Cincinnati, O., and ultimately to Detroit in 1797. In 1799 he was elected to the first Territorial Legislature of the Northwest Territory, at Cincinnati. Judge BURNET, the historian, states that he was among the most talented men in the House. He was elected a Delegate to Congress from Michigan Territory, in 1820, and Judge of the Supreme Court 1824 to 1836. He was also United States Commissioner, and in company with Hon. LEWIS CASS, made a treaty with the Indians for most of the territory now included in the peninsula of Michigan. He was also, for some time, United States District Attorney. He died April 4, 1846, universally lamented. [See Hildreth's "Lives of Early Settlers of Ohio," &c.]

Judge SIBLEY married Miss SARAH W. SPROAT, at Marietta, October, 1802. Miss SPROAT was the daughter of Col. EBENEZER SPROAT, a revolutionary soldier, and his wife, formerly a Miss WHIPPLE, daughter of Commodore ABRAHAM WHIPPLE, of the revolutionary navy. She was born at Providence, R. I., January 28, 1782. Her parents and grand parents settled in Marietta in 1788, so that her whole life almost, was spent on the frontier. She was a woman of unusual personal beauty, and rare mental accomplishments, and was, by a wide circle of friends in different States, greatly beloved and respected. She died at Detroit on January 22, 1851. Mrs. ELLET, in her valuable work, "Pioneer Women of the West," gives a full account of the dangers and hard-

ships to which Mrs. SIBLEY was exposed in the war of 1812, and other trying times on the frontier.

HENRY HASTINGS SIBLEY was born at Detroit February 20, 1811. The history of the northwest about that time, the perilous condition of the frontier, the savage warfare that desolated the region, the siege and surrender of Detroit, and the hardships experienced by the whites from 1810 to 1815, are too well known to need repetition. The SIBLEY family bore their full share in those trials. It would almost seem that the subject of this sketch was launched into a career destined from the start to be one of adventure and stirring incidents, repeating the eventful pioneer life of his ancestors. Thus hereditarily predisposed, as it might be said, to a life of close contact with the strange and romantic elements that have always given such a charm to frontier life in the eyes of the courageous and active, his innate disposition received a still further bent from the very condition of society in his boyhood. It was passed in a region favorable for field sports, and the hardy exploits of the hunter and sailor, where every inhabitant was a fireside bard, reciting those wonderful epics of "hair breadth 'scapes," and "accidents by flood and field," perils and feats of the half-mythical heroes of the frontier, legends full of poetry and romance, that seem never to weary the listener.

Young SIBLEY received an academical education in his boyhood, and subsequently enjoyed two years private tuition in the classics from Rev. Mr. CADLE, a fine scholar. His father had destined him for the profession of law, and at about the age of 16, he commenced its study in Judge S.'s office. After a year's attention to this, HENRY H became convinced that his natural inclinations and tastes would lead him to a more active and stirring life, and so informed his father. Judge S. very wisely told him if such was the case, to pursue his own wishes as to occupation, a decision that gave to Minnesota her honored pioneer, one whose history is so interwoven with its own, that to write the one, is almost *ipso facto* to record the other.

About the age of 17, HENRY H. went to Sault Ste Marie, and was engaged there in mercantile operations for about a year. In 1829 he went to Mackinac, and entered the service of the American Fur Company as a clerk. He remained at this post five years. Here he became acquainted with a number of the prominent pioneers of the great Northwest, and further acquired a desire for frontier life. During this time he made his entry into official life, being commissioned by Governor GEO. B. PORTER, of Michigan Ter., a Justice of the Peace of Michilimacinac county. His commission was received really before he was of age, and was subsequently executed before MICHAEL DOUSMAN, father of the late H. L. DOUSMAN. In 1834, Mr. SIBLEY, then 23 years of age, was persuaded by RAMSEY CROOKS and H. L. DOUSMAN to come to what is now Minnesota. [See page 194.] An account of his arrival is given in his own article. DUNCAN CAMPBELL, one of the Canadians who accompanied him, is still living at Mendota.

On May 2d, 1843, Gen. SIBLEY was married to Miss SARAH J. STEELE, at Fort Snelling. Mrs. SIBLEY died May 21, 1869—a lady of rare virtues and accomplishments, and well fitted to adorn the prominent station in society which she occupied for so many years, in Washington City and Minnesota.

Mr. SIBLEY held for many years the office of Justice of the Peace for Clayton county, Iowa, in which Minnesota west of the Mississippi River was then included. His jurisdiction was coextensive with what now forms all of the State west of that river, a portion of Iowa and a large part of the present Dakota Territory. Most of the criminal cases occurring in this vast region during that period were brought before him. Prominent among these were the murder of HAYS, at St. Paul, in 1838, by PHELAN, and the alleged murder of young SIMPSON, nephew of the Arctic explorer, in 1840.

On October 30, 1848, Gen. SIBLEY was elected by the people of what was then considered as "Wisconsin Territory"—the residue of the old territory of that name left after the State was admitted, outside the boundary of the latter—as their Delegate to Congress. He was admitted to a seat after much trouble, [see Collections, vol. I, p. 61,] and during the session was enabled to secure the passage of a bill organizing the Territory of Minnesota, which became a law March 3, 1849. In the fall of 1849, he was again elected Delegate for two years, and again in 1851, for another term. In the fall of 1853 he declined a further nomination.

