THE YANKEE AND THE TEUTON
IN WISCONSIN
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BY

JOSEPH SCHAFER

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JOSEPH SCHAFER

I. CHARACTERISTIC ATTITUDES TOWARD THE LAND

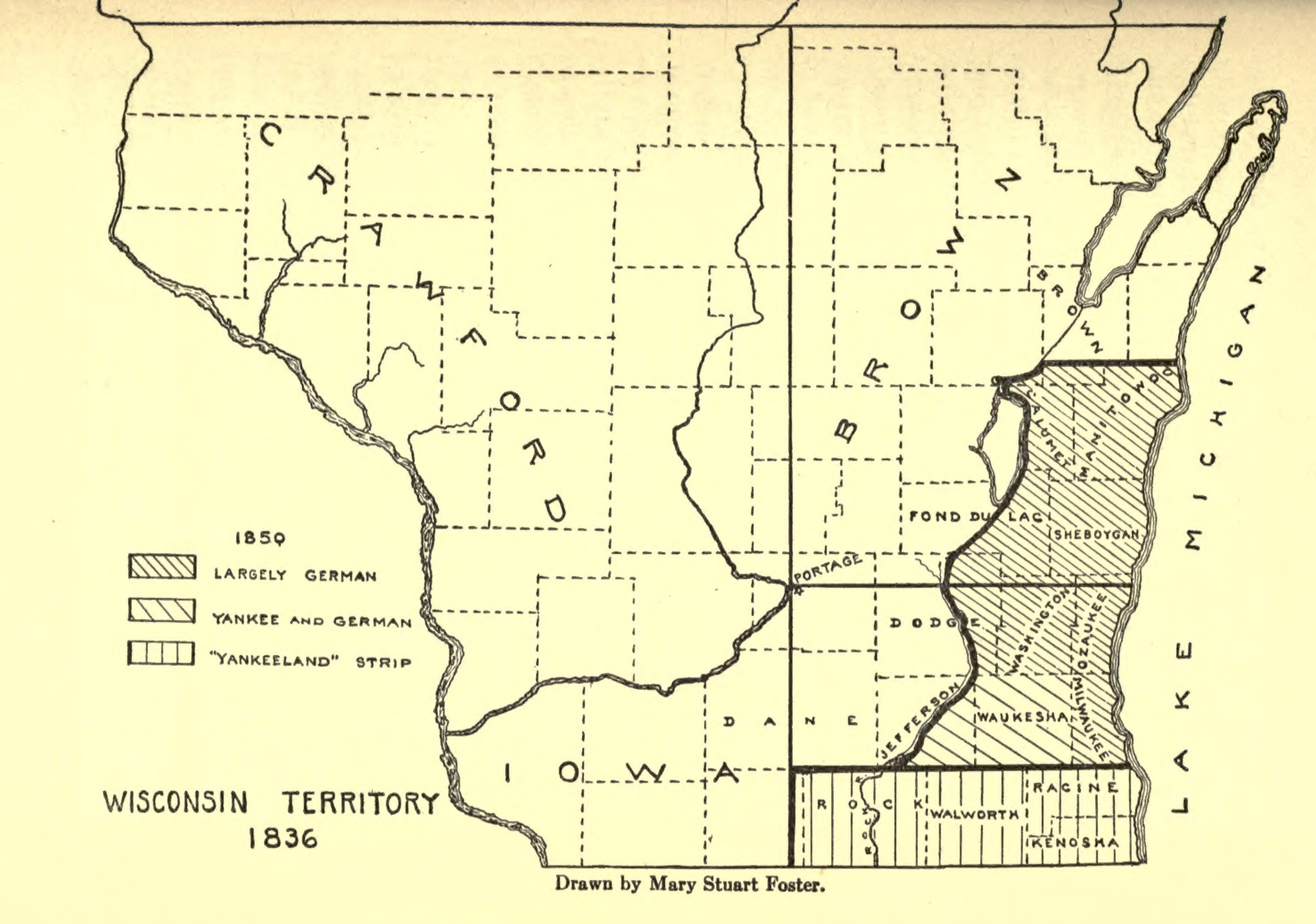
Wisconsin in its racial character is popularly known to the country at large as a Teutonic state. That means the state has a German element, original and derivative, which numerically overshadows the American, English, Irish, Scandinavian, and other stocks also represented in the Badger blend. It is not necessary to quarrel with this widely accepted theorem, though some of the corollaries drawn from it can be shown to be unhistorical; and one can demonstrate statistically that if Wisconsin now is, or at any census period was, a Teutonic state she began her statehood career in 1848 as a Yankee state and thus continued for many years with consequences social, economic, political, religious, and moral which no mere racial substitutions have had power to obliterate. My purpose in the present paper is to present, from local sources, some discussion of the relations of Yankee and Teuton to the land—a theme which ought to throw light on the process of substitution mentioned, revealing how the Teuton came into possession of vast agricultural areas once firmly held by the Yankee.

The agricultural occupation of southern Wisconsin, which brought the first tide of immigration from New England, western New York, northern Pennsylvania, and Ohio—the Yankee element— may be said roughly to have been accomplished within the years 1835 and 1850. The settlements which existed prior to 1835 were in the lead region of the southwest, at Green Bay, and at Prairie du Chien. The population of the lead mines was predominantly of southern and southwestern origin; that of the two other localities—the ancient seats of the Indian trade and more recent centers of military defense—was mainly French-

Canadian. When, in 1836, a territorial census was taken, it was found that the three areas named had an aggregate population of nearly 9000, of which more than 5000 was in the lead region included in the then county of Iowa. The Green Bay region (Brown County) was next, and the Prairie du Chien settlement (Crawford County) smallest.

The census, however, recognized a new county, Milwaukee, whose territory had been severed from the earlier Brown County. It was bounded east by Lake Michigan, south by Illinois, west by a line drawn due north from the Illinois line to Wisconsin River at the Portage, and north by a line drawn due east from the Portage to the lake. In terms of present-day divisions, the Milwaukee County of 1836 embraced all of Kenosha, Racine, Walworth, Rock, Jefferson, Waukesha, and Milwaukee counties, nearly all of Ozaukee, Washington, and Dodge, a strip of eastern Green County, and most of Dane and Columbia. In that imperial domain the census takers found a grand total of 2900 persons, or almost exactly one-fourth of the population of the entire territory.

Two significant facts distinguish the Milwaukee County census list from the lists of Brown, Crawford, and Iowa counties— the recency of the settlement and the distinctive local origin of the settlers. These people had only just arrived, most of them in the early months of 1836. One could almost count on his ten fingers the individuals who were there prior to the summer of 1835. In reality they were not yet "settled," for most of the rude claim huts—mere shelters of the pre-log house stage— were haunted at night and shadowed at noonday by men only, resident families being still rare, though many were on the lakes, at the ports of Milwaukee and Chicago, or on the overland trail which was to end at the cabin door. It was the prophecy of new communities, not the actuality, that the census taker chronicled when he recorded the names of claim takers with



Drawn by Mary Stuart Foster.

the number of persons, of each sex, comprising their households. We have reason to believe that the numbers were inscribed almost as cheerfully when the persons represented by them were still biding in the old home or were en route west, as when they were physically present in the settler's cabin or in the dooryard, eager to be counted.

Unlike the other populations of Wisconsin at that time, the vast majority of Milwaukee County settlers were Northeasterners. Such evidence as we have indicates that New York supplied more than half, the New England states, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Michigan nearly all of the balance.[1] New York's title to primacy in peopling Wisconsin is exhibited, most impressively, in the statistics of the 1850 census. At that time native Americans constituted 63 per cent of the total and New Yorkers had 36 per cent of the native majority. Native Americans predominated in all but three of the twenty-six counties, and in all but five those who were natives of New York, added to the natives of Wisconsin, were a majority of the American born. The exceptions were the four lead mining counties of Grant, Iowa, Lafayette, and Green, together with Richland, which, however, had so few inhabitants that its case is divested of any significance.

The three counties which, in 1850, showed a majority of foreign born inhabitants were Manitowoc, Milwaukee, and Washington (the last named including the present Ozaukee County); and in each case Germans constituted more than half of that majority. Together those three counties had over 20,000, which was considerably more than one-half of all the Germans (38,054) domiciled in Wisconsin at that time. The other lake shore counties, together with Calumet, Fond du Lac, Dodge, Jefferson, and Waukesha,

[1] As the tide of emigration from the northeastern states rose higher, it bore along a goodly number who were not of the old American stock, particularly English and Irish, with some Scotch and Germans. Yet, many of these were natives of the states named and, if foreign born, had enjoyed so long an apprenticeship to the Yankee system of life as to enable them faithfully to represent it.

accounted for 15,000 of the balance, leaving about 3000 scattered over the rest of the state. Thus the area embraced by Lake Michigan, Lake Winnebago and lower Fox River, the upper reaches of Rock River, and the south boundary of Jefferson, Waukesha, and Milwaukee counties was all strongly and in the main distinctively German.

Investigating the causes which may have operated to concentrate the German population within such clearly defined geographic limits, our first inquiry concerns the land on which settlement was taking place. And here we find that the distinguishing fact marking off the region in which Germans abounded from most of the other settled or partially settled areas of the state was its originally thickly wooded character. In a way almost startling, and superficially conclusive, the German settlements coincided with the great maple forest of southeastern Wisconsin, spreading also through the included pine forest on Lake Michigan south of Green Bay.

Returning now to the Yankee element, we find that although it was strong in all of the settled districts save the five counties named, it was more completely dominant in some districts than in others. For example, in Walworth County the northeastern states furnished 96.5 per cent of the American population, while 3.5 per cent was furnished by sixteen other states. The foreign born constituted less than 16 per cent of the total.[2] Walworth County was a section of the new "Yankee Land," which included in its boundaries also the counties of Racine and Kenosha, Rock, and at that time parts of Waukesha and Jefferson. Nowhere in that region were foreigners very numerous, and in many localities non-English speaking foreigners were almost scarce.

Physically, this new Yankee Land comprised those por-

[2] Of whom England, Ireland, Scotland, and Canada combined furnished 1920, Germany 460, and Norway 340.

tions of the prairies and openings of southern Wisconsin which lay not more than from sixty to seventy-five miles from the lake ports at Milwaukee, Racine, and Kenosha. The region was just as characteristically "open country" as that occupied so extensively by Germans was forested. One land type, the glacial marsh or swale—good for hay and pasture—was common to the two districts of country. But for the rest, the Yankee's land was all ready for the plow if it was prairie, and if oak openings the labor of felling the scattered trees and dragging them away before the breaking team was comparatively light.

The German, on the other hand, in order to subdue his land to the requirements of successful tillage, must attack with ax, mattock, and firebrand each successive acre, patiently slashing and burning, hewing and delving, till by dint of unremitting toil extended over an indefinite number of years his farm became "cleared."

Shall we therefore repeat, as the sober verdict of history, the statement often heard, that in settling this new country the Yankee showed a preference for open land, the German for woodland? On the face of the census returns that seems to be the case, and if our evidence were limited to the census such a conclusion would be well nigh inescapable. Fortunately, he who deals with culture history problems of the American West has this advantage over the Greenes and the Lamprechts of Europe, that on such matters his evidence is minutely particular, while theirs is general to the point of vagueness. No one will doubt that the Yankee staked his claim in the open lands because he preferred those lands on account of the ease with which a farm could be made. The question is, whether the German's presence in the woods rather than in the openings or on the prairies was with him a matter of preference so far as land selection in itself was concerned.

Timber for shelter, fuel, building, and fencing was an

important consideration to all settlers, including the Yankees. In another connection I have shown, from the records of land entries, that the Yankee settlers in a prevailingly prairie township of Racine County took up first every acre of forested land, together with the prairie lands and marsh lands adjoining the woods, while they shunned for some years the big, open, unsheltered prairie where farms would be out of immediate touch with woods.[3] Rather than take treeless lands near the lake shore, these settlers preferred to go farther inland where inviting combinations of groves, meadows, and dry prairie lands, or openings, could still be found in the public domain. Only gradually did American settlers overcome their natural repugnance to a shelterless, timberless farm home—a repugnance justified by common sense, but springing from the habit of generations. When, for economic reasons, they began to settle on the open prairies, the planting of quick-growing trees about the farmsteads was always esteemed a work of fundamental utility.

Yankee agricultural settlers found special inducements for going inland in search of ideal farm locations, in the glowing advertisements of Yankee speculators who early pioneered the open country far and wide. These speculators concerned themselves primarily with water powers for sawmill and gristmill sites and town sites. Yet power and town sites both depended for their development on the agricultural occupation of the surrounding country, and this made the speculators careful to locate their claims in areas of desirable lands which would soon be wanted. It also made them doubly active in proclaiming to immigrants the agricultural advantages of their chosen localities.

One may take up at random the land office records of townships in the older Wisconsin, and in practically every case find proof that the speculator was abroad in the land

[3] *Wisconsin Domesday Book, General Studies,* I. *History of Agriculture in Wisconsin,* chap. 2.

before the arrival of the farmer. Along the banks of navigable rivers he took up, early, such tracts as seemed to afford good steamboat landings, which might mean towns or villages also. Along smaller streams he engrossed potential water powers. In the prairie regions he seized the timbered tracts which commonly lay along the streams. And wherever nature seemed to have sketched the physical basis for a future town, there he drove his stakes and entered an area large enough at least for a municipal center.

In some portions, particularly of the earliest surveys, the speculator also absorbed a goodly share of the best farm land, which he held for an advance when the immigration of farmers became heavy. Other Americans, aside from Yankees, participated in these speculations, but the records show that the Yankee's reputation for alertness and sagacity in that line is not unmerited. For illustration, the plats of Dane County townships disclose among the original entrymen who bought their lands early, the names of well known speculators like James D. Doty, Lucius Lyon, the Bronsons, Cyrus Woodman, Hazen Cheney, and C. C. Washburn—all Yankees. In addition, we have distinguished New Englanders who probably never came west but invested through the agency of their Yankee correspondents. Among them are Daniel Webster, Edward Everett, Ralph Waldo Emerson, and Caleb Cushing.

To a considerable extent these speculators, in paying for government lands, employed military land warrants, usually purchased at a heavy discount. "Scripping" by this means became more common after the Mexican War. A German immigration leader wrote at the close of 1848: "There is a man living in Sheboygan who has already placed 344 of these warrants [each good for 160 acres] on government lands and intends next spring to place 200 more on tracts lying north of Fox River."[4] He did not say the man was a Yankee;

[4] William Dames, *Wie Sieht Es in Wiskonsin Aus* (Meurs, 1849).

possibly he deemed that information unnecessary. For, although the German sometimes bought warrants of the brokers in order to save the difference between the price of such warrants and the land office price of government land, he did not in the early years of the immigration speculate in farm lands.

Therein was one of the outstanding differences between him and the Yankee. The German could not be tolled into the interior by golden promises of unearned increments from the sale of city lots, of mill sites, or of choice farm lands which were going rapidly. His caution and his phlegm were a protection. He was not particularly responsive to the optimistic prophecies of the development of this region or that region in which this company or that prominent individual had interests. For these reasons, the German's motives as a land seeker were more legitimately economic and social than were those of the Yankee, and on the basis of such motives we can explain his settlement in the woods.

In his homeland the German villager loved the forest for its shelter, its recreational hospitality, and the benefits it conferred in necessary fuel, timber, bedding, and forage. A large proportion of the early German immigrants came from south German provinces dominated by such famous old forests as the Schwartzwald and the Odenwald. From considerations both of habit and of economy it was natural that in the New World they should make sure of an abundance of timber on the lands they sought for future homes. Yet, there is no reason to assume that the German, any more than the Yankee, courted the grilling labor of clearing heavily forested land— a labor to him the more formidable for the want of the Yankee's training in axmanship and his almost unbroken tradition of winning fields from forests. Some German pioneers who were self-helpful struck for the openings and the prairies, and like the Yankee chose for

their farms the ideal combination of wood, marsh, and open land whenever such a combination could be found within easy reach of the market.[5]

But Germans were less venturesome than Yankees, or more prudent, depending on the point of view. In the old home they were accustomed to haul their farm produce many miles in going to the markets and fairs. But there the roads were passable at all seasons. In the New World, where all was in the making, the roads were often impassable and always—except in winter—so rough and troublesome as to daunt those who were not to the manner born.[6] Hence the German settler's idea of what constituted a safe distance from the lake ports within which to open a farm differed from the Yankee's idea. There is one striking illustration of that difference. Along the Illinois boundary from Lake Michigan westward was the strip of prairie and openings twenty-four miles wide and seventy-eight long which was divided into Racine and Kenosha counties (on the lake), Walworth, and Rock. We have already called that region the new Yankee Land and have seen the Yankee farmers spread over it with seeming disregard to distance from the lake ports, each being intent rather on finding an ideal combination of desirable kinds of land. The three divisions of the strip contained almost equal numbers of Yankees—these people evidently believing that canals, roads, plank roads, and railways would come to them when needed, while a good farm location once lost was gone forever; and being willing also, until such improvements should come, to haul their crops sixty or seventy-five miles to market. Not so the few Germans who entered this Yankee Land prior to 1850. More than four-fifths of them were in the section nearest the lake (Racine and Kenosha

[5] For example, see William Dames, *Wie Sieht Es in Wiskonsin Aus.*

[6] See J. F. Diederichs, *Diary.* Translated by Emil Baensch. Account of a trip from Milwaukee to Manitowoc.

counties), and less than one-thirtieth in Rock County, the farthest west of the strip.

The movement into the prairies and openings of the southeast had been going on for about four years before the Germans began coming to Wisconsin, and so many selections of first choice, second choice, and even third choice land had been made that newcomers were already at a disadvantage in that region, especially if a number of them desired to settle near together in a body, which was the case of Old Lutheran congregations who made up the earliest German immigrations. Moreover, most of the Yankees were business-like farmers who generally planned for fairly large farms, in order to make money by raising wheat. They were mainly men who had sold small farms in the East in order to secure larger, or sons of large farmers. Most of them had money or credit to enable them to acquire land, construct buildings and fences, buy stock, and begin farming operations. Having found good land by canvassing the whole region, they were not to be dislodged until, with the failure of wheat crops at a later time, the spirit of emigration sent numbers of them to fresh wheat lands farther west, thus making opportunity for well-to-do Germans to buy their improved farms, which they did to a great extent.

Meantime, the forested lands pivoting on Milwaukee, the most promising of the lake ports, were open to entry at the land office or to purchase at private sale on easy terms. The Yankee had not altogether shunned those lands. There, as elsewhere, he had been looking for good investments, and the project for the Milwaukee and Rock River Canal, which was to traverse a portion of the forested area through the present Milwaukee, Waukesha, and Jefferson counties, favored speculation in farm lands as well as in mill sites and town sites. Besides, there is evidence that some of the poorer Yankee immigrants who felt unable at once to

maintain themselves on open land farms, often settled first in the woods, where they began making improvements with ax and fire, only to sell out promptly at an advance and go to the prairie or openings to establish permanent farms. But most of the forested land was still "Congress land" when the Germans began coming to Wisconsin.

The German "Pilgrims," as the first colony was called, arrived at Milwaukee early in October, 1839, their leader being Henry von Rohr. Within a month they had decided on a location, in the western part of township 9, range 21 east (the town of Mequon, Ozaukee County), and had made numerous purchases of government land. They selected a tract of high, rolling land, heavily timbered, well watered, and with an extensive marsh near by in the public domain which would furnish free hay and pasture.[7] The situation was similar to that which was chosen, near Watertown (in the town of Lebanon), a few years later by a German colony from the same region. They also took a tract of heavily timbered upland neighbored by an extensive marsh. "Here," said their leader, "we have both wood and hay" ("*Holz und Heu*").[8]

Many of the colonists in these two congregations were very poor. Those who had means lent to the indigent to enable them to emigrate. For them it would have been madness to go to the prairies, where such absolute necessities as fuel, building material, and fencing might cost ready money and at best would be difficult to procure. In the woods trees cut on the spot were used to build cabin and log house, stable, garden and field enclosure. Some of the German families were months without draft ox or even

[7] Those who filed with von Rohr and on the same day (Nov. 5, 1839) took up most of sections 17, 18, 19, and 20. All of these lands were described by the surveyor as "second rate" and all had a heavy forest covering consisting of sugar maple, lynn, birch, alder, black and white oak, ash, elm, ironwood, etc., together with some cedar in the swamps. The land lay on both sides of the creek, along which was some meadow, but the big marsh was farther east.

[8] William F. Whyte, "Settlement of Lebanon," in Wisconsin Historical Society, *Proceedings*, 1915, 105.

cow. All work was performed by hand, including the carrying of logs from the spot where the trees were felled to the place where they were to be rolled up to make the cabin wall. To such settlers, bringing timber from a distance would have been among the impossibilities. Their place was in the forest, where labor alone was required for making the beginnings of a self-sustaining home.

In thousands of later instances, Germans who came to Wisconsin on their own slender means were in a similar case to these early seekers of religious freedom. An immigrant of 1848, J. F. Diederichs, has left a diary and letters from which the process of home making in the woods can be reconstructed.[9] Diederichs, after considerable search, found eighty acres of good government land nine miles from Manitowoc, where early in winter he settled down to work alongside of several other Germans who were as poor as himself. The location was favorable, being near a port. "What good is there," he writes, "to possess the finest land and be 6, 8 or 10 days journey from market."[10] The first step was to build a cabin, the next to bring his family from Milwaukee and with a few dollars borrowed for the purpose to lay in supplies for them. Then he erected a comfortable log house and continued clearing till, by the middle of May, he had two acres ready partly for garden and partly for potatoes, corn, and beans to provide the family with food. Diederichs realized that "to begin such work at the age of 44 is some job," and recognized that not he and his wife but the children would be the chief beneficiaries. Nevertheless, the joy of creation was not wholly denied him. He had, he said, the "prettiest" location; house set on a commanding knoll, with a pure limpid stream flowing within a few yards of it, along whose course was some open land, making a "layout for the finest pastures."

[9] MS. translation by Emil Baensch.
[10] Page 29 in printed German edition.

And there was timber enough on his eighty to be worth $30,000 in the home town of Elberfelt. Of this, he would gladly make his friends in Germany a present of about $20,000 worth!

The question of nearness to market was a determinant also in the cases of Germans who were well enough off to take open lands. William Dames found, for himself and associates, a favorable tract near Ripon. It contained 160 acres prairie, 320 acres openings, and 160 acres of low prairie or meadow land. The advantages of that neighborhood, he wrote, were these: first, the prospectively near market, by way of the Fox River Canal to be completed the following spring; second, the excellence of the soil; third, the ease with which the land could be made into productive farms. There one need not subject himself to the murderous toil incident to farm making in the woods. And, fourth, the healthfulness of the climate and the superb drinking water.

One bit of information which Dames conveyed to his fellow Germans who were contemplating immigration to Wisconsin, was that the Yankees (by which term he described all native Americans) and the Scotch settlers of that neighborhood were becoming eager to sell their partly improved farms, preparatory to moving into the newer region north of Fox River. He advised Germans able to do so to buy such farms, which were to be had in plenty not only in Fond du Lac County but near Watertown, near Delafield, and even near Milwaukee—prices varying with the improvements, nearness to the city, etc. He seemed to think the Germans but ill adapted to pioneering. Let the German immigrant, he said, buy a partly cleared farm; then he could follow his calling in ways to which he was accustomed. Moreover, since such farms produced fairly well even under the indifferent treatment accorded them by the Yankee farmers, the German farmer need have no fear of failure.

The advice to purchase farms already begun was widely followed by the financially competent German immigrants. Ownership records of one Milwaukee County township show that the lands were originally taken mainly by Irish and Americans, yet in 1850 nearly one-half of the settlers were Germans; and there is no reason to regard that case as singular. Probably the Germans who bought improved farms were as numerous as those who bought Congress land. Many poor men worked as farm hands for some years and then bought small improved farms in preference to buying Congress land.