In 1857, Gen. SIBLEY served as a member and President of the Democratic branch of the Constitutional Convention, and was soon after nominated and elected Governor. Owing to the delay in the admission of the State, he was not inaugurated until May 24, 1858. In 1871 Gen. SIBLEY also served one term in the House of Representatives, and is at the present time a Regent of the State University and President of the State Normal Board.

The foregoing is a brief memorandum of Gen. SIBLEY'S civil services, and we desire to add also a short sketch of his military record.

The Sioux outbreak occurred on August 18, 1862, and on August 19, Gen SIBLEY was appointed by Gov. RAMSEY to the command of the military expedition, with the rank of Colonel commanding in the field, but really with the powers and duties of a General. Arriving at the frontier, everything was found in a terrible state. New Ulm and other towns had been partly burned, hundreds of persons massacred, the country laid waste, and numbers of women and children captive in the hands of the brutal savages. Panic reigned everywhere. The state authorities were entirely unprepared to meet this outburst of savage fury, which was as unexpected as it was sudden. Arms and ammunition were wanting; there was no government transportation on hand; several thousand of young men had been hurried to Southern fields, leaving only a few hundred raw and undisciplined volunteers to

cope with the numerous, well-armed, and thus far, triumphant enemy. Gen. S.'s first object was to protect the most exposed points, until he could be furnished with reinforcements of men, munitions of war and rations. The Indians were repulsed at New Ulm by the forces under Col. FLANDREAU; at Fort Ridgely and at Birch Coolie successfully, and finally completely beaten in the decisive battle of Wood Lake, on September 23d, by Gen. SIBLEY. By good management, strategy, and his thorough knowledge of Indian character, Gen. S. was enabled to not only effect the release of the white captives, nearly 250 in number, but to take prisoners about 2,000 men, women and children of the enemy. He then constituted a military commission, with Col. WM. CROOKS as President, by which the Indian warriors, to the number of more than 400, were tried, 303 condemned to death for murder and massacre, and others to various terms of imprisonment from one to ten years, for pillage and robbery. The execution of the condemned was prevented by the order of President LINCOLN, at the earnest solicitation of some Quakers in Pennsylvania, and so-called "humanitarians" in New England, very much to the disgust and dissatisfaction of the people of Minnesota. Finally, Gen. SIBLEY was ordered by the President to execute 38 of the criminals convicted of rape and massacre of the whites, which was done on the 21st of December, 1862, at Mankato, the whole number being hanged on one scaffold. The remainder of the convicted Indians were taken to Davenport in the spring following, where they were kept in confinement for some months. A large proportion died of disease, and the survivors eventually released, and taken to Fort Thompson, on the Missouri River, where they rejoined their families.

On September 29, 1862, President LINCOLN commissioned Col. SIBLEY as a Brigadier General for gallant services in the field. The winter was spent in forming a cordon of posts and garrisons, with a line of scouts and patrols across the frontier. A new military department was created, embracing Minnesota, Dakota, Iowa and Wisconsin. Gen. POPE was placed in command of this, but he was here in person only a few weeks, his headquarters being really in Milwaukee, and the management of all military movements in this state was entirely left to Gen. SIBLEY.

Congress having reduced the number of Brigadier Generals, it seemed certain that Gen. SIBLEY's appointment would not be confirmed. The Minnesota Legislature passed the following Joint Resolution on March 5, 1863:

WHEREAS, We learn with regret that the limitation placed by Congress on the number of general officers authorized to be appointed for the volunteer forces, is likely to prevent the confirmation of Brigadier General SIBLEY; and

WHEREAS The good results attending the conduct of the campaign against the Sioux Indians last fall—the safe deliverance of the white captives, the surrender of so large a number of Indians, the protection assured to the frontier; all at so small a loss of life in military operations, entitled Gen. SIBLEY to the promotion so promptly bestowed after the victory of Wood Lake, and indicate his peculiar fitness for the command of the approaching campaign against the Sioux; and

WHEREAS, The failure of Gen. SIBLEY's confirmation would now occasion the entire loss of his services to the public and the State (inasmuch as he holds no other commission than that heretofore tendered by the President) and would be regarded by the troops under his command, and the people of the State generally, as a misfortune, therefore

Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota:

That we respectfully and urgently ask the President to appoint Brigadier General H. H. SIBLEY, a Brigadier General of Volunteers, and to assign him to the command of the district of Minnesota, for the approaching campaign against the Sioux Indians.

Gen. SIBLEY's name was, however, not confirmed by the Senate, and deeming his withdrawal from the service a serious check to the success of military operations in the Department, the following appeal was presented to him:

SAINT PAUL, March 19, 1863.