The experience of an 1849 immigrant, Johannes Kerler, illustrates the less common case of Germans who arrived with considerable means. Kerler brought with him to Milwaukee a sum, derived from the sale of a profitable business, which would have enabled him to buy scores of mill sites and town sites in the public domain. Instead, he limited his investment to a 200-acre farm seven miles from the city, paying for the land, including all crops and livestock, $17 per acre. The buildings consisted of a log house and a cabin. One-half the farm was divided between plow land and meadow; the balance—100 acres—supported a dense forest growth. Kerler at once erected a barn for his cattle, and a good two-story frame house for the family. Then he went to farming and quickly transformed the earlier crude homestead into a fruitful and beautiful farm, the show place of the neighborhood.[11]

Social forces are among the imponderables, and yet their influence in controlling the distribution of immigration must have been considerable. The fact that nearly all incoming Germans landed in Milwaukee, where were acquaintances and often friends, tended in a hundred subtle ways to attach the newcomers to that community. Before

[11] This farm, located in the town of Greenfield, Milwaukee County, was afterwards divided among Kerler's three sons. A portion of it, at least, is I believe still in the possession of the family. Louis F. Frank, *Pioneer Jahre* (Milwaukee, 1911).

1850 Milwaukee had come to be looked upon as a German city. "There," said one immigrant, "more German than English is spoken." It had its German churches, schools, clubs, societies, and recreational features, all of which constituted powerful attractions. It was the most important industrial center of the state, with a relatively large demand for the labor which with farm work was the poorer immigrant's sole means of getting a financial start. In addition, it was the commercial metropolis, and that the German was firmly tethered to his market has already become clear.

The construction of the Milwaukee and Mississippi Railroad, begun in 1849 and completed to Prairie du Chien in 1857, partially freed the German immigrant from his dread of being marooned in the interior. Desirable government lands accessible to the proposed railroad were generally taken up several years before the completion of the road, and among the entrymen in certain districts were many newly arrived Germans. This was true to some extent in Dane County, but more noticeably so farther west. In Iowa County and in Grant were sheltered pleasant and fertile valleys, opening toward the Wisconsin, which would be served by the railroad when completed, and which had long been in touch with the world by means of steamers plying on the Wisconsin. In those valleys, and on the wider ridges between them, the Germans competed with others for the choicest locations on government and state lands. Land entry records for two townships in Blue River valley show, by 1860, out of an aggregate of 122 foreign born families 59 of German origin, while the American families numbered 93. A similar proportion doubtless obtained in other towns south of the river.

Directly opposite these townships, in the same survey range but lying on the north side of Wisconsin River, was the town of Eagle, whose settlement was almost exactly

contemporaneous with that of the Blue River valley. But Eagle, in 1860, had 20 foreign born families to 108 American, and of the 20 only 13 were German.

Inasmuch as the people on the two banks of the river had a common market—Muscoda, which was a station on the railroad—and the lands of Eagle were more fertile and quite as well watered, the question why the Germans avoided that town and made homes south of the river is surely interesting, and possibly significant.

There were two important differences between the two districts. In Blue River the valley land, to use the surveyor's phrase, was "thinly timbered with oak," while in the valley of Mill Creek, or Eagle Creek, opposite was a dense forest dominated by the sugar maple but containing big timber of several varieties, and dense undergrowth. In a word, it was a heavily timbered area. Now the Germans near Lake Michigan had given ample proof of gallantry in attacking forest covered farms, yet when the choice was before them of taking such land in Richland County or easily cleared land of poorer quality in Grant, almost with one accord they selected the latter.

We cannot be certain that the difference in the timbered character of the land was the sole motive determining the choice, though doubtless it was the most important. The railroad ran on the south side of the river and the principal trading center was on that side. Settlers in Blue River valley could therefore reach the market by a direct, unbroken haul with teams over public roads. Those in Eagle at first were obliged to use the ferry in crossing the river, and later they had to cross on a toll bridge except in midwinter, if the river was frozen to a safe depth, when they crossed on the ice. These transportation conditions might have deterred some Germans from settling north of the river, even if the lands there had been as lightly timbered as those on the south side. Taken together, the two causes

virtually served to blockade that district against settlers of their type.

But if the Germans declined the rôle of foresters, by refusing to settle in a partially isolated town like Eagle, the Yankees did the same. New Yorkers and New Englanders were scarcer there than Prussians or Hanoverians. The town was occupied mainly by families from Ohio, Kentucky, Missouri, Indiana—with a few from Virginia and North Carolina; in short, by men who had enjoyed or endured a recent experience as frontiersmen in heavily wooded regions. So many belonged to the class described by Eggleston in *The Circuit Rider*, *The Hoosier Schoolmaster*, and *The Graysons*, that the name "Hoosier Hollow," applied to one of the coulees, seems perfectly normal.

To the Yankee, we may be sure, the heavy woods in the town of Eagle were a sufficient deterrent to settlement there. The Germans shunned it either because they disliked heavy clearing when it could be avoided and when no compensating advantages offered, as was the case near the lake shore; or because they disliked the risk and the expense of crossing the river to market; or for both of these reasons combined. Probably either reason, singly, would have sufficed.

By way of summary, we may say that as a land seeker the Yankee's range exceeded that of the German. Both clung to the lake ports as their market base. But the Yankee's optimism painted for him a roseate future based on an experimental knowledge of material development for which the German's imagination was largely unprepared. The New Yorker had witnessed, in his home state, the almost miraculous transformation of rural conditions through the construction of a system of canals; and canal building affected Vermont, Pennsylvania, and Ohio only less profoundly than the Empire State. To the Yankee, therefore, who cast his lot in the favored lands of Wisconsin it seemed

that nothing could halt the march of improvement. The chief point was to obtain prompt possession of the right kind of farm. Having this, he could count on doing a big agricultural business as a wheat grower, which promised generous financial rewards. But if for any reason he failed to get the right kind of farm, if improvements were unexpectedly dilatory, or if the land ceased to respond to his demand for wheat and more wheat, he "sold out" with slight compunction and went elsewhere, confident of success on a new frontier, especially the great wheat plains. To him land was a desirable commodity, but by no means a sacred trust.

The German, on the other hand, came from a land of very gradual change. Although agricultural conditions there were actually considerably modified in the first half of the nineteenth century, he still, for the most part, looked upon his dwindling patrimony as the basis, not of a money making business, but of a livelihood. If, by the combined labor of all members of the household, the family could be fed, clothed, and sheltered, the heavy obligations to church and state redeemed, and a few *gulden* sequestered for times of emergency, the peasant was content. His land was his home. It had been his father's, grandfather's, great-grandfather's. The original estate was parted into ever more and smaller divisions, as generation succeeded generation, until the tracts of many holders were at last too small to support the families. These had no choice but to sell and go to the city, or go to America. This condition was one of the most general economic causes of the large German immigration to this and other states. When the German farmer, or other German, came to Wisconsin and bought a piece of land, one purpose dominated his mind—to make a farm for a home, and establish a family estate. In the beginning it did not occur to him to speculate in land, although in this as in other things he proved an apt pupil. Accustomed to a very limited acreage, he was not

like the Yankee ambitious to secure a large domain. Habituated to intensive tillage, a partly made farm having ten or twelve acres of cleared land was to him an ample equipment for making a living in agriculture. Enlarging fields meant a surplus and mounting prosperity. If he took raw land, he could count on clearing enough in a couple of winters with his own hands to raise food crops, and he looked upon the prospect of spending ten, twenty, or twenty-five years in fully subduing his 80- or 100-acre farm with no unreasoning dread or carking impatience. The remark of Diederichs characterized the German preëmptor: "If I once have land enough under cultivation to raise our food supplies, I will win through." Whereas the Yankee wanted to break 40, 60, 80, or 100 acres of prairie or openings the first year, the German contemplated the possession of a similar acreage of tillable land in ten, fifteen, or twenty years.

But once in possession of a tract of land, the German tended to hold on, through good years and bad years, as if his farm were the one piece of land in the world for him and his. The Yankee, already given to change in the East, tended in the West, under the stimulus of machine-aided wheat culture, to regard land lightly, and to abandon one tract for another on the principle that the supply was inexhaustible and that one social environment was apt to be as satisfactory as another. He had before him the great wheat plains, the Pacific coast, the inland empire and the parks of the Rocky Mountains. Latterly his range has widened to include the plains of the Assiniboin, the Saskatchewan, and Peace River. For more than half a century he was free to roam, to pick and choose land even as he picked and chose in southern Wisconsin—the slower, more cautious, or more timid German buying his farm when he was ready to sell.

It was peaceful penetration, involving no sabre rattling

but much canny bargaining, sober casting up of accounts, and cheerful jingling of specie. The Yankees, more speculative to the last, more imaginative and space-free, pressed ever toward the borders of the primitive, drawn by the same lure of wealth quickly and easily acquired which brought so many of them to the prairies of Wisconsin in the earlier days. The Germans, fearing distance more than debt, confident in their ability to make grain crops grow and farm stock fatten if cnly they had a sure market for cattle and for crops, remained behind to till the abandoned fields and occupy the deserted homes. Thus, so far as Wisconsin's farming areas are concerned, the shadow of the Yankee has grown less in the land, while the tribe of the Teuton has increased.

What tendencies may have been induced by the passing of the frontier and the resurgence of a population deprived of its former temptation to expand into new regions; what social changes were implied in the agricultural revolution which compels the daily application of science to the business of farming; what readjustments in relationships were involved in the modification of the Teutonic type with the coming upon the stage of the second and third generations of Germans; how the Germans in turn have reacted to the competition of groups having their origin in other foreign countries, like the Scandinavians, Bohemians, and Poles—all these are questions the answers to which would aid us to determine "where we are and whither we are tending." But their discussion will have to be postponed to later issues of this magazine.

THE YANKEE AND THE TEUTON IN WISCONSIN

JOSEPH SCHAFER

II DISTINCTIVE TRAITS AS FARMERS

The agricultural traits and peculiarities of the nineteenth century Yankees were the resultant of partly contradictory forces, some of them evolutionary, others devolutionary. In England the period of the Puritan migration to America and the half-century antecedent thereto was a time of vigorous agricultural change marked by many improvements in cultivation and in land management. The agrarian revolution introduced by the transfer of church properties to aymen was accompanied by enclosures and a widespread tendency to shift from an uneconomical crop economy to an agriculture governed by business principles. In this new system the production of farm animals—especially sheep—the fertilization of the soil, rotation of crops, and livestock improvement were main factors. Forces and interests were set in motion at this time which, a century or so later, made farming the concern of many of England's leading minds, whose wise and persistent experimentation benefited the whole civilized world.

The few thousand immigrants to the New England colonies, founders of America's Yankeedom, were not all farmers. Some were fishermen, some were small tradesmen, others craftsmen; a few were professional men and soldiers. But a goodly proportion were land owners and peasants, and all had a more or less direct knowledge of the principles and processes which governed English agriculture. The influence of habit, always a determining factor in the transfer of civilization from an old land to a new, caused the occasional reproduction in New England of some features of English farming, especially under village conditions. The

common field system in Old Salem reflected a disappearing element in English farm life, while the commons of hay, commons of pasture, commons of wood, and commons of mast, with their administrative "hay reeve," "hog reeve," "wood reeve," herdsmen, and shepherds, mark a natural imitating of the ways of parish life at home.

But there were differences in the conditions "at home" and in America as wide as those symbolized by the terms "insular," and "continental," applied to the geography of the two countries. Chief among these differences were the generally forested character of the new-world land, the necessity of adapting tillage to an unfamiliar climate, in part to new food cereals, especially Indian corn, and the absolute dependence upon markets which could be created or opened by the colonists themselves. It was in fact the problem of a market which so long subordinated farming proper in New England to a species of country living in which small patches of arable supplied most of the family's food, while forest and stream were the objects of exploitation for marketable furs, for medicinal plants, and for timber products. Yankee ingenuity, which justly became proverbial, had an assignable cause. It was not an inherited quality, or one which was imported and conserved; it was a distinctively American product, explained by the situation of the average New England farmer—who was, by force of circumstances, more of a mechanic and woods worker than a cultivator of the soil. His house, especially in winter, was a busy workshop where clapboards, staves, hoops, heading, ax handles, and a variety of other articles of utility and salability were always in course of manufacture. All the farm "tinkering" was additional thereto.

In his contest with the forest for a livelihood, the Yankee farmer was gradually changed from the eastern New England village type to that of the American "pioneer." His axmanship was unrivaled, his skill in woodscraft, his re-

sourcefulness in the face of untried situations were equal to the best. When the time came for taking agricultural possession of broad spaces in the northern and western interior, the Yankee was the instrument, shaped by four generations of American history, to achieve that object.[1]

This general "handiness" was gained not without a partial loss of such acquired knowledge and skill in agriculture proper as the first immigrants brought from England. Close, careful cultivation was impossible among the stumps and girdled trees of new clearings; the amplitude of natural meadows and the superabundance of "browse" relieved settlers from the sharp necessity of providing artificially for the winter feeding of cattle; the mast of oak trees and the wealth of nuts, supplementing summer "greens," roots, grass, and wild apples, supplied most of the requisites for finishing off pork. Under these conditions farming even at best was an entirely different thing from what it had been at home. At its worst, it was a crude process, affording a vegetative kind of existence, but nothing more. In fact, farming in the New England states hardly attained the status of a business until the nineteenth century, though in some portions it gave the farmer and his family a generous living and afforded a few luxuries. It made thousands of persons independent proprietors who could not have reached that station at home; it gave the farmers as a class a commanding influence in politics and society; "embattled," it enabled them to wrest their country's independence from the awkward hands of a bungling monarchy. In short, it contributed incalculably to their importance as men in history. The indications are, however, that as farmers the

[1] Michel Chevalier, *Society, Manners, and Politics in the United States* (Boston, 1839), chap. x, 112-113, 117, says: "Loading a wagon with a plough, a bed, a barrel of salt meat, the indispensable supply of tea and molasses, a Bible and a wife, and with his axe on his shoulder, the Yankee sets out for the West, without a servant, without an assistant, often without a companion, to build himself a log hut, six hundred miles from his father's roof, and clear away a spot for a farm in the midst of the boundless forest. . . . He is incomparable as a pioneer, unequalled as a settler of the wilderness."

fourth generation of *Mayflower* descendants were decidedly inferior to the original Pilgrims and Puritans.

The third generation were probably less skillful than the fourth. For, by the time of the Revolution there were farming areas in southern New England that were looking up. Timothy Dwight, near the end of the century, found and recorded some of the evidences of a movement to improve cultivation, to fertilize the soil, to better the character of farm livestock—a movement which had been going forward under impulses communicated from England, where the eighteenth century was peculiarly fruitful in agricultural development. Dwight was enough of an idealist to appreciate the limits of the improvement thus far reached. Yet he did insist, with evident justice, that the farming of the Connecticut valley and of eastern Massachusetts was at least respectable. Fields were well cleared and carefully cultivated, clover began to be used as a feeding and green manure crop, the beginnings had been made of a system of rotation of crops, livestock was of relatively good quality—especially in certain Connecticut towns which were already noted for the weight of the bullocks they furnished to the commissary department of Washington's army. By that time, also, leading men in New England lent their influence toward the building up of the agricultural interest; agricultural societies were organized and essays on agriculture came to have considerable vogue. Some importations of purebred livestock from England took place. The first merino sheep were brought in from France, then larger numbers from Spain by Consul William Jarvis. In 1810 Elkanah Watson established his Berkshire County Agricultural Society, with the county fair which became the model for subsequent county and state fairs the country over.

When Tom Paine predicted in 1776 that an independent America would prosper "as long as eating continues to be

the custom of Europe,"[2] he assumed one point about which some doubt might in future arise: Would Europe always have the wherewithal to purchase American foodstuffs at prices which would compensate our people for growing them and delivering them to the market? During the continuance of the long revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, Europe managed to make good Paine's prophecy, and prices at the close of the wars ruled high. There followed the great expansion era which spread American farmers over the New West, both south and north, into which Yankees entered to a large extent.

The good prices did not hold. Food could be raised cheaply, but markets were costly to reach, even with the new wizardry of the steamboat, and something gigantic was called for in the way of internal improvements. The answer was at first canals, afterwards railroads. At the same time, something had to be done by the farmer himself if the entire structure of American agriculture, now becoming conscious of its own embarrassments, was not to go down. The answer to this was *better farming.* It was in 1819, the panic year, that John S. Skinner founded at Baltimore the *American Farmer*, first of the distinctively farm journals which almost immediately had a small group of successors. Among them were the *New England Farmer*, the *Albany Cultivator*, the *Pennsylvania Farmer*, the *Rural New Yorker*, the *Vermont Farmer*, the *Ohio Farmer*, etc.

Yankeedom was a good social soil for these journals. The all but universal literacy of the people, their curiosity, their love of argument and disputation, their habit of experimentation, all tended both to give currency to the new ideas presented and to sift the practical and valuable from the merely theoretic and futile. Thus was introduced, in a period of prevailing "hard times," a meliorating influence destined to reach a very large proportion of the

[2] See his *Common Sense* (Philadelphia, 1791).

settlers in those sections, particularly Vermont, western New York, northern Pennsylvania and Ohio, from which the bulk of the Yankee pioneers of Wisconsin were drawn a quarter of a century later. The effect of county and state fairs was to deepen and fructify the influence of the new agricultural press.

It will be understood that the actual "shoring up" of agricultural practice came about with relative slowness. Yet, it soon began here and there, and by a kind of mild infection spread gradually over wide areas. Only in crisis periods, with the introduction of new methods to suit new market conditions, was progress ever very rapid. To illustrate, as early as 1820 Josiah Quincy was advocating and practising the summer soiling of cattle, especially milch cows, and demonstrating the profitableness of the system for the region near Boston. It was a long time before soiling became common even in that district, but this experiment engendered better care of livestock. The same careful, experimental farmer demonstrated the economy of using good-sized whole potatoes for seed, as against the practice of planting seed ends and small tubers; other farmers were slow to adopt the idea, which is not yet universally followed, yet some improvement doubtless came from the publication of Quincy's findings.

What, then, were the general farming habits of the Yankees who form the background of Wisconsin's pioneer age? First of all, they lived in decent houses which were usually of lumber. Dwight contended that not one New England village in a hundred was disfigured with the presence of even one log house. He also gives the result of a count made in 1810 of the log houses along the road from New Haven to Windsor in Vermont, thence across the Green Mountains to Middlebury, and back by a direct route to New Haven, a distance of over 460 miles, much of it through new settlements. It showed only fifteen to

Middlebury and thirty-two on the return route. It seems to have been a matter of pride with the Yankee to desert his pioneer log house as quickly as possible. His personal skill with tools, and abundance of saw timber, made the construction of a frame house a family undertaking calling for labor indeed, but only a minimum of hired skill; and for little material involving the outlay of actual money. So the frame houses rose wherever the Yankees settled. Along the great road from Albany to Buffalo, in western New York, they began to spring up before the settlements were ten years old. When, about twenty-five years later, travelers passed that way they saw many houses of squared, framed timbers, covered over neatly with boards at the sides and ends, and roofed with shingles.[3] These common frame houses were sufficiently inartistic, no doubt. Perhaps, as one traveler remarks, they did look like "huge packing boxes." Similar architectural designs can be seen scattered over the West—and the East, too—at this late date. Still, they were more commodious than the log houses, and improved the families' living conditions. The next stage was likely to mark a very distinct advance. "In the more cleared and longer settled parts of the country," says a none too sympathetic English traveler, "we saw many detached houses, which might almost be called villas, very neatly got up, with rows of wooden columns in front, aided by trees and tall shrubs running round and across the garden which was prettily fenced in, and embellished with a profusion of flowers." Yankees had the habit of building by the roadside, whatever the economic disadvantages of such a situation, because it enabled them to keep in touch with the world—a reason which is by no means frivolous, and for them highly characteristic.

We have no such definite account of the Yankee farmers'

[3] See Captain Basil Hall, *Travels in North America in the Years 1827 and 1828* (Edinburgh, 1829), i, 130.

barns as of those of Pennsylvania Germans. It is true that Dwight, speaking for the older New England, suggests that the barn was apt to be a much better structure than the house. The custom, however, noted by travelers in New York and elsewhere, of letting cattle run at large all winter without shelter other than trees and brush, and perhaps the straw pile or rick of marsh hay, argues that stabling was furnished for only a minimum number of work oxen, horses—if such there were—and perhaps in some cases cows in milk. It undoubtedly was not the practice to house stock cattle, or even—except in isolated cases—to feed them in sheds. The advocates of careful sheltering who wrote for the agricultural journals recognized that the weight of opinion was against sheltering stock. They compromised with that opinion by recommending sheds for young stock and dry cows, and warm barns only for milking cows and work animals.[4] Yet, some of the leading cattle feeders of the Genesee valley, as late as the year 1842, were content to scatter loads of hay over meadows and through brush patches for the hundreds of beef cattle they were wintering.[5]

The livestock, except sheep and pigs, was still by 1840 prevailingly of no breed. Nevertheless, Durhams and Devons were coming into use. The Patroon stock of shorthorns, introduced in 1824 from England by Stephen Van Rensellaer, of Albany, gained its first customers apparently among the English farmers of western New York, but gradually made its way among the Yankees as well. Other importations were soon made, so that by 1840 there were several prominent herds of purebreds in that section of the state. In 1842 it was said of the Genesee County Fair that "with the exception of some working oxen and one cow not a single animal of native cattle was in the yard. All were either pure or grade Durhams or Devons. . . .

[4] *American Agriculturist*, i (1842), 115 ff.

[5] Captain Robert Barclay, *Agricultural Tour in the United States* . . . (London, 1842), 41.

Bulls were shown by some six or seven competitors. Among them were four thoroughbred ones and one of those imported."[6] It is clear that by the time emigration to Wisconsin began to take place, actual progress had been made and the entire body of Yankee farmers had been indoctrinated with the idea of better livestock. Sheep and pigs were already largely improved, the former prevailingly through the cross with the merinos, the latter with Berkshires and other English breeds. The Morgan horse, a Vermont product, was gaining wide popularity.

From what has been said of the care of livestock, it follows that the possibilities of the farm for the manufacture of fertilizer were generally neglected. English travelers were apt to insist that this neglect was universal, but there were, of course, numerous exceptions. Farming was extensive, not intensive. Lands were cleared by chopping or "slashing" the timber, burning brush and logs, then harrowing among the stumps to cover the first-sown wheat seed. In a few years, with the rotting of the smaller stumps and the roots, the plow could be used, though always with embarrassment on account of the large stumps which thickly studded the fields. These disappeared gradually, being allowed to stand till so fully decayed that a few strokes with ax or mattock would dislodge them. As late as 1830 many fields in western New York were stump infested.

Wheat was the great, almost the sole, market crop, and it was grown year after year till the soil ceased to respond. From bumper yields of twenty-five or thirty bushels per acre the returns fell off to twenty, fifteen, and then twelve, ten, or even eight. The process of decline was well under way when the immigration to Wisconsin set in, and already the turn had come toward a more definite livestock economy, which in large portions of New York soon gave rise to a system of factory cheese making. A

[6] *American Agriculturist*, i, 311.

A FARM NEAR ROCHESTER, NEW YORK, IN 1827

From Captain Basil Hall's *Forty Etchings from Sketches Made with the Camera Lucida.* London, 1829

main reason for the removal to the West, on the part of farmers whose holdings were too small to make successful stock farms, or who refused to abandon wheat raising as a business, was that lands in the West could be had already cleared by nature. Many half-cleared farms, with customary buildings and fences, could in the forties be purchased in western New York for from four to eight dollars per acre. Instead of buying these farms, the young men preferred going to Michigan, Illinois, Iowa, or Wisconsin, those having such farms for sale doing likewise after selling out to neighbors, usually the larger farmers, who elected to remain and change their system of farming. In Vermont we have a similar story, in Ohio the same. The Yankee farmers who came to Wisconsin were generally at home either small farmers or the sons of farmers large or small; while a certain proportion of the larger farmers, by reason of debt or desire to extend their business, also sold out and came west to buy cheap lands on the prairies or in the openings.

An agriculture which dates from before the time of Tacitus, and which acquired permanent characteristics from the influence of Roman merchants, monastics, and feudatories in Roman and medieval times, was bound to differ widely and even fundamentally from the agriculture of a far flung American frontier. The Germans who met the Yankee immigrants in primitive Wisconsin brought an inheritance of habit and training analogous to that of the English Puritan emigrants to New England, but with the difference that the Germans' training had continued two hundred years longer, on similar lines. They were old-world cultivators, the Yankees new-world cultivators.

Tacitus says in one place: "The Germans live scattered and apart, as a spring, a hill, or a wood entices them."[7]

[7] *Germania* (translated slightly differently in University of Pennsylvania *Translations and Reprints*), 11.