To Gen. H. H. Sibley:

DEAR SIR: The undersigned beg leave to express their disappointment and regret at the failure of the Senate to confirm your nomination as Brigadier General. But, feeling confident of your re-appointment, we respectfully urge that the general welfare and immediate business interests of the State at large, demand your acceptance, should the President tender it. In this we are satisfied that we express the views of all classes of our people. At this most critical period, we should deem your retirement from the field a calamity which would certainly weaken, and possibly destroy, public confidence, now so happily restored in the border counties, under your able military administration. Believing that the wellare of the people of Minnesota will outweigh all other considerations, and overcome any personal scruples which might otherwise prompt you to decline a re-appointment; and assuring you of our confidence and esteem, we subscribe ourselves:

This document was signed by over 50 of the leading business men and firms of the city. Gen. SIBLEY made the following reply:

SAINT PAUL, March 23, 1863.

GENTLEMEN:—I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of the document signed by so many of the leading men and firms of this city, in which you urge me not to decline a renomination of Brigadier General, if tendered, as you do not doubt it will be. Since that was written, a telegraphic dispatch from the Secretary of War has reached me, announcing my reappointment by the President, so that your prognostications have proved to be correct.

While I feel duly grateful for the confidence manifested by you in my management of military affairs in this District, and for the kind expressions of regard for myself personally, it is nevertheless true, that I rather dreaded than desired to be placed in a position, by the act of the President, where I must promptly accept or decline the honorable station to which he has so repeatedly nominated me. It has been neither by my suggestion nor at my solicitation, that I was originally named for the post, nor have I since made any effort to retain it, or to secure a confirmation by the Senate. Indeed, the deranged state of my private affairs, which have been almost totally neglected for many months, apart from any other consideration, afforded me a very strong reason against my remaining longer in the service.

On the other hand, I recognize the right of the country to its full extent, to call upon any of its citizens to perform a public duty, at whatever sacrifice to himself, and while I feel too much diffidence in my own abilities to venture to hope that I can meet the wishes or expectations of my friends, in a career comparatively so new to me, I cannot disregard the general sentiment of my State, as signified by the unanimous resolutions of the Legislature asking for my confirmation, and by the representations of numerous private citizens. I shall therefore dispatch to the military authorities at Washington, my respectful acceptance of the position to which the President has generously seen fit to re-assign me.

It would not be proper for me to make known the plans of the contemplated campaign against the hostile Sioux. But I can state, without any impropriety, that the Major General commanding the Department [POPE] has given me the most cheering assurances of support in their prosecution, and manifests a determination to bring this war with the savages to a speedy conclusion, by the employment of all the means at his disposal.

The proposed expedition will be a tedious and laborious one to all connected with it, but with the aid of the gallant regiments under my command, composed of our own citizens, all of whom, officers and soldiers alike, are anxious to take the field, I humbly trust that enough will be accomplished during the coming season, to insure the frontier against any danger from Indian forays hereafter, and to relieve entirely the apprehensions of our citizens."

The *Pioneer* of March 23d, 1863, referring to the matter said:

We are gratified to announce that on Friday last, the President re-nominated Gen. SIBLEY to the position which he has filled with distinguished honor during the period of our frontier difficulties. This could hardly have been otherwise His appointment as Brigadier was conferred on him unsought and unexpectedly, while he was on service in the Indian country, and in compliment to the military abilities which he had there displayed. Returning from the field, at the close of the fall campaign, his administration of affairs in the District of Minnesota, has been marked by such practical good judgment, energy and economy, as to call forth the commendations of the heads of the several military bureaus with which he has had any connection, and to induce the President, unsuggested by any consideration except his own merit, to send his name for confirmation as a Major General. The forced reduction of the list of Generals, under action of the Senate, compelled the President to change Gen. SIBLEY's nomination to that of a Brigadier. We regret to learn that there are doubts as to Gen. SIBLEY'S acceptance of this re-nomination. We trust these doubts are unfounded. The people of the State, without distinction of party, or regard to locality, desire his continuance in command.

Gen. SIBLEY, in accordance with the unanimous wish expressed, accepted the nomination tendered by the President, and proceeded with the organization of an expedition to Devil's Lake and vicinity, to attack and defeat the Sioux known to be in that section. The expedition left Camp Pope June 16, marched into Dakota, had three battles with the Indians, besides skirmishes, and advanced as far as the Missouri River, driving the hostile bands across that stream. Having accomplished its objects and freed the Minnesota frontier from all apprehensions of Indian raids, it returned to Fort Snelling in September.

The years 1864 and 1865 were employed in conducting measures for the defence of the frontier, which resulted in completely restoring safety to the western counties and depriving the savages of an opportunity to molest them. November 29, 1865, Gen. SIBLEY was appointed Brevet Major General, "for efficient and meritorious services." He was relieved from the command of the District of Minnesota in August, 1866, by order of the President, and detailed with Major Gen. CURTIS, United States Volunteers, as members of a mixed civil and military commission, to negotiate treaties with the hostile Sioux, and other disaffected bands on the Upper Missouri, which duty was successfully discharged, treaties having been made at Fort Sully with the Sioux, and subsequently ratified by the Senate.

We have thus endeavored to condense in a few lines, the leading points of a long and active career of one so prominently identified with the history of the Northwest, that scarcely more than an outline is given, of what should occupy almost a volume of itself.