Nineteenth century German economists complained that German farmsteads were seated often most inconveniently with reference to the management of the farm lands pertaining to them. They had been established, in the days of long ago, by lakeside, brook, or river under conditions in which access to water was the most important single consideration. They had never been moved, although gradually the arable stretched far back from the dwelling, and the pasture perhaps was located in a wholly detached area.[8] This description applies to portions of northern Germany where farms were large and farming had the status of a regular and dignified business.

Many individuals and families came to Wisconsin from districts like Mecklenburg, Prussia, Pomerania, though in the emigrations of the 1840's and fifties the great majority were from southern and central German states. It will be one of the interesting inquiries in connection with our study of local influences in Wisconsin towns (*Domesday Book Studies*), how far the special regional inheritances of foreign born settlers manifested themselves in Wisconsin communities. The presumption, about the north German, would be that his farming operations would tend to be on a large scale, under a business system which—in this new land—would slough off such anacronisms as the dislocated farmstead, and present the features of an ideal establishment. But it may be that the forest was such a powerful leveler as to obliterate most of the regional distinctions among immigrants. Our chief concern, at all events, is with that great body of German farmers, and intending farmers, who came from the southwestern states of the recent Empire, especially Alsace, Baden, Württemberg, Rhine Palatinate, Rhenish Prussia, Hesse, Nassau, Westphalia—to some extent Bavaria and Saxony.

[8] J. H. von Thünen, *Der Isolierte Staat* (Berlin, 1875), 103 ff., "Ueber die Lage der Höfe in Mecklenburg."

The fundamental facts about the home conditions of these people, so far as they were farmers at home, were the smallness of their holdings, their intensive cultivation, and the almost universal village type of life. Travelers of about 1840 describe the typical middle Rhine country as a highly cultivated plain without division hedges or fences other than the tree-bordered roads, with no separate farm dwellings and with no livestock in sight. The crops of several kinds being arranged in various shaped fields, patches, and strips, the plain looked like the proverbial "crazy-quilt." Villages were huddled at the edges of woods, and occasionally in the midst of the cultivated area. Their houses, which were not arranged on a regular plan, were usually large stone structures, the farm yard, with tools, implements, manure and compost heaps, occupying a kind of court at the rear.

As a rule, all animals were housed winter and summer. Here was an important difference to the farming of the north, where large herds of cattle could be seen pasturing ample meadows, or ruminating in the shade of buildings or of woods. The soiling system was universally practiced in summer. Grass land being scarce and precious, feed for the cows was laboriously gathered along the brookside, in the open spaces of the forest, along all the roads, in the cemeteries, and the greens before the houses. The weeds and thinnings from the growing crops went to the same object. Vegetable tops were a great resource in late summer and fall, and patches of clover, while insuring green feed, furnished hay as well. In places the growing of sugar beets for the market was a leading agricultural enterprise, and the tops of the beets were carefully cured for winter feed.

The cultivation was intensive both in that it aimed at the maximum produce from given areas, and in that the crops raised included some which called for very special

care. Some sections grew tobacco, in connection with which much hand work was indispensable. This crop also called for care in seed selection, in germinating, and in preparing the ground for the reception of the young plants. Beet culture for sugar making involved perhaps not less care, and doubtless more hand labor. Of similar but less particularity was the growing of root crops for stock feed, the orcharding, which was general, and the vine dressing, incident to the business of special districts.

There were, of course, many farmers and farms in the region indicated and in other contributory regions, which were not so widely different from the average of those in America. Yet, on the whole, it can be said that the German husbandman, in training and habit, was analogous to our modern truck farmer or orchardist, rather than to our general farmer. He was a specialist in soils, in fertilizing and preparing them for different crops, in planting, stirring, weeding, irrigating; in defending plants against insect pests, seasonal irregularities, and soil peculiarities; he throve by hoeing, dragging, trimming, pruning, sprouting; by curing and conserving plants, roots, grasses, grains, and fruits. His livestock economy was incidental, yet very important. It supplied the necessary fertilizer to maintain soil productivity; it afforded milk, beef, pork, butter, cheese, wool. It gave him his draft animals, often cows instead of oxen, and economized every bit of grass and forage which his situation produced.

Improvement of livestock appears to have affected southwestern Germany prior to 1850 very little as compared with the pastoral countries of England, Holland, Friesland, and north Germany. The animals kept by the village farmers were therefore not remarkable for quality. But they were usually well housed, and the feed and care they received made up in considerable measure for the absence of superior blood.

The various states of Germany, by 1840, were maintaining schools of agriculture, a species of experiment stations for the dissemination of such scientific agricultural information as was then available. To some extent, therefore, farming was beginning to be scientific. But, prevailingly it was intensely practical, the appropriate art connected with the growing of every distinct crop being handed on from father to son, from farmer to laborer.

One could almost predict how farmers thus trained would react to the new environment of the Wisconsin wilderness. Taking up a tract of forested land or buying a farm with a small clearing upon it, their impulse would be, with the least possible delay, to get a few acres thoroughly cleared, subdued to the plow, and in a high state of tilth. Exceptions there were, to be sure, but on the whole the German pioneers were not content to slash and burn their timber. After the timber was off, the stumps must come out, forthwith, to make the tract fit for decent cultivation. Was it the Germans who introduced in land clearing the custom of "grubbing" instead of "slashing"? This meant felling the tree by undermining it, chopping off roots underground at a safe depth, taking out grub and all, instead of cutting it off above ground. In timber of moderate growth this practice proved fairly expeditious and highly successful, for once a tract was grubbed, the breaking plow encountered no serious obstruction. A good "grubber" among later immigrants could always count on getting jobs from established German farmers.[9]

To the American, who was content to plow around his stumps every year for a decade, to cultivate around them, cradle or reap around them, it seemed that his German

[9] In southwestern Wisconsin, about 1870, a respectable German farmer announced to his relatives the marriage of his daughter to a man who had arrived but recently and had the status of a mere laborer. To parry all questions about the suitability of the groom, who was known to be addicted to liquor and other vices, the farmer added: "I'm very willing to give him my daughter, for he is the best 'grubber' I've ever had on my farm."

neighbor was using some kind of magic to exorcise his stumps. The magic was merely human muscle, motivated by a psychology which inhibited rest so long as a single stump remained in the field.

The German not only used the heaps of farm yard fertilizer which, on buying out the original entryman, he commonly found on the premises, but he conserved all that his livestock produced, and frequently, if not too distant from town or village, became a purchaser of the commodity of which liverymen, stock yard keepers, and private owners of cow or horse were anxious to be relieved. The manufacture of fertilizer was a prime reason for stabling his livestock. The other was his fixed habit of affording animals such care. Not all Germans built barns at once, but the majority always tried to provide warm sheds, at least, whereas Yankee and Southwesterner alike were very prone to allow their animals to huddle, humped and shivering, all winter on the leeward side of house or granary, or in clumps of sheltering brush or trees.[10] The German was willing to occupy his log house longer, if necessary, in order to gain the means for constructing adequate barns and sheds.

Germans were not one-crop farmers. The lands they occupied, usually forested, could not be cleared fast enough at best to enable them to raise wheat on a grand scale, as the Yankees did in the open lands of the southeast and west. Their arable was extended only a few acres per year, and while that was being done the German farmers grew a little of everything—wheat, rye, corn, oats, barley, potatoes, roots. Clover was to them a favorite forage, hay, and green manure crop. In growing it, they used gypsum freely. This policy of clover growing, adopted gradually

[10] When John Kerler settled near Milwaukee in 1848, he bought a farm on which was no provision for sheltering livestock other than work animals. He built a barn at once, refusing to permit, for a single winter, the cruel American practice of leaving cattle out in the cold. His case is typical.

by all farmers, was one of the means finally relied on by the wheat farmers to restore the productivity of their abused soils.

In ways such as the above, German farmers helped to save Wisconsin agriculture in the period of stress when wheat growing failed and before coöperative dairying entered. They were not the chief influence in popularizing improved livestock. Credit for that innovation must be awarded to the Yankees. They had resumed in the eastern states the English tradition of breeding, and brought it into Wisconsin where, by means of state and county fairs and an active agricultural press, it was ultimately borne in upon the minds of all farmers, Germans among the rest.[11]

Neither did the Germans lead in developing the new agriculture, of which coöperative dairying was the keystone. Yankee leadership therein, too, was the dominant influence. Yet, it was the Germans, Scandinavians, and other foreigners—and numerically Germans were in the majority—who, by virtue of their agricultural morale, their steadiness in carrying out plans, their patience and perseverance, have made the dairy business of Wisconsin the great industry it has become.

Above all, the Germans persisted as farmers. They prospered not dramatically, like some of the more successful of the Yankee farmers, but by little and little they saved money, bought more land, better stock, and built better homes. When Yankee farmers, discouraged or impoverished by the failure of wheat, offered their farms for sale preparatory to "going west," Germans who had managed their smaller farms more carefully stood ready to buy; when Yankees who were tired of being "tied to a cow" wanted to go to Montana, Oregon, or Wyoming to raise steers by wholesale, on the ranching plan, they sold out to Germans who made the dairy farms pay larger dividends year by

[11] See the author's *History of Agriculture in Wisconsin* (Madison, 1922), *passim*.

year. When Yankee farmers retired to the city, or went into business, which in recent decades they have done by thousands, Germans were among those who were the keenest bidders for their farm properties. In a word, the German has succeeded agriculturally through the more and more perfect functioning, in this new land, of qualities imparted by the training and inheritance which he brought with him from the old world. On the whole, Germans have kept clear of speculation, preferring to invest their savings in neighboring lands with which they were intimately familiar, or to lend to neighboring farmers on farm mortgage security. In the aggregate, German farmers in Wisconsin have long had vast sums at interest. The Institute for Research in Land Economics (University of Wisconsin) has completed investigations which show that the nation's area of lowest farm mortgage interest rates (5.2 per cent or less) coincides very closely with the great maple forest of eastern Wisconsin, which has been held, from the first, predominantly by German farmers.

We have no desire to minimize the factor contributed to Wisconsin's agriculture by the Yankees. They were the prophets and the organizers of the farmers' movement. Their inherent optimism, their speculative bent, their genius for organization were indispensable to its success. "Anything is possible to the American people," shouted the mid-century American orator from a thousand Fourth of July rostrums, therein merely reflecting what the mass of his hearers religiously believed. When agriculture had to be remade in Wisconsin, the Yankee's intelligence told him in what ways it must be improved, and his tact, courage, and address enabled him to enlist and organize the means for remaking it. When the Yankee was convinced, by his farm paper or by the exhibitions, that a purebred animal was a good investment, his speculative spirit sent him to his banker to borrow a thousand dollars, and to a distant

breeder to make what his more timid German neighbor would call a "mighty risky investment"—for the animal might die! Finally, when local organization was required to secure a cheese factory, a creamery, or a dairy board of trade, the Yankee by virtue of his community leadership was usually able to effect the desired result.

Wisconsin's almost unique success in agriculture is due to no single or even dual factor. But among the human elements which have been most potent in producing the result, none is of more significance than the fortunate blend in her population of the Yankee and the Teuton.

THE YANKEE AND THE TEUTON IN WISCONSIN

JOSEPH SCHAFER

III SOME SOCIAL TRAITS OF YANKEES

Harriet Martineau, the English traveler who in 1837 published a book entitled *Society in America*, was deeply impressed with New England's concern for education. "All young people in these villages," she says, "are more or less instructed. *Schooling is considered a necessary of life.*[1] I happened to be looking over an old almanac one day, when I found, among the directions relating to the preparations for winter on a farm, the following: 'Secure your cellars from frost. Fasten loose clapboards and shingles. Secure a good schoolmaster.'"

We do not know what almanac Miss Martineau consulted. But a glance at a file of the *Farmer's Almanack*, begun in 1793 by Robert B. Thomas and circulated by him for more than half a century all over New England, shows her quotation to be fully justified in spirit if not in letter. As early at least as the year 1804, Mr. Thomas included in his directions for the month of November, the indispensable item of education in connection with other activities: "Now let the noise of your flail awake your drowsy neighbors. Bank up your cellars. Now hire a good schoolmaster and send your children to school as much as possible."

The nation was young in 1804. Parts of it were new and for that reason had made but meager educational progress; other parts were backward for different reasons. But in the older states of New England popular education had flourished for one hundred and fifty years. This point,

[1] Editor's italics.

stressed by a score of writers, illustrated by legal enactments, court decrees, town records, and anniversary sermons, cannot be over-emphasized in a summary of the social contributions which the Yankees made to the new western societies they helped to build. Notwithstanding all that has been written to prove the priority, in this or that feature of American educational progress, of other social strains or geographical areas, history may confidently assign to the Yankee priority in the attainment of universal literacy on an extensive scale.

Once the Puritan had convinced himself that the temptation to ignorance came from "ye old deluder Satan," whose fell purpose was to keep men from a knowledge of the Scriptures and thus the more readily win them for his own, he hesitated not to require the maintenance of schools in all towns and neighborhoods under his jurisdiction. He was also concerned to recruit an "able and orthodox ministry" to take the places of the aging pastors who had come from England and to supply the needs of new settlements. Harvard College could turn out the ministers, if it had properly prepared young men to work upon. So the larger towns were required to maintain grammar schools in addition to the common schools. Thus we have, as early as 1647, provision for schooling from the lowest rudiments up through the college course.

The original religious motive for maintaining these schools persisted. But other motives were added as the Puritans perceived how notably secular interests, as well as religious, were served by schooling. For one thing, young persons who could read, write, and cipher had a distinct advantage in worldly matters over those who could not. Cheats and "humbugs," of whom every community had its share, made victims of the ignorant, while they fled from the instructed even as their master, Satan, was supposed to flee from them. Many New England stories were

designed to carry the lesson, especially to parents, that the best legacy children could receive was good schooling, without which wealth and property would quickly melt away.[2]

Apart, also, from such negative worldly advantages as we have named, one who had enjoyed good schooling might thereby hope to share in many special social privileges from which the unlettered were debarred. New England life on the religious side centered in the church, on the civic side in the town. Each of the two institutions required a full set of elective officers, ranked according to the importance of the offices filled, and all of these were chosen from the instructed portion of the community. To be a deacon in the church or a selectman on the town board might not be financially remunerative, but it imparted a dignity to the individual and a social status to the family which caused these offices to be highly prized. The older theory was that only good churchmen could fill either type of office. Gradually, the town offices, which paid something in cash and yielded considerable political power, came to be sought with increasing frequency by men who might have no interest in the church. "Jethro Bass" was typical, not unique, in his scheming to be chosen selectman, and the training offered by the district school was looked upon as a minimum basis for such preferment. Said the *Farmer's Almanack* for November, 1810: "Send your children to school. Every boy should have a chance to prepare himself to do common town business."

The great majority were satisfied with the elementary training afforded by the district schools, kept for a few months in winter. But the presence of learned men in every community and the existence of secondary schools and colleges tolled a good many on the way to advanced instruction who had no plans for professional careers. From

[2] An example is in Abram E. Brown, *Legends of Old Bedford* (Boston, 1892).

farm, factory, and counting-room, even from among those before the mast, went boys to academy and college, while female seminaries springing up here and there took care of the educational interests of selected groups of girls. Such schools were not free, but their benefits were easy to attain, the principal requisite being pluck and a willingness to work both at earning money and at the studies. Girls and boys alike could usually earn their way by teaching in the common schools. Thus the educational system propagated itself, with the result that men and women of intelligence, culture, and refinement became widely dispersed through Yankeedom, and learning was recognized as an aid to the good life as well as a guarantee of the successful life. This was a fundamental condition of that literary flowering which marked the middle decades of the nineteenth century. It insured the poets, historians, orators, and novelists an audience which waxed ever larger as province after province in the West was added to New England's spiritual empire.

Let us not, however, picture to ourselves a Yankee society wholly suffused with intellectual and spiritual light. The Yankees had no such illusions about themselves. Listen to Timothy Dwight's description of a class of New Englanders who could not live "in regular society. They are too idle, too talkative, too passionate, too prodigal, and too shiftless to acquire either property or character. They are impatient of the restraints of law, religion and morality, grumble about the taxes by which rulers, ministers and schoolmasters are supported—at the same time they are usually possessed, in their own view, of uncommon wisdom; understand medical science, politics, and religion better than those who have studied them through life . . ." He represents the type as the pioneering or *forester* class, who had "already straggled onward from New England" to far distant settlements, and whose going he was not

disposed to lament. "In mercy," he says, "to the sober, industrious, and well disposed inhabitants, Providence has opened in the vast western wilderness a retreat sufficiently alluring to draw them from the land of their nativity. We have many troubles even now, but we should have many more if this body of foresters had remained at home."[3]

The above citation doubtless contains an element of exaggeration, due to Dwight's ingrained conservatism. He was outraged by the radical views no less than by the erratic and ignorant harangues he heard "by many a kitchen fire, in every blacksmith's shop, and in every corner of the streets . . ." Yet we must not lose sight of the fact that he here sketches for us some Yankee social traits of rather extended application which were important in the building of the West. These people belonged to the outstandingly non-conformist type. They were sufficiently independent—contemptuous, one might say—of established customs and institutions to be willing, with what ignorance or awkwardness soever, to bring about changes, some of which were sadly needed. Religiously they were apt to be *come-outers.* It was largely among this class that were recruited the Millerites, Millennialists, and original Latter Day Saints, together with many other minor sects and factions. In politics, when all orthodox New England was Whig, they were mainly Democratic; many, however, backed the program of Nativism; in the person of John Brown they exemplified the principle of direct action as applied to slavery. The social innovator, the medical quack, and the political demagogue found among them welcome and encouragement, sometimes to the temporary distress of society, often to its ultimate benefit. Not unlike the original Puritans who represented "the dissidence of dissent and the protestantism of the protestant religion,"[4] they constituted a dynamic social

[3] Timothy Dwight, *Travels in New England and New York* (New Haven, Conn., 1821), ii, 459, 462.

[4] Edmund Burke, *On Conciliation.*

element although wanting in the intellectual and religious training, the political morale, and perhaps the heroism which distinguished the original planters of Massachusetts Bay. They had the spirit of the revolutionary New Englanders, who were described, not inaptly, as "hard, stubborn, and indomitably intractable." They were the backbone of Shays's rebellion. In many ways they illustrate the qualities which, at various times in our later history, have served as the fulcrum of revolutionary change.

Dwight's *foresters* were merely the extreme manifestation, the caricature, of a much larger class of heady, self sufficient, opinionated, and troublesome persons who equally with the sober, church going, instructed, conformist type were the product of New England conditions. The cords of restraint were drawn so taut in the parishes and towns, that the person who was determinedly "different" was compelled to break them and become a kind of social pariah in order to gain the freedom his soul craved. It was not an accident that so large a proportion of that class went to the frontier. They found there a less rigorous church discipline, freedom from taxes for the support of the established church, and a more flexible state of society in the midst of which they might hope to function. In western Massachusetts and Connecticut, in Vermont, New Hampshire, and Maine, they were numerous at the opening of the National period. Soon large numbers emigrated to western New York, to northern Pennsylvania, to Ohio, thence throughout the West. They made up an appreciable part of the thronging Yankee immigration which seized upon Wisconsin's prairies and oak openings between 1835 and 1850, and their presence has left its impress upon our social history. Still the experiences of older frontiers, such as western New York, had already modified the type.

When all necessary deductions have been made, however, the church remained equally with the school a domin-

ant note in the Yankee's social landscape. His "meeting house," not infrequently in New England a gem of ecclesiastical architecture, fulfilled his artistic ideal; the congregation was the "household of faith" which claimed his undeviating loyalty; the pastor was "guest and philosopher" in his home whenever he chose to honor it with his presence. To men and women alike, attendance upon the church services was the principal Sabbath day duty and the chief physical and mental diversion of the whole week. It was an old custom to linger after the morning sermon for a social chat either in the church yard, when the weather permitted, or else at a near-by tavern; and while the talk was ostensibly about the sermon, gossip, bits of practical information, and even a shy kind of love making were often interwoven, tending to make this a genuine community social hour.

The tradition that the minister must be a man of learning was of incalculable social importance. His advice was called for under every conceivable circumstance of individual and community need. He assisted about the employment of schoolmasters and was the unofficial supervisor of the school. He enjoined upon negligent parents the duty of sending their children, and he had an eye for the promising boys—lads o'pairts, as the Scotch say—whom he encouraged to prepare for professional life. He fitted boys to enter the academy and sometimes tutored college students. In the rural parish the minister occupied the church glebe, which made him a farmer with the rest. He was apt to read more widely and closely in the agricultural press, or in books on husbandry, than his neighbors, thereby gaining the right to offer practical suggestions about many everyday matters. Some ministers were writers for agricultural journals. Many contributed to local newspapers items of news or discussions of public questions in which their parishioners were interested with themselves.

The home missionary idea was inherent in the New England system both as respects religion and education. Older, better established communities always felt some responsibility for the newer. Since settlement proceeded largely by the method of planting new townships of which the raw land was purchased by companies from the colonial and state governments, it was possible for the larger community to give an impetus to religion and education under the terms of township grants. This was accomplished by reserving in each grant three shares of the land—"one for the first settled minister, one for the ministry forever, and one for the school." Other grants of raw land were made for the support of academies. Here we have the origin of the system of land grants in aid both of the common schools and of state universities, in the western states. The grants for religion necessarily were discontinued after the adoption of the national constitution.[5]

The religious unity established by the Puritans, and maintained for a time by the simple method of rigorously excluding those holding peculiar doctrines, gave way to considerable diversity in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Episcopalianism made some progress in the older settlements, and Unitarianism created a great upheaval, while toward the frontiers the Methodists and Baptists flourished more and more. These several elements, by 1820, were powerful enough politically to secure the abolition of the ancient tax for the support of the established (Congregational or Presbyterian) church—a tax which had long caused ill feeling between West and East, and no doubt had contributed to the growth of dissenting churches. These frontier churches had the characteristics of the frontier populations. Their ministers were less learned, their morale less exacting, their religion less formal and

[5] The Ohio Company's grant, 1787, contained a reservation for religion as well as grants for education. Joseph Schafer, *Origin of the System of Land Grants in Aid of Education*, Wisconsin University *Bulletin*, History Series, Vol. 1, No. 1 (Madison, 1902).

ritualistic, their ordinances less regularly and habitually enforced. But there was an emotionalism which in a measure compensated for defects of training, for looseness of habit and negligence in the practice of religion. In a word, the camp meeting type of Christianity prevailed widely along the frontier, and that type entered Wisconsin Territory with the numerous Methodist and Baptist settlers from New York and New England. As early as August, 1838, such a camp meeting was held under Methodist leadership in the woods near Racine; it was attended by hundreds of pioneer families drawn from the sparsely settled neighborhoods for many miles around. Its appointments were of the typical frontier kind, though one would expect less boisterousness in the manifestations of emotion among those people than seems to have accompanied similar gatherings in the Southwest.[6]

The stated religious services in early Wisconsin, as in every frontier region, were apt to be less frequent than in older communities. Ministers were too few in number and neighborhoods too impecunious to justify each locality in supporting a minister. The circuit riding custom prevailed generally among all denominations. One preacher traveled, on foot, six hundred miles, making the round in six weeks. Each group of churches also had its conferences, which were occasions for planning missionary effort, for unitedly attacking special religious or social abuses, and for promoting constructive community effort. The ablest speakers addressed such gatherings; the membership of the churches concerned and others attended, in addition to the delegates; and important religious, social, or moral results sometimes flowed from them.

Another peculiar Yankee institution allied at once to the school and the church, was the lyceum or local cooperative organization for bringing lecturers to the com-

[6] See Edward Eggleston, *The Circuit Rider* and *The Graysons*.

munity. The settlements in southeastern Wisconsin had their lyceums at an early date, and many distinguished public men from the East had occasion to visit this new Yankeeland in the capacity of lecturer. Among them were Horace Greeley, Bayard Taylor, and James Russell Lowell.

Reform movements, however, though usually receiving valuable aid from churches, lyceums, mechanics' institutes, and other permanent organizations of men for public discussion, had a way of creating special organizations to propagate themselves. That was true of the temperance movement, which by the time of the Yankee immigration into Wisconsin was under vigorous headway. Beginning, in serious form, about 1820, the intervening years witnessed the creation of hundreds of local temperance societies in New England and New York, and the federation of these societies into state societies. These central organizations stimulated the movement by sending out lecturers, conducting a newspaper propaganda, and issuing special publications. Some of their tracts are said to have been scattered "like the leaves of autumn," all over New England and New York.

One of these tracts affected the social history of Wisconsin very directly. It is known, traditionally, as "The Ox Discourse," because it was based on Exodus 21:28-29: "If an ox gore a man or woman, that they die: then the ox shall be surely stoned, and his flesh shall not be eaten; but the owner of the ox shall be quit. But if the ox were wont to push with his horn in time past, and it hath been testified to his owner, and he hath not kept him in, but that he hath killed a man or a woman; the ox shall be stoned, and his owner also shall be put to death." The sermon on this text produced a great sensation and gained many new adherents to the temperance cause. Among these were two brothers, Samuel F. and Henry Phoenix, who were storekeepers in a New York village and sold

much whisky. They publicly destroyed all the liquor they had on hand and became crusaders in the temperance cause. In the spring of 1836 Colonel Samuel F. Phoenix selected in Wisconsin a "Temperance Colony claim," on which he settled that summer. Then he rode to Belmont and induced the first territorial legislature to set off from Milwaukee County a county to be known as Walworth, in honor of the chancellor of the state of New York, who was a noted temperance leader. He named the village begun by him Delavan, in honor of E. C. Delavan, pioneer temperance editor and at that time chairman of the executive committee of the New York State Temperance Society. Colonel Phoenix lectured on temperance, helped to organize early temperance societies, rebuked his neighbors—especially the New Yorkers—for employing whisky at raisings, and, before his death in 1840, had succeeded in giving a powerful impulse to the movement in southeastern Wisconsin.

Another dramatic figure in early temperance annals was Charles M. Goodsell, who in 1838 settled at Lake Geneva and built the first mill operated in Walworth County. He was of Connecticut birth, and his father owned and managed, among other properties, a whisky distillery. Goodsell, however, when he came west from New York State, was a most determined opponent of the traffic in intoxicants. Soon after opening his mill a local company erected in Lake Geneva a distillery for making corn whisky. Goodsell warned them, he says, not to expect him to grind their grain and they installed a grinding apparatus of their own. But, their machinery proving inadequate, they finally sent a grist of corn to Goodsell's mill, demanding, as under the law they had a right to do, that it be "ground in turn." Goodsell refused, thereby producing a tense situation, for the pioneer farmers looked to the distillery as a cash market for their grain. Finally,

the distillers brought suit, won a verdict, and Goodsell appealed. But meantime, he rode to Madison, where the legislature was sitting, and procured the adoption of an amendment to the law regulating milling, to the effect: "Nothing in this section contained shall be construed to compel the owners or occupiers of mills to grind for distilling, or for sale or merchant work." This proviso, adopted in 1841, remained a feature of the statute for many years.[7]

It must not be supposed that pioneer Yankee society, even in Walworth County, was prevailingly of the temperance variety. All testimony, both of the reformers and of others, tends to show that a large majority was at first in the opposition. Frontier history would indicate that excessive indulgence in whisky was apt to be more common during the primitive phase of settlement than later, due perhaps to the looser social and religious organization.

Wisconsin may be said to have been born to the temperance agitation which, in a few years' time, produced societies pledged to total abstinence all over the southeastern part of the state and in many other localities. In March, 1843, a legislative temperance society was organized with a list of twenty-four signers. The house of representatives at the time had twenty-six members, the council thirteen, or a total of thirty-nine. So a decided majority was aligned with the movement. Moses M. Strong was chosen president, which was considered a triumph for the cause, and much interest was aroused by the adherence of William S. Hamilton, who is reported to have addressed one of the society's meetings.[8]

The temperance agitation everywhere received a notable impetus from the adoption in 1851 of the prohibition law

[7] Goodsell, who was one of the founders of Beloit College, removed later to Northfield, Minnesota, and became one of the founders of Carlton College. S. A. Dwinnell, Reedsburg (Wis.) *Free Press*, December 24, 1874.

[8] *Madison City Express*, March 14, March 23, and April 27, 1843. Strong and Hamilton are not reputed to have been total abstainers.

by the state of Maine. Immediately other states moved for the same objective, and in Wisconsin a referendum vote was taken in 1853 which resulted favorably to prohibition, though no enactment followed.[9] In that election the southeastern counties were overwhelmingly for the Maine law. Walworth gave 1906 votes for it and 733 against, Rock 2494-432, Racine 1456-927. Milwaukee at the same time voted against prohibition by 4381 to 1243. This shows where was to be found the powerful opposition to legislation of this nature, which was destined to increase rather than diminish with the strengthening of the German element already very numerous.

From the time of the Maine law agitation the communities dominated by Yankees were generally found arrayed in favor of any proposal for limiting or suppressing the liquor traffic, although, as we shall see in later articles, no large proportion of their voters ever joined the Prohibition party. They did not succeed in abolishing drunkenness, though it became very unfashionable to indulge heavily in spirituous liquors and the proportion of total abstainers among the younger generation steadily increased. Yankees furnished a very small per cent of those who gained their livelihood through occupations connected directly with intoxicating liquors, except as such traffic was carried on incidentally as a feature of the drug business. The disfavor with which saloon keeping, brewing, and distilling have long been regarded among that class of the population is explained by the fervor and thoroughness of the early temperance campaigns.

Because of their attitude on the liquor question, on Sunday laws, and other matters pertaining to the regulation of conduct, the Yankees have always been looked upon by other social strains as straight-laced and gloomy. In this judgment men have been influenced more than they

[9] The vote stood, for prohibition, 27,519; against, 24,109.

are aware by the traditions of Puritanism which it was supposed the Yankees inherited. They recalled the story of how Bradford stopped Christmas revelers and sent them to work; they pictured Puritan children as forbidden to laugh and talk on the Sabbath day; and some may have heard the story of how Washington, while president, was once stopped by a Connecticut tithing man who must be informed why His Excellency fared forth on the Lord's Day instead of resting at his inn or attending public worship.[10]

Two remarks may be made on this point. First, while Puritanism unquestionably had a somber discipline, there was not lacking even among Puritans the play instinct which persisted in cropping out despite all efforts of the authorities at repression. Second, the nineteenth century Yankees register a wide departure from early Puritanism in their social proclivities, and the difference was particularly marked in the West. Even church services were modified to fit the needs of the less resolute souls. Music became an important feature and it was adapted more or less to special occasions.[11] Sunday Blue Laws were gradually relaxed, though never abandoned in principle. Well-to-do city people allowed themselves vacation trips, visits to watering places, and to scenic wonders like Niagara Falls.[12] In town and country alike dancing became an amusement of almost universal vogue, though protested by some religionists, and rural neighborhoods found bowling such a fascinating game for men and boys that the almanac maker thought well to caution his readers against over-indulgence therein.[13] Ball playing, picnicing, sleighing, coasting, skating were

[10] The story was printed in the *Columbian Centinel*, Boston, December, 1789.

[11] See *Diary of Sarah Connell Ayer* (Portland, Me., 1910), 227.

[12] See *Almon Danforth Hodges and His Neighbors* (Boston, 1909), 217-218.

[13] "At sun two hours high," says the *Farmer's Almanack*, 1815, "the day is finished and away goes men and boys to the bowling alley. Haying, hoeing, plowing, sowing all must give way to sport and toddy. Now this is no way for a farmer. It will do for the city lads to sport and relax in this way, and so there are proper times and seasons for farmers to take pleasure of this sort, for I agree that all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy."

among the outdoor sports much indulged in by Yankees, while family and neighborhood visiting, the quilting bee, donation parties, church socials, and the like furnished indoor recreation. The circus and the "cattle show" were events in the western Yankeeland equal in social significance to Artillery Day in Boston.

Thus, while it is true that Yankees were a sober people, of prevailingly serious mien and purpose, they were not averse to the relaxations of play and recreation. The question whether or not the Yankees were fun loving cannot be answered by yes or no. If we mean by fun the rollicking joviality characteristic of irresponsible, carefree folk, the answer is no. Many Yankees found their best fun in work or business. To the David Harum type, which was fairly numerous, a horse trade was more fun than a picnic. Some Boston merchants were so immersed in their business that, though very pious, they nevertheless spent Sunday afternoon going over their books and writing business letters.[14] Being serious minded, they tended to make their chief concern an obsession, and could hardly be happy away from it. But the majority were quite as ready to amuse themselves out of working hours, as are the Italians or other social stocks that have a reputation for fun and frolic.

The Yankees also found intellectual enjoyment in cultivating quickness of retort, in giving utterance to clever if homely aphorisms, and in a kind of whimsical humor. These traits emerge in their vernacular literature like "Major Jack Downing's" *Thirty Years out of the Senate*, and especially Lowell's *Biglow Papers*. "The squire'll have a parson in his barn a preachin' to his cattle one o' these days, see if he don't," said one of "Tim Bunker's" shiftless neighbors by way of summarizing the squire's over-niceness in caring for his Jersey cows. "Ez big ez wat hogs dream

[14] See *Hodges and His Neighbors*, 94.

on when they're most too fat to snore"; "that man is mean enough to steal acorns from a blind hog"; "the coppers ain't all tails"; "pop'lar as a hen with one chicken"; "quicker'n greased lightnin'"; "a hen's time ain't much"; "handy as a pocket in a shirt"; "he's a whole team and the dog under the wagon"; "so thievish they had to take in their stone walls at night"; "so black that charcoal made a chalk mark on him"; "painted so like marble that it sank in water"—the above are all Yankeeisms of approved lineage and illustrate a characteristic type of Yankee humor. The example below is of a rarer sort. "Pretty heavy thunder you have here," said the English Captain Basil Hall to a lounger in front of a Massachusetts tavern. "Waal, we do," came the drawling reply, "considerin' the number of the inhabitants."

About the time that Yankees began to emigrate to Wisconsin a talented French writer, Michel Chevalier, gave the world a brilliant and on the whole favorable characterization of them. "The Yankee," he says, "is reserved, cautious, distrustful; he is thoughtful and pensive, but equable; his manners are without grace, modest but dignified, cold, and often unprepossessing; he is narrow in his ideas, but practical, and possessing the idea of the proper, he never rises to the grand. He has nothing chivalric about him and yet he is adventurous, and he loves a roving life. His imagination is active and original, producing, however, not poetry but drollery. The Yankee is the laborious ant; he is industrious and sober and, on the sterile soil of New England, niggardly; transplanted to the promised land in the west he continues moderate in his habits, but less inclined to count the cents. In New England he has a large share of prudence, but once thrown into the midst of the treasures of the west he becomes a speculator, a gambler even, although he has a great horror of cards, dice, and all games of chance and even of skill

except the innocent game of bowls." Chevalier also says: "The fusion of the European with the Yankee takes place but slowly, even on the new soil of the west; for the Yankee is not a man of promiscuous society; he believes that Adam's oldest son was a Yankee."

The Yankee was not more boastful than other types of Americans, though his talent for exaggerative description was marked. Yet he had a pronounced national obsession and was uncompromising in his patriotism: "This land o'ourn, I tell ye's got to be a better country than man ever see," was put into a Yankee's mouth by one of their own spokesmen and represents the Yankee type of mild jingoism. It is full cousin to that other sentiment which also this writer assigns to him:

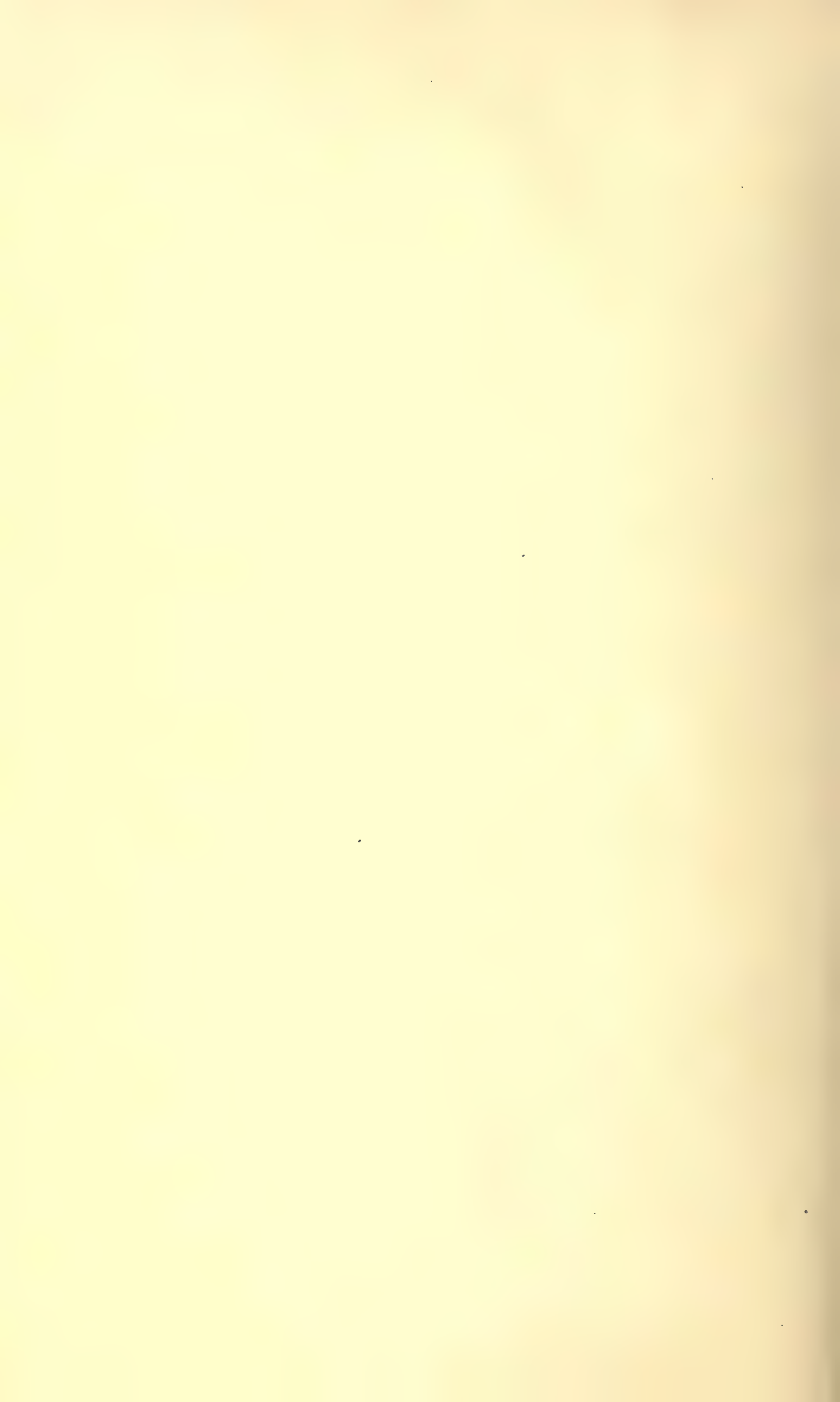
> Resolved, that other nations all, if set longside of us,
> For vartoo, larnin, chiverlry, aint noways wuth a cuss.[15]

These are but cruder expressions of ideas dating from the Revolutionary War, and of which Timothy Dwight, who was not a poet by predestination, gave us in verse a noble example:

> Columbia, Columbia, to glory arise,
> The queen of the world, and child of the skies!
> Thy genius commands thee; with rapture behold,
> While ages on ages thy splendors unfold.
> Thy reign is the last, and the noblest of time,
> Most fruitful thy soil, most inviting thy clime;
> Let the crimes of the east ne'er encrimson thy name,
> Be freedom, and science, and virtue, thy fame.

It need not be supposed that all Yankees who came to Wisconsin or other western states were familiar with these glowing lines. But it is almost certain that, in the common schools of Yankeedom, most of them had thrilled to the matchless cadences of Webster's reply to Hayne. What more was needed, by way of literary support, to a pride of country which, if a trifle ungenerous to others, was based on facts all had experienced.

[15] J. R. Lowell, *Biglow Papers.*



THE YANKEE AND THE TEUTON IN WISCONSIN

Joseph Schafer

IV SOME SOCIAL TRAITS OF TEUTONS

The year 1832, celebrated in Wisconsin history as the time when the lead miners and other pioneers destroyed the power of the Rock River Indians, was remembered by later-coming German immigrants for a very different reason. It was toward the end of March in that year, the place Trier (Treves), the ancient capital of the western "Cæsars," a city which is still rich in the massive ruins of its Roman foretime. As the story goes, the boys of one form in the old *Gymnasium* were being entertained at the house of a professor, where, boy-like, they were playing indoor games accompanied with much laughter and general hilarity. Suddenly one of their younger classmates rushed breathless into the room, exclaiming: "Goethe is dead!"[1] During the balance of the evening, the less serious of the youngsters having returned to their interrupted play, this boy engaged with his instructors in eager discussion of Goethe's life and writings.

The youth in question was Karl Marx, whose later history exhibits a wide divergence from the exclusively literary career prophesied by his boyhood scholastic interests. The classmate who is authority for this incident continued in Marx's company the *Gymnasium* studies; he then performed his one year minimum of military service, and having secured some business experience sailed away as an immigrant to the new world, settling on a Wisconsin farm. In the course of a long life he often reverted to the story of Goethe, whose works, as well as those of Schiller and Lessing, made a part of his home library. These great names never failed to kindle his pride in the

[1] The death of Goethe occurred on the twenty-second of March. The news must have taken several days in travel.

intellectual achievements of the German people, whose governments at the time of his emigration in 1841 seemed to him a compound of despotism and inefficiency.[2]

Doubtless there were Germans of the immigration to Wisconsin who knew not Goethe, or if in a hazy way they did know who he was, had no intellectual right to judge his merits. But the more intelligent were sure to possess some knowledge of the writings of their greatest poet and of lesser men who still were great in the world's estimation. Hence it was that Germans who at that period went to the new world, while acknowledging by their flight the political, economic, and social obstacles to a successful life in Prussia, Bavaria, Baden, Westphalia, or Luxemburg, were always able to maintain a self-respecting attitude when confronted with the pretensions of those Americans who were unsympathetic, jingoistic, or boastful. German immigrants might grant much to superior cleverness, to the stupendous achievements of a liberty loving race, domiciled in a peaceful continent and dowered with free lands and boundless opportunity; but they remembered that *William Tell* and *Faust* and *The Laocoön* were written by Germans.

Though many immigrants were far from being literary, they doubtless possessed, on the average, a knowledge of German masterpieces fully equivalent to the knowledge which Americans possessed of the English Classics. For education was looking up, and while most of the immigrants from German states, like those from other European countries, were of the peasant class, which was usually the most backward, still by 1840 nearly all were sure to have enjoyed some systematic schooling. At an earlier period this might have been otherwise. The condition of limited serfdom, removed but a generation earlier, operated powerfully to neutralize such benevolent plans for universal instruction as kings

[2] Prussians were apt to console themselves for the pusillanimity of King Frederick William III by harking back to the really strong if ruthless monarchy of Frederick the Great, familiarly spoken of as *Der Alte Fritz.*

and ministers proclaimed. For the peasants were directly subordinate to the local lords, who often felt "that an ignorant labor supply was less likely to seek to better its condition by demands upon them. . . ."[3] The great national reform movement which came to fruition after the close of the Napoleonic wars swept away many of the disabilities of the common people, and developed in Prussia and other states a system of universal education as the surest means of national upbuilding.

The excellencies of the Prussian school system prior to 1840 became the theme of flattering reports on the part of educators in many lands. The celebrated philosopher Victor Cousin made it the basis for his plan of educational reform in France; the Scotch, English, and Irish discussed it; Horace Mann proclaimed it to the school authorities of Massachusetts, and Calvin E. Stowe recommended it to the legislature of Ohio. That system may not have possessed all of the virtues which the ordinances quoted by Cousin imply.[4] Yet it had the one excellence to which educationally all others are subsidiary—a well-trained teaching force. Indeed, if there is anything which seems miraculous in the swift and thoroughgoing transformation of school conditions in Prussia during the first forty years of the nineteenth century, it is explained by the provision which the state made for normal schools and the supply, through their agency, of teachers enough to man all the schools. "In the lowest school in the smallest and obscurest village," says Horace Mann, "or for the poorest class in overcrowded cities; in the schools connected with pauper establishments, with houses of correction or with prisons—in all these there was a teacher of mature age, of simple, unaffected and decorous manners." Mann also made it clear that every such teacher was possessed of adequate scholarship

[3] Guy Stanton Ford, *Stein and the Era of Reform in Prussia, 1807-1815* (Princeton, N. J., 1922), 185.

[4] Victor Cousin, *Report on the State of Public Instruction in Prussia.* Translated by Sarah Austin. London, 1834.

and special training for the work of the schoolroom.[5] Such a statement could not be made at that time about Massachusetts, where popular education was already two hundred years old, nor could it be made with equal confidence of other German countries, though several of these approximated the Prussian standard and most of them were earnestly promoting education along the same lines and by the use of similar means.

We must therefore regard the generation of the German exodus from which Wisconsin profited so largely in the later 1840's and the 1850's, as almost universally literate and usually well grounded in the rudiments of an education. The intelligent, reading, writing, and slow but careful figuring German peasant immigrants constituted the best testimonial to the efficacy of German systems of instruction for the common people. The *Gymnasia,* the *real Schule,* the universities, sent forth representatives of the highest German culture to honor the learned professions, the literary, philosophical, and scientific circles of America.

On the basis of formal school instruction alone, the historian of early Wisconsin would be compelled to assign first place in social fitness to the immigrants from Germany. Neither the Irish, the English, nor even the Yankee pioneers on the average had enjoyed as thorough a training as had Prussians, Saxons, Hessians, or Badeners. Yet, school training is never all there is of education, and it may constitute but a small portion of it. No one questions that the social character of Prussian and other German peasants was far higher in 1840 than it had been in 1800, and this was due to a variety of causes, of which schooling was only one. In part it was due to the abolition of serfdom, in part to the reorganization of municipal life; also, largely to the religious agitation of the period, to the movements for political reform, and especially

[5] See *Life and Works of Horace Mann* (Boston, 1891), iii, 346ff.

to the widespread, momentous, and gripping spirit of nationalism.

Nevertheless, despite their superb educational equipment plus other incentives, the Prussians still seemed to intelligent American observers in a very retarded social condition. Horace Mann, who wrote most enthusiastically of their schools and was sympathetic toward the Germans in every respect, in a passage of almost classic force and beauty written in 1843, tells us why education in Prussia accomplished for the people so much less than one might expect. For one thing, he says, the pupils left school too early—at the age of fourteen, which was their time for beginning regular and heavy work. Then, too, books for further self-instruction were lacking. There was in Prussia nothing analogous to the Massachusetts district school libraries. "But," he continues, "the most potent cause of Prussian backwardness and incompetency is this—when the children come out from the school they have little use either for the faculties that have been developed, or for the knowledge that has been acquired. Their resources have not been brought into demand; their powers are not roused or strengthened by exercise. Our common phrases, 'the active duties of life'; 'the responsibilities of citizenship'; 'the stage, the career, of action'; 'the obligations to posterity';—would be strange sounding words in the Prussian ear. . . . Now, although there is a sleeping ocean in the bosom of every child that is born into the world, yet if no freshening, life-giving breeze ever sweeps across its surface, why should it not repose in dark stagnation forever." The bill of particulars with which the great educator clinches his indictment of the Prussian system, while it aims to describe accurately only the then existing condition in Prussia, might be equally applicable to almost any other absolutist, paternalistic state. All responsibility for the people's welfare was assumed by the monarch, who in turn was actively

aided by a hierarchy of officials in state and church, in the central government and the local administrative areas.

Of this officialdom, particularly in its military and civil aspects, the nobility was not merely the corner stone but the essential part of the structure. The church, loyal to its traditions, was much more democratic, men of every class being found in each of its official grades. The newly developed educational system gave to the common man another significant opportunity, since teaching candidates were drawn in large numbers from the middle and lower classes, and were given at public expense the training necessary to fit them for permanent positions in the various types of schools. On the whole, however, life beyond the school, which among Americans of that day commonly yielded the major part of education, was in Prussia far less fruitful. For, the American, whose formal schooling had been limited, was sure to multiply its efficacy many times through the intensely original character of his activities. In these he was apt to employ everything he had learned, and constantly to learn more for the sake of applying the new knowledge to challenging situations.

The contrast between the average Prussian's life and the average American's life was sharp and decisive. The boy leaving school at fourteen in Frederick William's country was thrust at once into a routine of severe labor, controlled by others. Either he might be on a farm, where his duties were fixed by custom and minutely directed by parent or employer; or he might be apprenticed to a trade which would give him seven years under an exacting master. Assuming that he remained in his native region, his career thenceforth would be determined with the minimum of personal effort. The American boy whose schooling stopped at an early age might go west and start a new farm home in a new environment, with every incentive toward employing his best powers to

win unusual success; he might go to the city and engage in some business; attend school to prepare for a profession; or settle down on the ancestral acres under social and economic conditions which called for almost continuous readjustments, and kept his mind on the stretch to bring these about.

The governmental arrangements in America were inherently educational; in Prussia they were the reverse, save when, with revolutionary fury, the people rose to seek their destruction or reform. In Prussia, says Horace Mann, "the subject has no officers to choose, no inquiry into the character or eligibility of candidates to make, no vote to give. He has no laws to enact or abolish. He has no questions about peace or war, finance, taxes, tariffs, post office, or internal improvements to decide or discuss. He is not asked where a road shall be laid, or how a bridge shall be built, although in the one case he has to perform the labor and in the other to supply the materials. . . . The tax gatherer tells him how much he is to pay, the ecclesiastical authority plans a church which he must build; and his spiritual guide, who has been set over him by another, prepares a creed and a confession of faith all ready for his signature. He is directed alike how he must obey his King and worship his God."

The schools of Prussia inculcated religion and morality as sedulously as they taught geography, singing, and writing, the methods used being highly praised by American pedagogical experts. This universal insistence on the ethical content of life could not fail to produce results more or less in harmony with the aims of great ethical philosophers, like Kant of Königsberg, a teacher of the learned whose "categorical imperative," popularized in that epoch, has not yet gone into the philosophical discard. The average German immigrants of the 1840's knew little of Kant or the Kantian school of ethics. But of honesty, truthfulness, and fidelity to the plighted word they knew much, because those were practical

virtues with which in school if not at home all were indoctrinated. Thrift and industry were additional but fundamental virtues which were widely diffused. It is hard for an empty sack to stand upright. The reason why in America a German's note was more often worth face value than that of some other classes was because the German usually labored unceasingly and saved what he earned, thus enabling him to meet his obligation.[6]

They were not all saints, these Germans, and in the matter of personal morality the Prussians particularly seem in those days to have deserved much of the criticism directed against them.[7] However, it is not necessary to regard even the Prussians as more lax than most other continentals, and their character is always explainable as a vulgarized aping of the low if gilded immoralities of court and aristocracy. Matters of this sort do not lend themselves readily to statistical inquiry. But it can hardly be doubted that in France, Prussia, Austria, or any other country of continental Europe the private morals of the common people were better on the whole than those of the upper classes. In America, where immigrants from those countries came into contact with a self-governing people of simple habits and prevailingly high ideals of personal conduct, though with numerous individual divergences from the type, sharp attention was bound to be directed to this feature in the character of foreigners, and the Germans attracted their full share of suspicion and disfavor from the stricter sort of Americans.

Such suspicions were heightened by certain social customs of the Germans to which Americans reacted adversely. Sun-

[6] Cf. Franklin's views on the comparative thrift of English and of German laborers, and note his tentative explanation of the difference. *The Complete Works of Benjamin Franklin* (compiled and edited by John Bigelow, New York and London, 1887), ii, 291ff. Letter to Peter Collinson, dated Philadelphia, 9 May, 1753.

[7] By writers like Samuel Laing, in his *Notes of a Traveller on the Social and Political State of France, Prussia, Switzerland, Italy, and Other Parts of Europe* (London, 1854), especially 108-115.

day amusements were all but universal among them. Travelers in Germany dwell upon the gaiety observed in the villages, or in the city parks and the beer gardens, the distinctive costumes of different localities lending color and interest to the scenes. Music was cultivated in every German community; all Germans could sing and a large proportion could perform on musical instruments. One was "as certain to see a violin as a blackboard in every schoolroom."[8] Wherever Germans gathered together—and Sunday, since it was the weekly holiday, was their day for assembling—there was singing and dancing, usually accompanied by the drinking of beer or wine to stimulate hilarity. This drinking was not necessarily excessive, because most Germans were moderate in their appetites for alcohol, some were unable to spend much, and all were economical (*sparsam*). The dances differed from those favored in this country, being mainly "round dances," and the standards of decorum in the relations of the sexes were different also. No wonder that, when German families settled in groups near our own people, Yankee fathers and mothers often shook their heads doubtfully in contemplating the influence upon their children of these unfamiliar social customs.

It is probable that the vigor with which among this resilient people amusements were carried on had a definite relation to the intensity, monotony, and sordidness of the labor from which they were a recoil. At all events, with more leisure on week days and an opportunity to do his work under pleasanter conditions, the German readily adapted himself to a type of relaxation which was less boisterous and more genteel. His work and his living being what they were, it is doubtful if anything better in the form of amusements could have been expected of him. Travelers from England and

[8] *Life and Works of Horace Mann* (Boston, 1891), iii, 346ff. See also *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz* (New York, 1907), i, 40.

America, on their visits to Germany, were impressed with the wholesomeness of the Sunday picnics, the rambles through the forests, the frolics on the village greens and in the parks adjacent to the towns and cities.[9]

With all his sociability, joviality, and occasional levity, the German was not devoid of an element of austerity. This was one secret of his ability to achieve. Whatever the work might be, he settled himself to its performance with a grim determination expressive of century-long training. The mechanic, from his apprentice years, was habituated to long hours of unremitting but improving toil. The farmer (*bauer*) was a traditional daylight-saver and a night-worker besides, such excessive labor being compulsory under the system of serfdom, when the peasant's time was levied upon to a very large extent by the lord. The German schools inculcated similar habits of relentless application to the work in hand, and even the government bureaus, under rigorous taskmasters like old Friedrich Wilhelm and his son Frederick the Great, enforced compliance with the ideal of a patient, steady "grind" which not inaptly typified the German in the eyes of other peoples. The German often performed less work in the time consumed than an alert Yankee would have performed in a shorter day; his tools and implements were generally awkward and inefficacious; even in scholarship he not infrequently took the long way around to reach his goal—but he usually reached it because he had no notion of turning back or of stopping at a halfway point on his job. Persistent rather than brilliant, more industrious than inventive, the German toiled on, content if he always had something to show for his labor. The contrast, in that generation, between the German at work and the German at play is the contrast be-

[9] See William Howitt, *Rural and Domestic Life of Germany* (London, 1842), *passim.* That portion of Carl Schurz's work (see note 8 *ante*) which describes his boyhood life at Liblar throws much light on the amusements indulged in by the people. There is a delightful account of the Schützenfest, or marksmanship contest, on pages 45-48 and pages 81-83.

tween a man governed by an intense purpose to accomplish a given task, whether interesting or not, and the same man intent on accomplishing nothing with every physical, intellectual, and emotional evidence of enjoying the process. Some men carry into their play the morale which governs them in their work; others import into their work the spirit of their play. In the case of the mid-nineteenth century German the two aspects of his existence, work and play, differed in spirit quite as much as in content.

The Germans had their Puritan sects, like the Moravians and other pietists, whose attitude was distinctly other-worldly, to whom play was a sedate if not a solemn activity. Such people disapproved of dancing and beer drinking Germans quite as heartily as of profane whiskey drinking and quarrelsome Americans or Irish. Individuals and colonies of the pietistic classes passed into the emigrations, and thus Wisconsin's German population contained most of the elements to be found at the same time in the German states. This illustrates one difficulty in generalizing about social characteristics; there are so many exceptions to be noted that the generalization loses much of its validity.

Craftsmanship was a prevalent accomplishment among the Germans of the early emigration. Every shipload of emigrants of which we have a social analysis had a large proportion of craftsmen, who were either established members of the city and village industrial class, or else belonged to the peasantry and had learned a craft in order to improve their status. Trades were learned exclusively under the apprenticeship system, the candidate usually living in the master's home and giving service at the master's will. When he reached the journeyman stage he was privileged to find work for himself, a quest which though usually fruitful in educational results often proved disappointing from a monetary point of view. In those cases the journeyman was peculiarly open to the temptation to emigrate. Arrived in

this country, the chances of finding employment in the line of his training varied. Sometimes they were excellent, at other times poor, depending mainly upon the craft represented. Carpenters were in great demand, as were also blacksmiths, wheelwrights, millwrights, masons, bricklayers, plasterers, and in general all representatives of the building trades and of trades ministering to farmers. Others were in occasional demand. But, if a dyer, or a slater, or a cabinet maker, or a silversmith, or a tile maker, or a weaver, or a wood carver happened to find himself in America without a market for his peculiar skill, he always had the resource of taking land and commencing as a farmer. Many craftsmen, indeed, came with the set purpose of doing that immediately upon their arrival; others contemplated a farming career after a period devoted to their specialty. In some or all of these ways Germans trained as craftsmen came to be widely distributed over the farming areas of Wisconsin as well as among the cities, towns, and villages.

The possession of special skill in any line, like the possession of special scientific knowledge, raises a man in social estimation, and every trained worker properly regards himself with satisfaction as being not quite "as other men are." In addition to the social training which came to him as an incident of his apprenticeship and journeyman's experience, the German craftsman often was able to challenge the respect and admiration of his American neighbors by making articles of cunning workmanship which to them seemed wonderful because they did not understand the processes involved. Agriculture being regarded as an unskilled occupation, the artisan farmer also was very apt to lord it over the peasant farmer of his own nationality. Craftsmanship, in a word, established a kind of rank among Germans in this country because it was a recognized means of personal and social progress at home.

Statistics are impossible to procure, but the testimony of men and women familiar with early conditions in Wisconsin proves that the German population of the state in early days varied quite as widely in social characteristics as did the American population, though America had no distinctive peasant class. Accordingly, although in the beginnings of American contacts with their Prussian or Westphalian neighbors these were lumped together indiscriminately as "Dutchmen," differences soon began to emerge. In the course of a few years a class of "fine old Germans" was recognized in almost every community to supplement the well-known type of "fine old Yankee gentlemen." These select Germans were very apt to be men who had been trained as craftsmen, or men who had enjoyed the advanced scientific or literary instruction afforded in the higher schools and the universities of the homeland. In the cities, especially Milwaukee, were many Germans who had been prominent in business lines as well as in the professions.

The question has sometimes arisen why so many of the second-generation Germans appear inferior in social character to their immigrant parents. A hint of the reason is found in what has just been said. Whatever elements of superiority were shown by the immigrant artisan-farmers or the highly educated Germans, the social advantages accruing therefrom were personal, and in a slightly developed western society could not be handed on to the next generation. In the cities it frequently was possible for men of high ideals and fine social status to provide equivalent opportunities for their children. But not so on frontier farms. There it was a rare case when an education or training like that received by the father in the old country could be supplied. Accordingly, the sons of the most intelligent, dignified, and worthy German farmer, if they became farmers in succession, might perhaps turn out mere farmers, with none of the

graces or exceptional social virtues of the parents, and little except the memory of a parent's high respectability to distinguish them from the farmer sons of the clumsiest peasant.

However, this is but half the story. If the superior Germans reared families incapable of remaining on their own social plane, other types of Germans, who in their own persons counted for less, frequently had the happiness to see their children advance to a position perceptibly higher than their own. Natural gifts, industry, the social opportunities which yield to the key of economic success availed much. Sometimes the presence of a good school, a wise and helpful pastor or some other worthy friend gave the necessary impulse. The process, in fact, does not differ essentially from that which, throughout American pioneer history, has enabled the deserving to press forward and permitted the weak, indolent, or vicious to fall behind in the social competition. It is impossible to say how many German families made a step, or several steps, upward, and how many others slipped back. The delinquents may perhaps exceed the meritorious in number, but probably not, and the impression that the children of German immigrants shame their parents is almost certainly an illusion which would be likely to disappear if the facts were fully known.

The social institutions of Wisconsin, based on the earlier Yankee and southwestern immigrations, were profoundly influenced by the German immigration of the late forties and the fifties of last century. Milwaukee, the center of German influence (the *Deutsche Athen*), became a city in which the German language was spoken and read by many English speaking persons, in order to facilitate communication and trade with the numerically dominant German element. The Germans maintained advanced schools for instruction in both English and German; their parochial schools were conducted

mainly in German; the immigrants themselves felt no compulsion to learn English, and their children, in many cases, however well educated, spoke the language of the country with very imperfect accent.

The universal respect in which the German language was held, and the extent to which it was affected by others than Germans, provided an admirable social soil for the development of German music and the cultivation of German literature. Hardly had the immigrants established themselves when, in 1847, they founded at Milwaukee their first singing society, which was followed three years later by the famous and far-reaching *Musikverein.* A German theater followed promptly, and became a permanent feature of Milwaukee's intellectual life.[10] The *Turnverein* fostered in America Father Jahn's conception of athletics, while restaurants and beer gardens gave an old world, continental atmosphere to public recreation. Holidays assumed a German aspect. The *Christ Child* displaced *St. Nicholas* not alone in Milwaukee, but in scores of towns, villages, and hamlets, and innumerable farm homes scattered over Wisconsin. The joyous German *Weinacht* made way easily against the more somber Puritan Christmas, which, however, had already brightened a good deal in its progress from the seventeenth century to the nineteenth century.

In general, Germans did not insist with extreme pertinacity upon the retention of their own social customs, and wherever people of that nationality were intermingled with a larger number of Americans, the process by which they assimilated American habits of living, American social usages, and even ways of acting, speaking, and thinking was very rapid. In the schools of a Yankee neighborhood the children of German settlers, in many cases, could not be distinguished

[10] Albert Bernhard Faust, *The German Element in the United States* (Boston, 1909), ii, 472.

by their manner of speech from the Yankee children. On the other hand, in communities made up wholly or mainly of Germans, the grandchildren continue to have trouble with the *th* sound in English words, and manifest other linguistic peculiarities. And this difference is merely symptomatic. To this day, it is easy to reconstruct, in case of the average person of German descent, the atmosphere in which he was brought up. If he comes from Milwaukee, or from some rural "Dutch settlement," that fact is usually clear from a hundred trifling intimations. If he was brought up in a non-German community (so adaptable is the race), a change of name from the German *Weiss* to the English *White,* or from *Schwartz* to *Black,* would ordinarily suffice to disguise the fact that he is of German descent at all. Germans thus brought up are apt to have made their religious affiliations and their intimate social relationships harmonize with those of the leading American element of the community, so that these quite as much as their speech would tend to conceal their racial origin.

Wisconsin writers have made much of the fact that emigrating German revolutionists came to this state largely in 1848 and the years following. That fact, significant as bringing to Wisconsin Carl Schurz, who became the most noted liberal American statesman and publicist of German birth, has perhaps been overstressed. At least, it can safely be said that for every revolutionist disembarked at Milwaukee or Sheboygan or Manitowoc, probably a full score of plain, everyday, conventional Germans filtered into the state's population during the same time. The important point about the revolutionists is not their relative numbers, but their character and the leadership they helped to supply in the affairs of the new commonwealth. Newspaper editors who possessed exceptional literary and scholastic attainments came from that class; some found their way into the legislature, and

many served the cause of liberal government on the local plane.

The name of Schurz was one to conjure with, as American politicians were quick to discover. He figured prominently in Wisconsin state politics only a few years, but as a national leader his influence in attaching the Germans to the causes he advocated was especially strong in this state, which claimed him as her own. Schurz's high character and attainments, coupled with his political successes in this country, were a source of pride to thousands of Wisconsin Germans who shared not at all his revolutionary views. Enough that, like Goethe, he was a great German, and that he had gained the respect and confidence of large sections of the American people. It ministered to the self-respect of the average German settler to feel that his people had contributed something of value to the life of the nation and state.

Later arrivals from Germany, and especially from Prussia, brought with them an intense pride of nationalism and enthusiasm for German achievement in the wars against Austria and against France. The difference in attitude between immigrants of 1880 and those of forty years earlier was antipodal. Many of the former had served in the victorious wars and abounded in military incidents and in stories of Bismarck, of Kaiser Wilhelm I, and Crown Prince Frederick William (*Unser Fritz*). These men obviously belonged to a new generation of Germans, and they have exerted a powerful influence upon our recent history. But the Germans who deserve special recognition along with the Yankees, as founders of the commonwealth and its institutions, are those of the earlier immigrations from a Fatherland which as yet was united only in culture, while politically its states remained dissevered.

THE YANKEE AND THE TEUTON IN WISCONSIN

JOSEPH SCHAFER

V SOCIAL HARMONIES AND DISCORDS

The "Sons of the Pilgrims" of Milwaukee held in December, 1850, their customary banquet to celebrate the historic landing on Plymouth Rock. The occasion was one which stimulated the flow of oratory and the display of quaint Yankee humor and sparkling wit. Among the toasts, some of which embodied genuine wisdom, was the following: "Our adopted state. She has gathered her sons from many lands and given them all a home amid her bounty and her beauty. May the elements of strength and greatness peculiar to each be here transplanted and united to form a perfect commonwealth."[1]

The sentiment was notably generous, voiced as it was by one out of the many and diverse population elements, and we now see that it was also prophetic. But the attainment of the ideal here advanced was not to result from an effortless, unconscious process. Much history is involved in the relations of Yankee and Teuton—to say nothing of other stocks—which reveals a general tendency to helpful coöperation, but presents, on the other hand, episodes marked by animosity, jealousy, and social estrangement. If there were social harmonies, there were also discords.

As early as 1850 Milwaukee contained more Germans than Yankees. Out of an aggregate population of 20,059 the census taker had designated 3880 as natives of the New England states and New York, while 5958 were born in Germany. The entire American element (aside from

[1] *Daily Free Democrat,* December 27, 1850.

natives of Wisconsin, who were children of the foreign born as well as of the American born) amounted to 5113, while the number of foreigners was 12,036. Of these, more than 3000 were Irish and about 1300 English. Thus the German was numerically the dominant social factor in the city.

Nevertheless, in all but numbers the Yankee element remained, as it had been from the beginning of the town's growth, in a position of acknowledged leadership. There would be no difficulty in proving that socially, industrially, and commercially the places of power were occupied by the "down-easters," while in politics, although their control was being challenged from one side or another, they were still far from recognizing a master.

Yankees were the promoters of those far-reaching improvements, like the various plank roads, and especially the railroads, which were destined to unite the extensive new settlements with Milwaukee and thus guarantee the future greatness of the city. They were largely engaged in the carrying trade on the Lakes. They controlled the flour milling business, the leading industry of the city, in which was concentrated probably more capital than was invested in all other lines of manufacturing carried on at that time. They were also prominent in wholesale merchandising and owned the most pretentious retail stores.

Their general preëminence in the professions was undisputed. They had most of the lawyers, a large proportion of the physicians, the editors of English language papers, the Protestant clergymen, the teachers. Public opinion, with a reservation to be stated presently, was mainly of their making, both in the city itself and—through the agency of a widely read newspaper press—in the state at large. On all questions affecting public education, social morality, health, and recreation, as well as business or industry, the American portion of the community was very apt to mass

behind Yankee leadership; and the English speaking section of the foreign population was not averse to doing the same, at least under ordinary circumstances. Often, indeed, such was the prestige of the Yankees, their initiative was followed unquestioningly by American and foreigner alike.

But the weight of numbers being with the Germans, the bulk of whom did not speak or read English—though there were numerous exceptions,—it was natural that there should have developed a community leadership within their own group, and such leadership would be determinative in cases of divergence from American ideas. The presence of this great body of non-English speaking persons, clothed with political power and wielding also a goodly share of economic power, especially as manifested in consumption, tended in itself to generate a more amiable attitude and more moderate policies on the part of the dominant class.

For the Germans were a coherent, prosperous, and growing element in the city. They began coming in 1839, and during the succeeding decade the annual accretions waxed gradually larger. After the revolution of 1848 the tide of emigration, especially from the countries and provinces along the Rhine, was swollen to unprecedented proportions, Milwaukee and the whole state profiting largely therefrom. But, already before 1850 Milwaukee's streets, business places, and homes were so habituated to German speech, that most visitors unhesitatingly described it as a German city. "In the colony of Herman alone," wrote Carl de Haas in 1848, "among all the United States is the population so preponderantly German."[2] This writer also says, as do other chroniclers of his race, that not alone the speech of his country, but also the national habits and customs prevailed exceedingly in Milwaukee; that the Americans made many concessions to the Germanism of the environ-

[2] *Nordamerika, Wisconsin, Calumet. Winke für Auswanderer* (edition of 1849), 64.

ment—merchants, for example, learning the language themselves, or at least keeping clerks in their establishments who could speak it, in order to attract German trade.

The emigration which began in 1839 as a religious movement, a congregation of Old Lutherans fleeing the pressure of the illiberal policy of Prussia's king, was continued thereafter mainly from economic and social motives. An examination of the census schedules of 1850 for Milwaukee reveals its general character better than volumes of reminiscent testimony. The census shows that, among the 5958 Germans in the city, 1165 (if the count is accurate) were craftsmen. There were house carpenters, ship carpenters, smiths, wheelwrights, millwrights, cabinet makers, masons, plasterers, painters, brickmakers, tailors, shoemakers, saddlers, watchmakers, coppersmiths, silversmiths and goldsmiths, barbers, bakers, brewers, cigar makers, musicians, sailors, and many more. In contrast to the large number of craftsmen, those employed at common labor numbered only 461, while the aggregate of those who may be described as business men was 248. A total of 45 persons fall in the class of professional men. Many, even of the laborers, possessed some property, thus showing that they were of a substantial, home-making type. A good many of the craftsmen owned homes, some of the business men were possessed of real estate to an appreciable extent, and there were a very few capitalists whose properties were valued at from $20,000 to $50,000.

The significance to the city of having among the population so large a body of thoroughly trained and skilled artisans cannot readily be overstated. It toned up all building operations and enabled them to keep pace with the city's rapidly growing needs; it facilitated the establishment and expansion of industries depending upon a full supply of skilled labor; it gave the city a fine body of industrious, well paid residents as homemakers and citizens—at a time

when American artisans were very prone to seek land and raise farm produce. American business and industrial leaders in Milwaukee appreciated the German craftsmen who contributed largely to the prosperity of the city; and the same may be said of the common laborers.

The appearance of Germans with capital which sought investment in lines of business already pursued by Americans was no doubt less welcome, and to some it may have seemed like an intrusion. Generally, however, Germans began their business enterprises on so modest a scale, and built them up so gradually, that no serious economic dislocations could have been felt in consequence. In some cases the German business men merely undertook to meet demands created by the presence of their own people, which demands were not fully cared for by existing American enterprise. Perhaps no better illustration of this tendency can be found than the local tobacco trade. "Groceries," of course, carried the "plug tobacco" used so widely in those days by Americans of all classes, while drug stores handled cigars. But smoking was more nearly universal among European immigrants than among Americans. Germans accordingly set up tobacco shops, which usually included a department for the manufacture of cigars. The investments were all small, ranging from $50 to $4000, but the payroll was of some consequence to the city and the output considerable. It is believed that all firms of tobacconists or cigar manufacturers listed by the census takers in 1850 were Germans.

Another industry in which Germans were prominent in 1850 was tanning. This they did not monopolize, for several non-German tanners were operating at the same time. But G. Pfister and Company, Tanners, had an investment of $35,000 and, employing thirty-five men, manufactured an annual product valued at $45,000, while all other tanneries taken together had an aggregate investment of less than $7500.

In boot and shoe manufacturing one American firm was far in the lead.[3] Yet, on a smaller scale, German firms were participating in the business actively, while German craftsmen were an important element in the success of all shoe manufacturers. A similar statement will hold true in the department of brickmaking. A large number of Germans worked in the brickyards as experts, and several had small plants of their own. But the big brickyard of the city was not managed by Germans.[4] There was one single rope maker, who was a German, and also one glove and mitten manufacturer, who was also German. Both of these industries were small.

There remains the historically important Milwaukee industry of beer-brewing, popularly supposed to have been introduced by immigrants from Munich and other centers of beer manufacture in the fatherland. The census lists a total of ten establishments designated as breweries. Of these, seven were owned by Germans and three by non-Germans. The investments by the latter aggregated $27,000, those of the former $20,900. But the sum of the annual products of the German breweries was $41,062, while the aggregate product of the others was $32,425. The non-German brewery which had the largest investment was doing an annual business valued at less than the investment, while one of the German breweries having only $3000 invested reported a product valued at $18,000.[5]

When we consider mercantile lines as distinguished from the industrial, Germans were prominent in those which called for moderate investments. They had many small grocery stores scattered through the city, a number of meat markets, and of course a goodly proportion of liquor

[3] Bradley and Metcalf.

[4] It was managed by G. and J. Burnham, who had an investment of $10,000.

[5] This was John Braun's. Best and Company had the largest investment among the German brewers, $7400, but their output was only $11,250. Other German brewers were Weizt, Englehardt, Stolz and Schuder, H. Nunnemacher, and H. Beverung.

saloons. There were also several German clothing stores, confectioneries, and bakeries. That their business men expected to sell almost exclusively to Germans is indicated by the fact that for the most part they advertised only in the German language papers—the *Wisconsin Banner* and the *Volksfreund*,— not in the English papers. On the other hand, the American merchants, as we have already seen, catered to the German trade by providing German salesmen,[6] and they also advertised extensively in the German papers.

There were German taverns which did a thriving trade; the restaurants made the sojourner from Berlin feel at home; and the German beer gardens were the despair of the pious Yankee mothers of boys. So indispensable did German musicians become, that when the Sons of the Pilgrims banqueted, a brass band directed by a German bandmaster discoursed "martial as well as festive" music.

One other form of coöperation between Yankee and Teuton deserves to be mentioned—the employment of German girls in Yankee homes. This custom, testified to by German writers and indicated unmistakably by the census, was widespread. Such service was an immediate resource to the poorer immigrant families, and a boon to the American families as well. By that means numbers of future German homemakers came promptly into possession of the manners and customs of the Yankees, acquired their speech, and gained some insight into their distinctive views of life.

The least numerous of the special classes into which we have analyzed the German population of Milwaukee, in 1850, was the professional class. Yet it is not for that reason least important, for the little group of forty-five[7]

[6] If our count is correct, the 1850 census lists as "clerks" fifty-one Germans. Doubtless many of these were serving in American stores.

[7] Or thirty-six, if we omit the teachers, some of whom at least were probably not liberally educated.

persons contained most of the individuals whose views swayed public opinion among the 6000 Milwaukee Germans. Among them were two newspaper editors, each in charge of a German language paper. There were six lawyers, nine teachers, and eleven clergymen and preachers. Four of the preachers are described as German Lutheran, one was Evangelical, and one Methodist.[8] Two, Joseph Salzman and Franz Fusseden, were Catholic priests. One, F. W. Helfer, was called a "rationalist preacher." Two, John Mühlhauser and G. Klügel, were merely called preachers.

It is not strange that medicine, among all the professions, should have had the strongest representation. A physician, wherever trained, is equipped to practice anywhere, while a lawyer, clergyman, editor, or teacher is obliged to prepare for service by first fitting himself into the community he is to serve. German medical education was far superior to American at that time, and, in the western states at least, the supply of trained physicians was below the requirements. There were communities in Wisconsin where not one-fourth of the practitioners were graduates of medical schools or had honestly earned the title of "doctor."[9] This condition made a splendid opportunity for German physicians, who could hope to win the patronage of Americans as well as Germans. That the prospect was alluring to them is shown by the fact that Milwaukee at the census date in 1850 had seventeen German physicians, some of them already men of note in the community.

The Yankees and the Germans came into such close and intimate contacts in Milwaukee, that it is easier to study their normal attitudes there than in the outlying portions of the state. On the whole those relations, in the

[8] The Lutherans included a Fr. Lachner, C. Eisenmeyer, and Ludwig Dulitz; the Evangelical preacher was Christian Holl, and the Methodist, Christian Barth.

[9] The Western Medical Society of Wisconsin, representing the counties of Grant, Iowa, and Lafayette, reported in December, 1850, that out of sixty persons engaged in the practice of medicine in that area, only twelve were entitled to be called "doctor." *Daily Free Democrat*, January 8, 1850.

period terminating with the Civil War, appear to have been marked by mutual respect, if not active friendship. At all events, if there were differences causing ill will on one side or the other, these—so far as they were the outgrowth of the social, economic, or commercial interplay of the two groups—rarely became serious enough to be reflected in the public press. The prosperity of the city, providing usually full employment and adequate returns to all who wanted to work, made the bond between capitalist and employees satisfactory, and this solved one important aspect of the class problem. The absence of any decided public interest in the immigrant problem as affecting the city—other than politically—is a fact which obtrudes itself upon one who canvasses the Milwaukee papers, English and German, during the fourteen years which intervened between the first constitutional convention and the election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency.

Yet, there are not wanting evidences that the two groups were quite distinct and that the Germans, as a foreign group, were sensitively class conscious. This is shown, for example, by the race appeals in their business advertisements. To call attention to one's nationality when offering services of a personal nature, like those of the physician, or the dentist, or even the druggist, is reasonable and correct. But there is no good ground for assuming that nationality makes a difference to the purchaser of lime. Why then the advertisement of a *Deutsche Kalk Haus* (German lime house), unless there was a feeling that the German dealer would be favored by German buyers simply because he was German? This is a typical example which goes to show the existence of a city within a city, a German Milwaukee which tended to live its own group life, for which, as already explained, it possessed, within itself, great facilities.

Occasionally some relatively minor happening threw this feeling of separateness into strong relief, as when, in 1850, a German scholar published in the Milwaukee papers of his language the story of his relations with the chancellor and board of regents of the University. He thought they had promised him a chair, but afterwards they made it plain that no contract had been closed with him. He may or may not have had cause of complaint. But what he professed to do was to lay the whole matter before the Germans of Wisconsin, in order that they might know how the board of regents "flouts the wishes of the German citizens," how it keeps its promises "to Germans," and how little it regards the rules of ordinary courtesy "in dealing with Germans."[10] No doubt the design was to bring political pressure to bear on the regents, but the device would not have been resorted to had not the recognized racial unity among the Germans rendered that a hopeful plan.

In a society like the present Milwaukee, where interracial marriages are a daily occurrence, and one is rarely conscious of race in cases of that kind, the condition of seventy years ago seems almost incomprehensible. For, a close scrutiny of the entire census record for Milwaukee in 1850 reveals that marriages between Germans and Americans of all derivations at that time were excessively rare. The aggregate number of such unions was twelve. But of marriages between Yankees and Germans I can provisionally identify only six, as follows: Margaret, twenty-six years of age, born in Germany, was the wife of John H. Butler, a livery-stable keeper, born in New York. Hiram Brooks, twenty-seven, born in New York, was married to Mary, twenty-three, born in Hesse Darmstadt. James Ridgeway, thirty, a cooper, native of New York, was married to Mary, born in Prussia. Abram Davis, twenty-five, a cooper, born

[10] "The University and the Germans," *Daily Wisconsin Banner*, August 23, 1850.

in New York, was married to C–, twenty-three, native of Bavaria. Joseph Stadter, thirty-three, physician, rated at $2000, who was born in Bavaria, was married to Sarah Ann, nineteen, born in New York (but a female who was a member of the family, and may have been this woman's mother, bore a German name). Finally, William Stamm, thirty-two, painter, native of Bremen, was married to Lucy, twenty-eight, a native of Massachusetts.

It is not possible to determine how many of the American born persons represented in the six cases may have belonged to German families, but doubtless some did. At all events, we can assert that in Milwaukee at that time, with its nearly 6000 Germans and nearly 4000 Yankees, not more than six cases can be found of marriages between them. No commentary is needed to establish the fact of the virtual segregation of the two great population groups.[11] If Chevalier, the French philosopher, was right in his conviction that "the Yankee is not a man of promiscuous society," it is equally true that the German at that time was excessively clannish. His clannishness was due, no doubt, to natural and inevitable causes, but the fact needs to be recognized by the student of history.

This disposition on the part of Germans to "hang together" was promptly discovered by American politicians and exploited for partisan and personal ends. The outstanding fact of the political history of the period under review is the attachment of the immigrant Germans to the Democratic party. That relation was all but absolute and universal during the 1840's, though a gradual change took place in the last half of the next decade. There was nothing mysterious about it. Germans found the country,

[11] The remaining cases of marriages between Germans and Americans were briefly as follows: A whitewasher, born in Pennsylvania, was married to a German woman; tailor, born "in U. S.," married to a German; a weaver, born in Germany, married to a woman born in Pennsylvania; a laborer, born in Ohio, married to a German woman; a stage driver, born in Ohio, married to a German woman; a minister (M. E.), native of Hanover, married to a woman born in Illinois.

on their arrival, living under a Democratic administration, to which they looked for favors and usually not in vain. The Democratic party was liberal in the bestowal of lands; it contended manfully against the principle of monopoly, especially in banking and other corporate activities; and it emphasized the doctrine of the equality of all men. The Germans, like the Irish and, in fact, all immigrants, were strongly attracted by the principles professed in Democratic platforms. The very word "democracy," had its winning appeal. "Democracy," wrote the editor of the *Banner* in 1850, "is a glorious word. There are few other words, in any language, which can be compared to it. To the poor man it is peculiarly precious since he is aware that he owes to it his escape from the serfdom in which his oppressors held him, and can now look up into heaven and thank his God that he has ceased to be a serf. Democracy knows no distinctions between man and man. She sets all upon the broad foundation of equality."[12]

The enormous prestige gained by the Democratic party under Jackson's leadership easily floated the administrations of Van Buren and Polk. But, as an influence toward captivating the foreign element in Wisconsin, no other Democratic principle had quite the efficacy of the liberal suffrage provision which the party in power adopted at the beginning of our history as a state.

In Michigan the makers of the state constitution had granted the voting privilege to all aliens who were *bona fide* residents and who had declared their intention to become citizens. That clause in her organic law drew the criticism of Whig members of Congress, but she was admitted to the union in spite of their opposition, and thus was established the principle that men might be voters without being citizens. When, in 1846, the territorial legislature of

[12] *Daily Wisconsin Banner*, August 1, 1850 (translation).

Wisconsin provided by law for the holding of a constitutional convention, a similar proviso was made to govern the election of delegates to the convention.

In Milwaukee County the Democrats nominated eight candidates for delegates. Dr. Franz Huebschmann was the sole German named. The *Wisconsin Banner*, while remarking that Germans constituting one-third of the population were to have but a single delegate, urged Germans to vote as one man for him. He was needed, said the editor, especially to contend for equality in the voting privilege, for which he had striven manfully during the past three years. In the neighbor county of Washington, Germans were urged to support two Irish candidates who favored equality of the voting privilege and whom the Whigs (so it was asserted) were trying to defeat by the same wiles they employed against Huebschmann. The moral of the *Banner* editorials was: "Don't trust the Whigs. They have always opposed the rights of the foreign born."[13] In preparation for the vote on delegates, Milwaukee Germans who had not declared their intention were given every direction for completing that formality, and the indications are that a large number of voters were newly made for the occasion.

Dr. Huebschmann, in the first convention, was a powerful advocate of equality, giving as the chief ground in favor of the principle that it would tend to bring Americans and foreigners into more harmonious relations with one another. "The more distinctions you make between them politically," he said, "the more you delay this great end [amalgamation], which is so essential to the future welfare of this state. And, in fact, I regard only one measure equally important as the political equality which I ask for, and that is a good common school system. . . . Political equality and good schools will make the people of Wisconsin an en-

[13] *Wisconsin Banner*, August 29, 1846.

lightened and happy people. They will make them one people."[14]

On the educational question Huebschmann found the Yankee majority of the convention eager to welcome his coöperation. On the subject of suffrage their unity was less complete. While party lines were not strictly drawn, the chief contenders for equality were leading Democrats and the chief opponents leading Whigs. But both conventions adopted the principle, the first not quite frankly, and with the admission of Wisconsin into the union all foreign born persons who had resided in the state one year prior to any election had the right to vote, provided they had declared their intention to become citizens of the United States.

The adoption of such a liberal suffrage provision in the teeth of the nativist movement which had affected all parts of the country more or less, was considered a great triumph of Democratic principles. And there is no doubt about the gratitude of adoptive citizens to the party which secured them the boon. To the Germans it seemed thenceforward a simple question of loyalty to support the Democratic party, through thick and thin, through good report and evil report. Inasmuch as the Democratic party also supported the Germans' views on the subject of temperance (prohibition), soon to become a burning issue,[15] and in their contest with the more serious manifestations of Know-Nothingism, which in this state reached its climax somewhat later, one almost wonders how any of the Germans were able to detach themselves from that party, despite its failure to represent them on the slavery and free-soil issues.

The temperance movement and nativism were the chief grounds of political contention between Germans and Yankees during this period. The first of these broke, in

[14] *Wis. Hist. Colls.*, xxvii, 235.

[15] See this magazine, vi, 395-398 (June, 1923).

1853-55, on the rock of German—which meant Democratic—opposition. For, although a referendum vote had gone in favor of the enactment of a "Maine Law," the Democratic legislature chosen at the same time refused to accept the result as mandatory, and did not pass the law. And when the first Republican legislature did pass such a law, in the early months of the year 1855, Barstow, the Democratic governor, vetoed the bill. Never thereafter did the temperance issue become as acute as it had been during the seven years immediately following statehood, but it is not strange that their record on that question was one of the standing arguments against Republicanism among the German voters.[16]

The Know-Nothing issue, which was supposed to be dying out at the time of the Wisconsin constitutional conventions, 1846–1848, revived after the Mexican War, figured prominently in the defeat of General Scott in 1852, and in this state as well as in some other states rose to dramatic and even tragic interest in 1855. Thereafter it declined, to pass away for the time being with the election of Lincoln and the engulfing of the nation in war.

But the Know-Nothingism of 1855 was regarded by the Democratic party as sinister because, as that party professed to believe, it had got itself incorporated as an important if not controlling element in the new Republican party. This the Republican leaders and organs denied with vigor, but it is true that the general council of the *American* party in this state urged the support of the Republican candidates and professed to have contributed 20,000 votes toward the election of Bashford. The Republicans had no objection to Know-Nothing votes, but they feared that the endorse-

[16] "Events teach us," said the *Banner und Volksfreund*, October 15, 1855 (in the thick of the bitter Barstow-Bashford campaign), "that the Shanghais (Republicans) despite their prating of antislavery, are further removed from actual human freedom than the slaveholders themselves. The occurrences of the past year, during which the Shanghais have been dominant in various state legislatures, have shown us that this party is the incubator of the temperance law." This line was followed vigorously through the campaign.

ment of their ticket by the Know-Nothings would cost them more foreign born votes than it would gain them nativists. It was tactically wise for the Democrats, and especially the German Democratic press, to keep the "Republican-Know-Nothing" idea before their people—and they made the best use of the opportunity.

"Temperance," after all, was regarded by the Germans as merely a manifestation of Puritan fanaticism, which must be opposed in the interest of personal liberty. Much as they disliked it, their opposition does not seem to have developed excessive bitterness against the believers in or practicers of temperance. But nativism, which demanded that the suffrage be limited to citizens; that naturalization be made more difficult; that in some departments, as in the army, natives be favored to the exclusion of the foreign born, this they felt to be a deliberate and vicious attack upon the rights of the foreign born as a class. The advocacy of these principles involved much discussion of the unfitness of foreigners, their ignorance, their sordidness, their "un-American" habits and customs, in one important respect their "anti-American" religion.

All of this inevitably roused a bitter, fighting resentment on the part of all foreigners, as it did among radical natives also, and it is well known that many parts of the country suffered in consequence from riots and other manifestations of a class war. In Wisconsin there was less overt hostility than in some states where the foreign elements were not so powerful.[17] The Know-Nothing party as such functioned seriously only in the one year 1855, and its propaganda was relatively mild-mannered.[18] Its chief objects of attack were the foreign born Catholics, which class included

[17] Note, for example, the Louisville, Kentucky, riots in which the Germans were driven from the city. The Wisconsin Democracy, in August, 1855, made that the excuse for a resolution refusing seats in the convention to men of Know-Nothing proclivities. See *Argus and Democrat* (Madison), August 29, 1855.

[18] See the *Milwaukee American*, 1855-1856, which was the party organ.

a majority of the Irish but only a fraction of the Germans, most of whom—probably—were either Lutheran or Reformed, with an appreciable number of non-churchmen or "free-thinkers."[19] Nevertheless, nativism, as entangled in the political psychology of this eventful year, had its full share in producing a tragedy in this state also.

It came in the form of a lynching, carried out with hideous barbarism by a body of the ruder Germans of Washington County, in August, 1855. It seems that a sickly, weak witted boy of nineteen, named George DeBar—a native of New York State—felt himself aggrieved by a German farmer and proposed to administer a beating. This he partly accomplished, at the farmer's home, but his victim fled into the field, where he found a hiding place. Meantime, DeBar ran amuck, and meeting the man's wife stabbed her severely but not fatally. He next pursued a fifteen-year-old boy, Paul Winderling, who was living with the farmer, attacked him with his pocketknife, and killed him. He then burned the farmer's cabin. DeBar afterwards solemnly assured his attorneys that the only part of the transaction he could remember was striking the farmer himself with a stone knotted in his handkerchief. The belief was widespread that he became unbalanced mentally at this point, which theory is really the simplest explanation of his horrible crime, committed without assignable motive.

Immediately on DeBar's arrest a plan was hatched to storm the jail, take him out, and hang him. The death penalty had been abolished at the instance, as many felt, of the Yankee sentimentalists, and the ignorance of some suggested that, since hanging was only justice in a case like this, and the state refused to execute a criminal, the people themselves had a right to take the matter into their own

[19] Those belonging to the Turner Society are generally classified as "free thinkers." The *Turner Zeitung*, national organ of the Society in 1855, was Republican in its politics, which probably influenced the result in Wisconsin.

hands. Unfortunately, a similar case had happened two weeks earlier at Janesville, in which the avenging crowd was made up of Americans.[20] It was suggested by some that DeBar was himself a Know-Nothing, or at least trained with the Know-Nothing element, and there were dire whispers about the trial judge, Charles H. Larrabee. Doubtless these rumors were altogether wild. The nineteen-year-old DeBar, practically *non compos mentis*, was of no possible political consequence, while Judge Larrabee at the time was as sound a Democrat as could be found.[21] But passions once fully aroused hurl reason from its throne, and so it was in this case. The rowdies gathered at a drinking place in West Bend, and decided on a lynching.

Judge Larrabee convened a special session of court, impaneled a grand jury, and having summoned two companies of militia—the Union Guards of Ozaukee County, a German company, and the Washington Guards, another German company, of Milwaukee—to come up for the protection of the prisoner, had him conveyed to the courthouse and examined. The grand jury brought in a true bill, charging murder in the first degree. To this the prisoner, on the advice of his attorneys, pleaded "not guilty." The multitude which had been permitted to press into the court room, despite the judge's instruction to the militia to limit the number to the seating capacity of the room, fairly raged when they found a trial would be required, and before the prisoner took many steps in the direction of the jail, they seized him and made way with him.

The severest censure was leveled against the militia companies and their leaders. All the American writers whose statements appear in the *Sentinel* charge that these companies fraternized with the lynching party, and practi-

[20] The Mayberry lynching. The lynchers were loggers from an up-river camp belonging to the murdered man.

[21] See his letter, MS, to Lyman Draper, August 28, 1855.

cally assert that they had an understanding by which the prisoner was to be given up to them. The captain of the Milwaukee company, who was a veteran of the Mexican War—though a German immigrant—insisted with vigor that his company did all it could to prevent the lynching. He did not speak for the Union Guards of Ozaukee. All witnesses agree that one of the Union Guard officers, Lieutenant Beger, performed his duty manfully and heroically, but the weight of the testimony condemns the companies as organizations, and especially their captains. It would seem that two companies of militia, if well led, ought to have been able with the butts of their guns to hold off a rabble of three hundred men, and no witness puts the number higher than that, while some declare the rush was made by not more than thirty-five men.

In the Milwaukee captain's statement, as in the statements of other German apologists for the militia, we come at once upon the political note. They could not expect the "Know-Nothing American writers" to tell the truth about the tragedy. In other words, they found in the politics of the time an opportunity to charge prejudice against Americans, and by that means to dodge the real issue. Two German writers of West Bend, one of them the undersheriff, bitterly denounced both the militia companies and the lynchers, and both more than hint that the passions which led to the lynching were partly religious. Here, undoubtedly, we come upon one of the signs of division among the Germans themselves. It is possible that these two Germans were politically opposed to the main body of their fellow-countrymen, for by this time a light minority had already been attracted away from the Democratic party. However, we do not know that this was true, and merely call attention to the several psychological attitudes which, from the testimony, we know the case disclosed.

Of greatest interest is the attitude of English and German language papers of Democratic and Republican proclivities. The *Sentinel* continued to admit contributions on the West Bend tragedy for approximately two weeks. It also published the results of an investigation made on the ground by one of its staff, and a petition to the governor, said to have been signed by 186 residents of Washington County, who asked for the disbandment of the two accused companies and the withdrawal of their officers' commissions. But the *Sentinel* does not appear to have tried by means of the incident to influence the political situation which was about to become superheated. At all events, what it published would all have been legitimate as news. On the other hand, the *Banner und Volksfreund*,[22] while condemning the lynching, made no demand for the punishment of the lynchers. It tried to exculpate the militia companies (accepting the Milwaukee captain's testimony as against all other evidence), and deliberately charged that the *Sentinel*, in publishing the above-mentioned petition, was playing for political advantage. This charge was absurd on its face, for the success of the new Republican movement which the *Sentinel* had espoused depended on its ability to detach Germans from the Democratic party, which assuredly could not be done by playing into the hands of the Know-Nothings, and the *Sentinel* did not hesitate to declare the Know-Nothing support a handicap to the party.

Both American and German testimony discloses the existence in Washington County of a strong German party of law and order. They deplored the lynching and urged the apprehension and trial of the ringleaders. They realized that the crime would put a stigma upon their race as well as upon the county and the state. But, as a matter of fact, although some of the lynchers were identified in the verdict

[22] In the year 1855 the *Wisconsin Banner* and the *Volksfreund* were united and became the *Wisconsin Banner und Volksfreund.*

of the coroner's jury, it must be recorded that no earnest effort was made to punish them.[23] Nor was any step of an official character taken (so far as I have been able to find) to determine the guilt or innocence of the militia companies and their officers. In fact, the Democratic press of the state, evidently fearful of sacrificing some German Democratic votes, which that year were all needed, deliberately tried to darken council by confounding this case in principle not only with the Mayberry case, which it resembled, but also with another of an entirely different nature, to which we must give passing attention.

In the previous year, 1854, occurred at Milwaukee the famous Glover rescue. Glover was a runaway slave who had been apprehended by his self-styled owner, brutally man-handled, and confined in the Milwaukee County jail for safekeeping. Sherman M. Booth, editor of the *Daily Free Democrat*, one of the founders of the Republican party, a vigorous free-soil and antislavery partisan, and the man in the state who was perhaps most feared and hated by the Democracy, had argued hotly for the protection of Glover's rights against the man claiming him under the "unconstitutional" compromise law of 1850. Booth called a public meeting at the courthouse for the purpose, as he claimed, of concerting measures for helping Glover without the use of force. But the upshot was a rescue party which battered down the door of the jail, took Glover out, and by various shifts and transfers on the underground railway, carried him to Canada and freedom. Booth was then made to suffer for all that had been done; he was tried in the federal court, convicted, fined, and given a jail sentence.

[23] "Fifteen participators in the lynching affair were indicted and tried for the murder of DeBar in May, 1856. They were acquitted, as the testimony did not sustain the allegation that 'he came to his death by hanging,' *there being a reasonable doubt as to his being alive when he was hung the last time.*" *History of Washington and Ozaukee Counties* (1881), 358. Editor's italics.

We cannot go into the details of the Booth case, a *cause célèbre* in ante-Civil War political history. But the Democratic papers, after the DeBar lynching, ostentatiously bemoaned the fact that due to recent events "neither national nor state laws" could hereafter be enforced in Wisconsin. The beginning of the trouble was the setting at naught of the national law for the rendition of slaves, in which the arch Republican Booth was ringleader. The Mayberry lynching and the DeBar lynching followed in natural sequence. These editors did not choose to analyze the difference between the Glover case and the others—the fact that the one was a rescue performed at their own risk by philanthropic men, the others brutal killings committed by men crazed with the lust of blood vengeance. In other words, the Democratic press, including those papers printed in the German language, attempted the impossible feat of arranging in the same straight line the "higher law" and the lower law.

Of course, the Republican press retorted handsomely, and probably with considerable political effect, that if the apologists for mob law in Kansas were "in favor of the execution of the fugitive slave act in Wisconsin" they would like their avowal to that effect.[24] It is well known that during the 1855 campaign, as in the previous year, a good many Germans were converted from their old-time Democratic allegiance.[25] But both parties were too intent on their immediate political objects to risk pressing for an investigation of the West Bend tragedy, which might have alienated a large section of the German vote in three German counties.

[24] See a brilliant editorial by Colonel David Atwood, in the *Daily State Journal* at Madison, for August 13, 1855.

[25] See the article in *Banner und Volksfreund*, July 28, 1855, entitled "The So-Called Republicans:" "We encounter in the *Watertown Anzeiger* the following appropriate article concerning the so-called Republican (vulgarly Shanghai) party, by which so many Germans were duped at the last election and which expects to repeat the same swindling tactics in the approaching election." (Translation). The election of Coles Bashford as governor was due in part to German votes.

It is not impossible that politics was responsible for the severity of the onslaught upon the militia companies, since the nativist propaganda for an exclusively American militia would be quick to seize upon such an opportunity, and it is not to be supposed that the politics of the case was all on one side. Yet, unless the governor was in possession of facts which were withheld from the public, the least that could be said against the companies is that they exhibited criminal inefficiency. From this distance, it looks as if politics affected the Republican attitude as well as the Democratic; as if crime was condoned in the interest of party success, since one party was intent on holding its former German adherents and the other was determined to take as many of them as possible into the opposition camp.

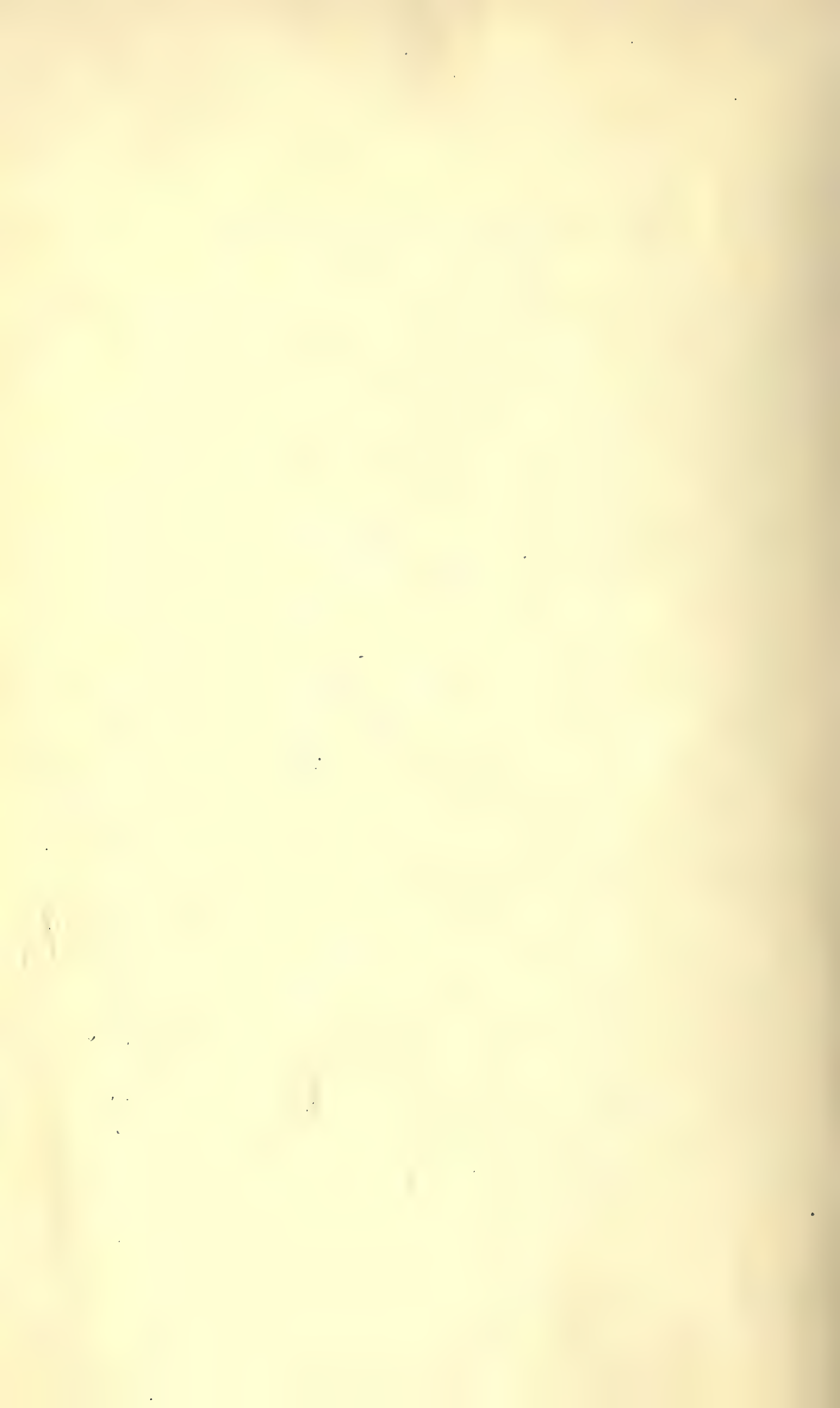
Whether or not the incident leaves the stain of blood on the path of Wisconsin politics, it marks the nearest approach to a race war between Germans and Americans which this general period affords. And by Americans we practically mean Yankees. For it was a truth which the German press sensed instinctively, that the Republican party—made up of "shreds and patches," as was said,—embracing prohibitionists, abolitionists, free-soilers, nativists, and Whigs, was dominated by the "Puritan" element.[26] A glance at the history of its origin in Wisconsin will at least convince the reader of its Yankee paternity.[27]

However, the Republican party changed radically in character during the next few years, and as the German population came to be distributed between it and the Democratic party, a healthier social tone was the result. The

[26] "The temperance swindle," says *Banner und Volksfreund*, October 16, 1855, "is an outflow of Puritan bigotry and comports with other of their pious pretensions, for example, such a rigorous observance of the Sabbath as will reduce all sociability to the condition of a Puritan graveyard. For this sort of thing, also, is the Republican party the fruitful soil. The Know-Nothings harmonize, in these matters, with the Republicans."

[27] Success was to render it practically as cosmopolitan as a protracted career of triumphs had long since rendered the Democratic party.

political campaign of 1856, when Frémont was candidate for the presidency, was conducted with such enthusiasm by Wisconsin Republicans, as to make serious inroads on the Democratic German vote. A number of prominent German leaders took the stump for Frémont, speaking in the German language to German audiences with telling effect. Thereafter, in successive state campaigns and in the presidential canvass of 1860, the Germans of Wisconsin were electrified by the compelling oratory of their greatest campaigner, Carl Schurz, to whom the success of the Lincoln ticket, both in Wisconsin and other western states harboring many Germans, was largely due. Such participation was doing much to justify the prophecy of Dr. Huebschmann—that political equality would help to make the people of Wisconsin "one people."



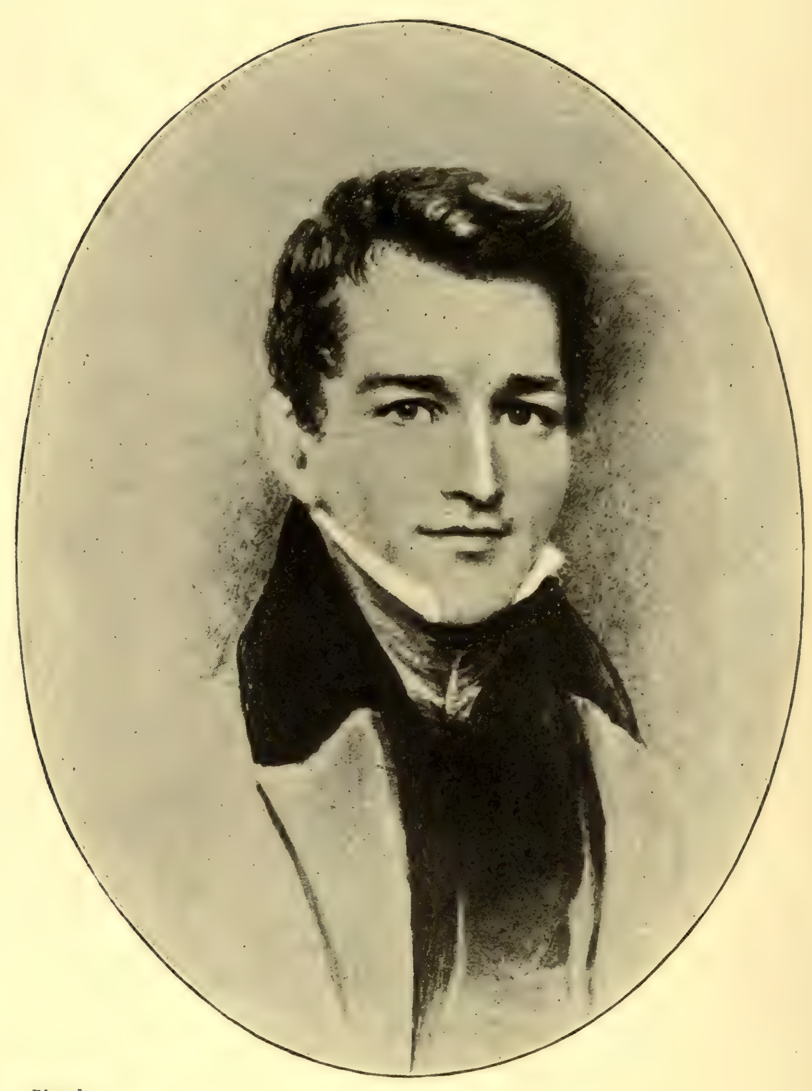


Photo by
Edward C. Nelson

WM. STEPHEN HAMILTON, FOUNDER OF MUSCODA

MUSCODA, 1763–1856

JOSEPH SCHAFER

The light which local inquiry can shed upon general history is well illustrated from a variety of viewpoints in the story of the Wisconsin village which is the subject of this sketch.

Muscoda as a present-day railway station is inconspicuously located on the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul line, Prairie du Chien division, at the distance of fifty-six miles almost due west from Madison, one hundred and fifty-two from Milwaukee; it is forty-two miles east from Prairie du Chien. The village was begun at the river bank on the south side of Wisconsin River, in section 1, township 8 north, range 1 west of the fourth principal meridian. It stretches south from the river toward the flanking hills about three-fourths of a mile, the main portion now clustering about the depot, whereas the "Old Town" lay farther north and hugged the river bank.

The ground on which Muscoda stands is a portion of the sandy plain, the outwash of the erosion process by which the Wisconsin and its larger tributaries worked their way through the sandstone stratum. The upper courses of these tributaries and the smaller streams which feed them have laid down flood bottoms of rich alluvium. Often, too, the bench land of their valleys is a fertile limestone soil intermingled with clayey patches and occasional streaks of sand. These are all characteristics of the "Driftless Area," as the geologists have named this region, because the various primordial movements of glacial ice, so influential in modifying the topography elsewhere, passed around instead of over it, leaving no "drift" upon it. The terrain is just what the eroding waters in the course of countless ages made it—a

system of regular valleys perfectly drained and bounded by symmetrically sculptured hills or bluffs, which exhibit a level sky line and decrease in altitude steadily till at the heads of the streams they merge in the great plateau or "prairie" of southern Wisconsin. The valleys make natural and not ill-graded highways from the prairie to the Wisconsin River, while the ranges of bluffs separating them appear like promontories running out fingerwise from the main plateau and terminating either where two smaller streams converge or at the edge of the lower plain laid down by the Wisconsin.

The principal stream entering the Wisconsin from the south, in the neighborhood of Muscoda, is Blue River—the "Riviere Bleu" of the French traders. It has several head streams rising in township 6–1 E, and a large affluent named the Fennimore rising in 6–1 W, the Six Mile Creek, rising in 7–1 E and Sandy Branch which heads in 8–1 E. There are also several small branches entering the Fennimore from 7–2 W. In its lower course the Blue River swerves to the west, entering the Wisconsin near Blue River Station, in Township 8–2 W, but its rich upper valleys and those of its tributaries have always been mainly within the trade area of Muscoda. North of the Wisconsin the valleys most intimately associated with Muscoda are Indian Creek, Eagle Creek, and Knapp's Creek in Richland County. The "Sand Prairie," by which name the sandy plain along the Wisconsin on the south side has long been known, and a narrow tract of shelving land between the river and the hills on the north are also within the Muscoda area.

Since the bluffs are mostly rough land, with only limited areas on their summits where the soil is deep, free from stones, and sufficiently even for cultivation, and the sand prairie comparatively infertile, Muscoda as a trade center suffers from the low average productivity of her territory. Still, from pioneer days the long valleys beyond the sand

prairie have yielded abundant harvests; the roads through them from the high prairie to the south opened to Muscoda's merchants for some years a great trade in livestock and grain beyond her legitimate boundaries; while the cross ranges which run out from the high prairie northward approximately fifteen miles forced the only rival railway,[1] when it came, back upon the great ridge, leaving the north trending valleys still as a whole tributary to Muscoda.

THE BACKGROUND

According to Father Verwyst, a distinguished authority, the name Muscoda is a corruption of the Chippewa word "Mashkodeng" which means "prairie." A similar corruption occurs in the name "Muscatine," a town in Iowa, and there was a tribe of Indians on the Upper Fox River called Mascouten (prairie Indians).

The earlier name of the place was English Prairie, and while it is clear that geography suggested "Prairie" (or Savannah), there are various traditions to explain the association of the word "English" with it. One is that some English families were settled there as early as 1812 and that they were massacred by the Indians. Another, that the place was so named from the fact that Colonel McKay, who descended the river in 1814 with a regiment of British troops to capture Prairie du Chien, encamped at this place which thereafter was called English Prairie.

A more hopeful clue to the origin of the name occurs in the journal of Willard Keyes, a young New Englander who passed down the river with a party in 1817. He writes, under date of August 29, 1817: "pass a place called 'English meadow' from an English trader and his son, said to have been murdered there by the savages, 20 Leagues to Prairie

[1] The Chicago and Northwestern. It follows in the sector south of Muscoda the old military road from Fort Winnebago to Fort Crawford. Towns taking some of Muscoda's former trade are Montfort, Fennimore, and Cobb.

du Chien."[2] Now, the fact of "an English trader and his son" being murdered at some point on the Wisconsin River between the Portage and Prairie du Chien is well established. In the journal of Lieut. James Gorrell, the first English commandant at Green Bay after the ejection of the French, we read, under date of June 14, 1763: "The traders came down from the Sack [Sauk] country, and confirmed the news of Landsing and his son being killed by the French." When all the Sauk and Foxes had arrived at Green Bay a few days later they told Gorrell that their people were all in tears "for the loss of two English traders who were killed by the French in their lands, and begged leave . . . to cut them [the French] in pieces."[3]

In the following summer, 1764, Garrit Roseboom testified, that "about the latter end of April, 1763, he was going from the Bay [Green Bay] to the Soaks [Sauk] to look for his Partner Abrah[a]m Lancing who had been up there, being told that he was killed, that on his way he met some Indians coming down with some Packs [of furs], which he knew to be his, and which they said he could have for paying the carriage. That both the French and Indians told him, Mr. Lancing and his son were killed by two Frenchmen" who were servants of Mr. Lansing and who afterwards escaped to the Illinois Indians.[4]

When we reflect how persistent is the memory of great tragedies and recall that some of the French traders and voyageurs who were on the river when the murder took place remained there for many years and handed down the traditions of the river to their successors, it is not hard to believe that it was the story of Abraham Lansing and his son, slightly altered, which Willard Keyes heard from the rivermen as his boat drifted along the "English meadow" in

[2] *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, III, 352.

[3] *Wisconsin Historical Collections*, I, 38, 41.

[4] *Wis. Hist. Colls.* XVIII, 263-64.

1817. The French traders in whose company he was would not be likely to ascribe the murder to their own people so long as there were "savages" who might just as well serve as scapegoats. We may consider it almost certain, then, that the place came to be called English Prairie from the gruesome crime of 1763, which had occurred almost three-quarters of a century before the postoffice of that name was established, and more than half a century prior to the voyage of Willard Keyes. Jonathan Carver, who visited a village of the Fox Indians at that place in 1766, does not use the name; but neither does he mention the story of the murder which occurred only three years before.

No definite information about the fur trade at English Prairie, aside from the record in Lansing's case, has come down to us. Tradition has it that Laurent Rolette, brother of the famous Prairie du Chien trader, Joseph Rolette, traded there for some years, going later to the Portage. It appears also that some time before the arrival of white settlers a trader named Armstrong operated in that neighborhood. But no details have been preserved and we can only infer from the fact that Indians were still numerous when settlers came that the trade at English Prairie in earlier times was probably important.

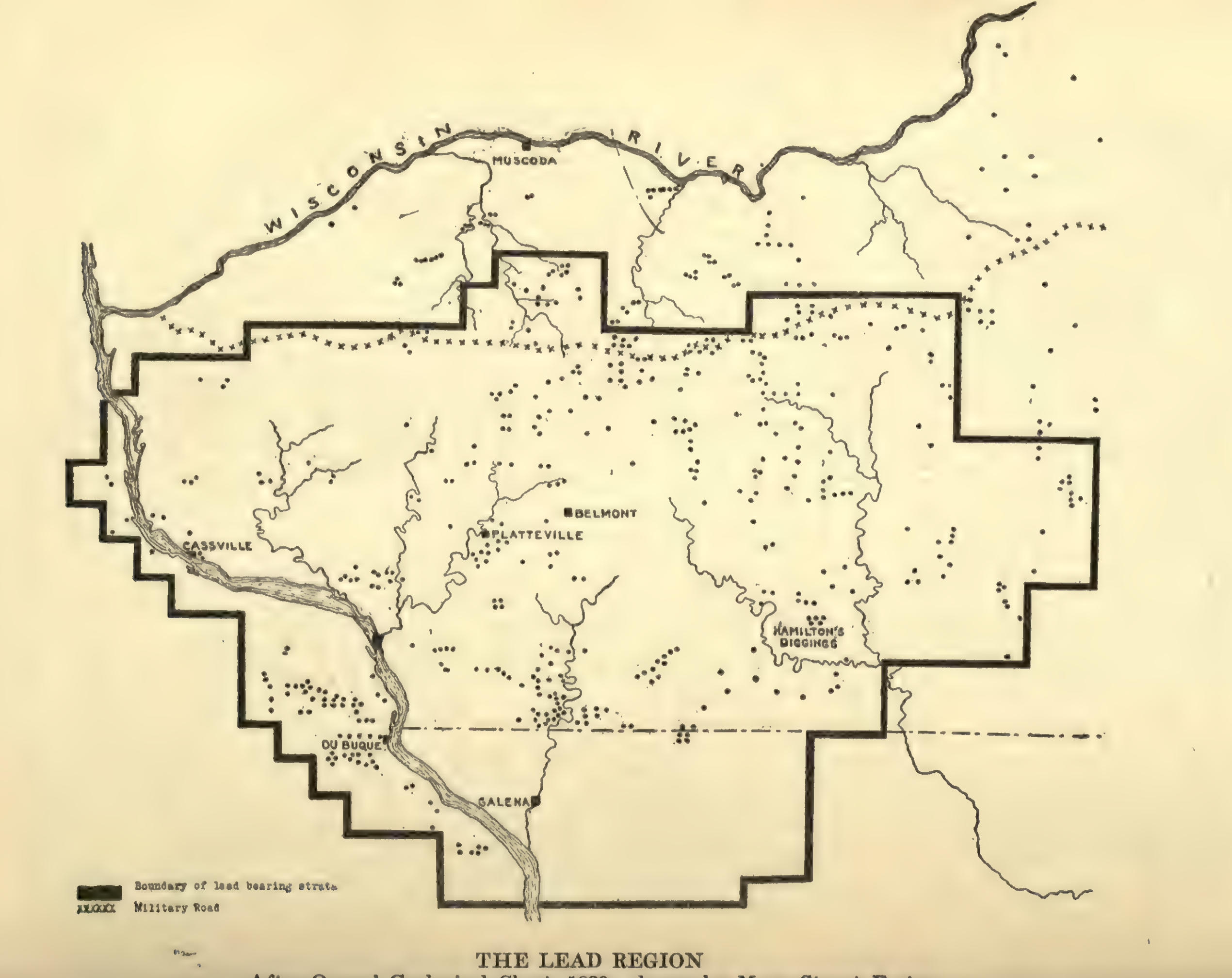
It was the Black Hawk War and the treaties following it that produced the revolutionary change in the life of the natives in this region. From that time forward Indians could live south of the river only on sufferance, though they were permitted to roam the forests to the northward for about a quarter of a century longer. During the Black Hawk War a detachment of Colonel Henry Dodge's Mounted Volunteers went to English Prairie, another detachment going at the same time to Prairie du Chien. Between them these two bodies of troops scoured both sides of the Wisconsin from the mouth to the Portage, dislodging all natives. English Prairie was also the camping ground for

a military company composed of friendly Indians recruited at Green Bay and led to Prairie du Chien by Samuel C. Stambaugh in July, 1832. The route of march was from Green Bay to the Portage, thence to Sugar Creek (near Blue Mounds), thence to Fort Dodge (Dodgeville), thence to English Prairie, thence to Prairie du Chien "with one other camping between."

RELATION TO THE LEAD MINES

History repeats itself in making the Indian War of 1832 the impulse to a great new expansion movement among American pioneers. Just as the Pequod War of 1638 by familiarizing the coast settlers of Massachusetts with the rich lands of the interior enticed them westward, and as the Seven Years' War destroyed the last obstacle to western and northern expansion in New England, so in a very real sense this war made the beginnings of the agricultural settlement in Wisconsin. Immediately after the Black Hawk War the survey of the lands in southern Wisconsin began. In the four years, 1832 to 1836, the entire region from the Illinois line north to the Wisconsin, the Fox, and Green Bay, and from the Mississippi to Lake Michigan, was checked off into townships and sections. Hardy, resourceful government surveyors, with their crews (usually two chainmen and one axman) traversed every square mile, whether prairie, forest, valley, or bluff. In 1834 a land office was opened at Mineral Point for the sale of lands in the western portion of Michigan Territory (as it was then).

The ranges of townships numbered 1 W and 1 E, of which the townships numbered eight (Muscoda and Pulaski) bounded by the Wisconsin, were for some years the northernmost, were surveyed by Sylvester Sibley in 1833. The next year those lands were offered for sale and some tracts along the river were actually sold to private individuals. Among the purchasers were Thomas Jefferson Par-



THE LEAD REGION

After Owens' Geological Chart, 1839; drawn by Mary Stuart Foster

rish and Charles Bracken, who were well-known lead miners and smelters living farther south. Others among the early land owners of Township 8–1 W have been identified as mining men.

The lead mines, while known and worked by Indians and a few traders for many years, received the first large body of emigrants in 1828, when several thousand came scattering out widely over the territory which now constitutes Grant, Iowa, and Lafayette counties in Wisconsin, together with adjacent parts of Iowa. These were the lead miners who under Dodge and Hamilton fought the Black Hawk War. It was these hardy pioneers who as troopers patrolled the Wisconsin River and who finally delivered the coup de grace to Black Hawk's band far to the north on the banks of the Mississippi.

Many of the lead miners were shrewd business men always on the lookout for good financial prospects. With the knowledge of new regions gained during the war, either from personal observation or from reliable report, with the sense of a new era opening to settlement and expansion in the region dependent for transportation facilities on the Mississippi and Wisconsin rivers, it is not strange that some of them should have been interested in river points lying as far outside the mineral belt proper as did English Prairie.

A RIVER PORT

For it is clear that it was water and not lead that the pioneers of Muscoda sought. Surveyors and prospectors had found no hopeful signs of mineral north of townships 6–1 W and 7–1 E. A few years later (1839) Dr. David Dale Owen, the geologist, made his famous survey of the lead region and excluded from it everything north of the heads of Blue River in townships 6 and 7–1 E. When the lands in township 8–1 W were offered for sale in November, 1834, it was precisely the river front lots and subdivisions which

were taken first. Parrish entered fractional lots 2 and 3 of section 1; Frederick Bronson the northeast fraction of the southeast quarter of section 1; Isaac Bronson the south half of the southeast fractional quarter; Garrit V. Denniston the southeast half of the fractional southwest quarter; and Denniston and Charles Bracken fraction No. 4 of fractional section 1. Other water front tracts in section 2 were bought by Denniston at this time; between 1836 and 1841 other tracts in the same sections were bought by others. All of these lands were obviously deemed favorable locations for a prospective town dependent on river transportation.

The way in which the village was begun, by the erection of a smelting furnace, is rather startling, in view of the absence of lead in the region adjacent. The motives which induced Colonel William S. Hamilton of Wiota to build a furnace at English Prairie can only be conjectured.

Colonel Hamilton was the son of the great Alexander Hamilton, Washington's Secretary of the Treasury. As a lad of seventeen in 1814 he entered West Point but resigned in 1817 to accept a commission as deputy surveyor-general under Col. William Rector, surveyor-general for Illinois, Missouri, and Arkansas. From that time young Hamilton was almost continuously in the West, though he made one trip east, on horseback, to see his mother. He was in Wisconsin as early as 1825 and in 1827 began his career as a lead miner and smelter in what is now Lafayette County at Wiota or Hamilton's Diggings. He took part in the Indian troubles of 1827, and also in the Black Hawk War.

It is not known with certainty when Hamilton established his furnace at English Prairie. Tradition says it was in the year 1835. If the furnace was operating then, it is strange that so careful an observer as Featherstonhaugh, who dropped down the Wisconsin in August, 1835 and stopped at English Prairie to draw a sketch of its landscape,

should have failed to note that fact.[5] We are probably justified in asserting that the furnace was not there at that time. But we know it was there in 1837, for Captain Frederick Marryat, a famous English writer who descended the river in that year, saw "a small settlement called the English prairie" where there was a "smelting-house and a steam saw-mill."[6] I incline to think the year 1836 was the date of its beginning. In 1835 Hamilton was a candidate for member of the Council from the western part of Michigan Territory. His canvass was conducted in the lead mining region and his advertisement appeared in the Galena papers. He was elected to and became president of the so-called "Rump" Council which met at Green Bay January 1, 1836 and sat for two weeks. During that session the town of Cassville, on the Mississippi, was designated as the territorial capital, Hamilton making the principal argument in favor of the movement. Much interest was manifested in internal improvements designed to develop a through line of transportation via the Wisconsin and Fox rivers.[7] The territory of Wisconsin was just being organized by Congressional action and great expectations were being awakened in consequence.

The miners and smelters had theretofore sold their lead through the commission merchants of Galena, by whom it was sent to St. Louis. But as new mines were opened farther and farther north, the cost of transportation to Galena—by means of the "sucker teams"[8]—steadily increased. Moreover, in the year 1836–37 the price of lead declined so alarmingly that little of it was made and the smelters had

[5] Featherstonhaugh was obviously in error in calling that stopping place Prairie de la Bay. The context shows it must have been English Prairie. See his *A Canoe Voyage on the Minnay Sotor*, I, 199-201.

[6] *Wis. Hist. Colls.* XIV, 147.

[7] The Portage canal was begun in 1836 by a private company. Its completion was promised in 1837. See Governor Dodge's message to the Legislative Assembly, Belmont, Oct. 26, 1836.

[8] Ox-teams owned by Illinois farmers.

nearly all ceased to operate. Yet, it was felt that prices would rise again promptly in response to the demand for lead. In the same period, due no doubt partly to the hardships of the miners and smelters, there was widespread and loud dissatisfaction with the treatment accorded the lead owners by the Galena middlemen. Efforts were made to establish some other lead shipping port as a rival to Galena, which helps to explain the rise of both Cassville and Potosi.

The inference from these facts is that Hamilton probably thought he saw in a smelter located at the steamboat landing at English Prairie a possibility of immediate profit, even though margins were very narrow, and a chance to build up a flourishing business. He could buy the cheapest ore—that which was produced near the northern edge of the lead region, Centerville, Wingville, and Highland. The haul from those places would be short and all down grade and if the mineral were taken direct from the mines there would be no rehandling until the bars of pure lead were ready to be dumped from the furnace floor into the hold of the steamer. The teams employed to bring down the raw mineral could carry freight back the fifteen or twenty miles to the mines much more cheaply than it could be transported from Galena or Cassville three or four times as far. Finally, abundant supplies of wood were at hand to feed the furnace, and French rivermen were a source from which to recruit labor.

To an enterprising, speculative, acquisitive character like Hamilton, who had no family to tie him to a particular spot, such arguments would appeal strongly, and there is no inherent reason why the venture should not have succeeded. Hamilton operated the furnace, either personally or by proxy, at least till 1838 and possibly longer, selling it finally to Thomas Jefferson Parrish, whose principal mining and smelting business was located at the head of Blue River, afterwards Montfort.

The fact that Parrish owned the ground at the steamboat landing and that in 1837 he was postmaster at English Prairie (then called Savannah) suggests that he may have been a partner in the business from the first and perhaps local manager of the furnace. At all events, Hamilton continued his business at Wiota and very soon cut loose entirely from the English Prairie venture.[9] That place, under the name of Savannah or English Prairie, was a calling place for river steamers as early as 1838 and is scheduled as forty-one miles from the mouth of the Wisconsin.[10] It was said that the only boat which regularly plied on the river in that year was the *Science*, piloted by Captain Clark, who made his first voyage in June, 1838.[11] But there were doubtless visits from steamers running to Fort Winnebago (Portage) during that and earlier years.

In one of the Milwaukee papers for 1841 is a statement that "four sucker teams" had brought in lead from Thomas Parrish's furnace "near Muscoday in Grant County." This reference has been taken as proof that the Muscoda furnace was still in operation. I think it refers not to the Muscoda furnace but to one of several furnaces Parrish was conducting in the lead region near the heads of Blue River. The phrase "near Muscoday" used as far from the lead region as Milwaukee may very well mean some place fifteen or twenty miles from the Wisconsin; and the word "near" instead of "at" certainly excludes Muscoda itself. Setting this evidence aside, there is no proof that the Muscoda furnace was operated as late as 1841. Nor, on the other hand, is there proof of its earlier discontinuance. We simply do

[9] Hamilton went to California during the gold rush, finding, however, not a fortune but an untimely grave.

[10] See Abel, Henry I. Geographical, Geological, and Statistical Chart of Wisconsin and Iowa, Phila. 1838. The fare for passengers from St. Louis to Helena (it was doubtless the same to Savannah) was in the cabin from $10 to $15 and on the deck from $2 to $4.

[11] Smith, William R., *Observations*, 44.

not know how long it was kept alive or how large a business it developed at the "Landing."

SIGNS OF HARD TIMES

Two things suggest that the little village failed to develop a "boom" or even to gain a basis for healthy growth. These are the land entries in the territory adjacent and the story of the post office. Practically, there were no new entries of land between the years 1841 and 1849. This is true for all the townships in the tributary region—7, 8, and 9, range 1 W, and 7, 8, and 9, range 1 E. The post office under the name of Savannah appears in the government list for the first time in the report for 1837. At that time Thomas J. Parrish was postmaster. In 1839 S. A. Holley was postmaster, the office then being listed as English Prairie. The postmaster's compensation was $5.68. Charles Stephenson's compensation in 1841 was even smaller, $3.36, the ne proceeds of the office amounting to only $7.55. In 1843, for the first time, the post office was called Muscoda. The postmaster was Levi J. D. Parrish, who received as compensation $9.29, the net proceeds of the office having risen to $16.51.

It is probable that most of the seeming prosperity of 1843 was due to the presence of the land office, which had been removed from Mineral Point to Muscoda in 1842. Some have charged that the change was brought about through James D. Doty's influence in order to save the town. If so, the scheme failed, for the land office promptly went back to Mineral Point in 1843, and May 16, 1845, the post office department discontinued the office at Muscoda. Muscoda was not listed in the post office report for 1847 or in the report for 1849. In 1851 it reappears, with James Moore as postmaster. Now the compensation is $39.74 and the net proceeds $53.09. The exact date of its restoration

is not given but it must have been as early as 1850, and possibly 1849 or even 1847.[12]

BEGINNINGS OF SETTLEMENT

The reopening of the Muscoda post office, about 1850, synchronizes with the first movement of pioneer farmers into the good lands tributary to that place. A number of tracts of land were purchased by actual settlers in this and adjoining townships in the years 1849 to 1851. Indeed, Conrad Kircher's purchase dates from 1847. Charles Miller and Emanuel Dunston bought land in 1849; Isaac Dale and Moses Manlove in 1851. We know also that the Moore family owned land at Muscoda as early as 1851. Across the river, in township 9–1 W, Robert Galloway, William Pickering, William and Andrew Miller, and two or three others bought in 1849; several in 1850; and a few others before 1854, when the great rush came.

A similar story can be told for township 9–1 E (now Orion) where J. H. Schuermann and Daniel Mainwaring (settlers) bought lands in 1849; Albert C. Dooley in 1850;

[12] If the office was not open in 1847 it is hard to explain the language used by a correspondent of the Prairie du Chien *Patriot*, Feb. 23, 1847, who says: "The mail from . . . Mineral Point to Muskoda goes but once a week. There is no post office in Richland County; their post office is at Muskoda." The census of 1846 assigns to the northern district of Grant County 1,482 persons. It is possible to identify in the lists of heads of families six families whose later homes were at or near Muscoda. They are John D. Parrish, James Smith, Manuel Denston [Dunston?], Thomas Waters, Wm. Garland, and Richard Hall. All of these are met with again in the census returns for Dec. 1, 1847, where the "Muscoday Precinct of Grant County is listed separately. The precinct seems to have included townships 7 and 8–1 W and townships 7 and 8–2 W, or the present towns of Muscoda, Castle Rock, Watterstown, and Hickory Grove. That precinct is credited with thirteen families aggregating 77 persons. Aside from the families mentioned above (except Denston) we find the names of S. [R?] Carver, J. Moore, N. Head, M. Manlove, D. Manlove, I. Dale, S. Smith, D. Smith, and A. Mills. Garland is credited with a family consisting of nine males and two females, which confirms the statement in the county history that he was managing a hotel in Muscoda at that time. Moses Manlove has a family of seven males and five females which suggests a second hotel or "boarding house." Most of the other families mentioned probably lived some distance from Muscoda on farms. Aside from those in Muscoda Precinct of Grant County, several families living in Iowa County, township 8 1–E, must have depended for their supplies either on Muscoda or on Highland. These were John Pettygrove, A. Palmer, A. Bolster, three Knowlton families, Mathias Schafer, Henry Gottschall, Vincent Dziewanawski, and the two Wallbridges. If Richland County settlers really were, as reported, getting their mail at Muscoda, that would mean, according to the census, that 235 persons living north of the Wisconsin must have done some trading at that place. The county history says the old log house once used as the land office served in 1847 as the store.

and Jacob Roggy in 1851. One of the purchasers of 1848, John H. Siegrist, was probably the earliest actual settler in the township. A half dozen families bought in township 8–1 E as early as 1849; and a few others were added before 1854. A very few settlers were to be found in township 7–1 W prior to 1854, and while there were a good many settlers and miners in township 7–1 E, the greater part of that township was served from Highland where a post office was established as early at least as 1847 and where there was much lead mining activity, and from Blue River which had a post office from 1839. These mining centers doubtless drew their supplies from the steamers unloading at Muscoda, for the road to the river at that point had been open for many years, but settlement was more numerous and local activity much more intense, as revealed by the post office returns. The Highland post office led the Muscoda post office in importance for just about ten years—from 1847 to 1856. With the coming of the railroad, Muscoda drew ahead.

THE RAILROAD

If one had no other evidence than the sales of land at the United States Land Office, it would still be clear that in the years 1854 to 1856 something important was astir affecting the value of lands in those townships (7, 8, and 9—1 W, and 7, 8, and 9—1 E) which pivot on Muscoda as the trading point. For, while up to 1854 only scattering tracts of land had been entered, and those largely by speculators using military land warrants in making payment to the government, by 1856 nearly every forty-acre subdivision of first-rate land and much of the second-rate land also was under private ownership. And the state lands in the townships had also been purchased to the same extent. Besides, the vast majority of the purchasers of government land during those years were actual settlers, with only an occasional speculator.[13]

[13] This is not true of the state lands, which went mainly to speculators first, then to settlers.

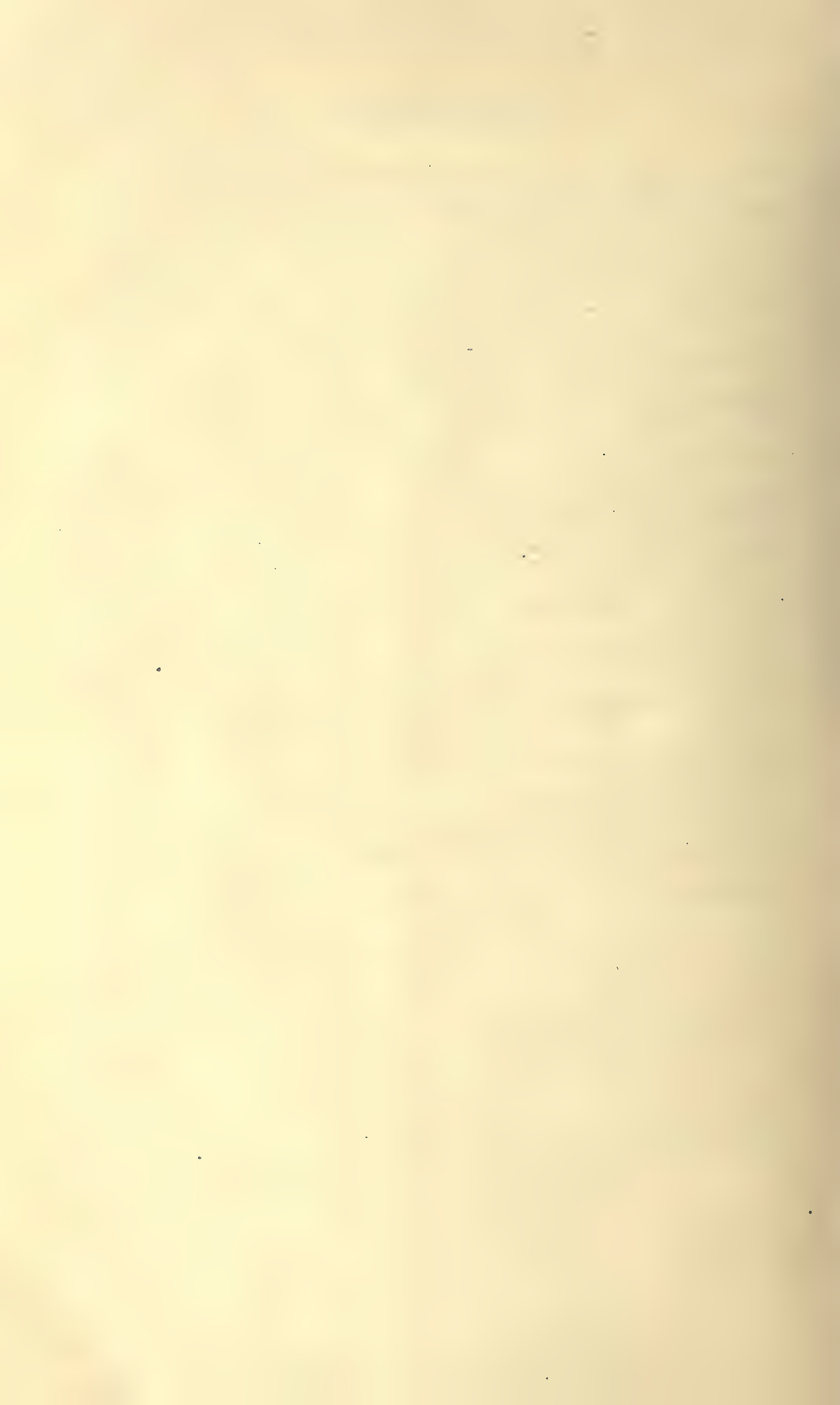
These facts challenge attention and call for an explanation. Wisconsin had been in course of settlement for about two decades. The earliest settlements were in the southeastern and eastern parts of the state where the economic support was the market reached by the Great Lakes and the Erie Canal; and in the southwestern section where the basis of prosperity had been lead-mining. The lead found its market mainly down the Mississippi, though increasingly the superiority of the route open to the lake ports had impressed itself upon the people.

At the legislative session of 1841–42 a bill was introduced for the chartering of a railroad from Milwaukee, via Madison, to Potosi. Despite continuous effort, the first railroad bill to pass, in 1847, provided only for a railroad from Milwaukee to Waukesha. In 1848 this was by law extended to the Mississippi.

The agitation of plans for a railroad from Lake Michigan to the Mississippi tended to give the lake route an overshadowing importance in the popular mind. Actual construction work on the Milwaukee-Waukesha section began in 1849; that portion of the road was completed by the end of the year 1850, and in another year it was practically completed to Whitewater on Rock River. It reached Madison in the year 1854.

The intention of the company had been to build to the Wisconsin River so as to intercept steamboat transportation at or near Arena. Thence the road might run along the river to its mouth, or it might run along the ridge between the Wisconsin and the south flowing streams, reaching the Mississippi at some point, like Potosi, lower down. By the year 1853 it had been determined to follow the Wisconsin Valley route to the Mississippi, and during that summer the line was surveyed from the mouth of Black Earth Creek to Prairie du Chien.

It can easily be imagined how the clangor of railway construction echoed in the minds and hearts of intending settlers. That they should have watched, with greedy eye, the reports of progress of the location of the road and hurried away to the land office as soon as it was definitely located, to buy the good lands adjacent to the right-of-way, is a perfectly normal phenomenon. The township plats showing original purchasers of the government land tell the story. In section 1, township 7–1 W, four forty-acre tracts were bought in 1854; eleven in 1855; and one in 1856. In section 2, one in 1854; twelve in 1855; and two in 1857. A single forty had been bought as early as 1847. The other sections of that township show very similar dates and proportions in the entries; the same is true of the other townships of the group. The 1854 entrymen were those who pursued the railway surveyors with keenest determination. The slower ones came mainly in the two years following, during which trains actually were put on the roadbed. In October, 1856, the village of Muscoda, which had maintained a precarious existence for twenty years, awoke to newness of life at the sound of the puffing locomotive. And the beginning of permanent prosperity for the village meant the beginning of prosperity for the rural neighborhood tributary to it.



POPULAR CENSORSHIP OF HISTORY TEXTS

JOSEPH SCHAFER

Wisconsin has now a unique law on the subject of school history texts. That law provides, section 1:

> No history or other textbook shall be adopted for use or be in any district school, city school, vocational school or high school which falsifies the facts regarding the War of Independence or the War of 1812 or which defames our nation's founders or misrepresents the ideals and cause for which they struggled and sacrificed, or which contains propaganda favorable to any foreign government.

The method provided in other sections of the law for banishing textbooks which have been adopted but which are repugnant to the above provision is as follows: Upon complaint of any five citizens, filed with the state superintendent of public instruction, a hearing shall be arranged, to be held before the state superintendent or his deputy, in the county from which the complaint came. Previous notice must have been given through the press to the public and by mail to the complainants and to the publishers of the textbook complained of. A decision must be rendered within ten days. If the book shall be found obnoxious to the provisions of the law, that fact shall be noted by the state superintendent in the list of books for schools which he publishes annually. Thereafter the book so listed may be used only during the remainder of the year in which the state superintendent publishes it as proscribed. The penalty for retaining it beyond the time limit shall be the loss to the school or district concerned of the state aid normally falling to its share.

The passage of this bill in the senate with only one vote against it, created a good deal of surprise, which changed to admiration for the oratorical powers of its author and sponsor, Senator John Cashman of Manitowoc County,

when it was learned that his impassioned appeal to patriotism figuratively swept senators "off their feet."

History students can have no quarrel with the motive assigned by Senator Cashman for the passage of this law. He says: "The history of a nation is its proudest asset. It includes the record of its great men, their ideals, sacrifices, and achievements. To preserve that history in all its original purity and teach it to the rising generations is a nation's first duty." With every word in that stirring exordium the historically minded man or woman will cordially agree. Thoughtful persons, whether historians or not, will also sympathize with Senator Cashman when he undertakes to rebuke anything approaching levity in characterizing the fathers of the Republic or captiousness in criticizing their policies, motives, and achievements. Unfortunately, there always have been among writers some who display a certain air of "smartness" or superciliousness which hardly comports with the inherent dignity of the historian's office, or with the aim of doing equal and exact justice to all persons and to all causes discussed. Yet it will probably be no light task to convince an impartial umpire that writers of textbooks which have been adopted for use in the schools, after careful scrutiny by boards of education and other school officers responsible to the people, have been guilty of "treason to the nation," as Senator Cashman seems to think has often been the case.[1] The framers of the constitution, with wise prevision, limited the application of the word "treason" in such a way as to exclude that indefinite class of crimes known elsewhere under the name of *constructive treason*, which in England and other countries had provided a favorable soil for plotters of revenge against individuals and in times of high tension always yielded a sinister harvest of oppression and suffering. So they defined treason against the

[1] Speech of Senator Cashman, *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, vi, 444-449 (June, 1923).

United States narrowly as consisting only in "levying war against them or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort," and they also provided that conviction under a charge of treason could be secured only on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act or confession in open court.

This view of the fathers as relates to treason was of course lost sight of during the Civil War, when in the North it used to be fashionable for men to pillory as "fool" or "traitor" (with an emphatic expletive) anyone who had the temerity to vote the Democratic ticket; it was lost sight of in the recent war when men were called traitors because they refused to buy liberty bonds or because they declared the draft a violation of the rights of the individual; and it is likewise lost sight of when we condemn under the term treason opinions on history which we may regard as too favorable to our nation's one-time enemies, or too contemptuous of the characters or the acts of our own distinguished men of a past age. It would be strange if the impulses engendered by the war and the peace were not reflected more or less in editions of books prepared since 1917. It is probably true that some authors have overstressed the "hands across the sea" sentiment, while others perhaps lean unduly in an opposite direction. But that any of them have been guilty of treasonable acts or even intentions is what no one who knows the historical profession can believe without the most explicit proof.

But this question of treason aside, the problem still remains to determine what is the history of our country "in all its original purity." What shall be the test of purity inasmuch as, happily, there is no established list of authorized books or records from which writers must derive their facts? Are they not compelled either to investigate each point for themselves or to accept as probably correct the results of other men's investigations? To be sure, every

important event creates its own legend or tradition, and such legends tend to be preserved and to be handed down from generation to generation. But legends are not history. No one worthy to rank as a careful historian would presume to write the history of the Great War on the basis of legends now crystallizing about it. No more can one write the history of the Revolution on such a legendary basis. This view, that much which once was thought to be history but was in fact mere legend, is not in any sense new. James Russell Lowell, who ranks among the very distinguished Americans of the last generation, wrote, in 1864, that the early reports of the battle of Lexington claimed for the Yankee minute-men a non-resistant attitude.

> The Anglo Saxon could not fight without the law on his side. But later, when the battle became a matter of local pride, the muskets that had been fired at the Red coats under Pitcairn almost rivalled in number the pieces of furniture that came over in the Mayflower. Indeed, whoever has talked much with Revolutionary pensioners knows that those honored veterans were no less remarkable for imagination than for patriotism. It should seem that there is nothing on which so little reliance can be placed as facts, especially when related by one who saw them. It is no slight help to our charity to recollect that, in disputable matters, every man sees according to his prejudices, and is stone blind to whatever he did not expect or did not mean to see. Even where no personal bias can be suspected, contemporary and popular evidence is to be taken with great caution, so exceedingly careless are men as to exact truth, and such poor observers, for the most part of what goes on under their eyes.[2]

It is hardly necessary at this late day to insist that no writer is justified in building his narrative of events on unverified tradition. He must try to penetrate to the truth that lies behind the legend (which in some cases will differ very widely from the legend itself). It is no easy task at best to perform a successful piece of historical research, and the questions on which final agreements have been reached are not numerous. Accordingly, if the law should be so construed as to enforce banishment from the schools of any book which can be proved incorrect

[2] Essay on *The Rebellion*.

in some of its alleged facts without regard to their importance, no textbooks will be left in the schools, for none are impeccable. True, the Cashman law would condemn only for falsifying the history of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, leaving four other foreign wars in which our country has engaged, and the great Civil War, to be treated without other restraint than that contained in the last clause of section 1, denouncing propaganda in favor of any foreign government. But under that sole provision it might still prove embarrassing for a writer to tell the truth about the Mexican War and possibly the others also, for the term propaganda—as the whole world has learned lately—is a most elastic one. Presumably, the propaganda test applies as well to other phases of history as to the military phases, wherefore an author of a textbook is apt, under a strict construction of this law, to be haled into court on the charge of propaganda if he should consider it his duty to say a single thing in commendation of any other nation. For, will there not always be found, in any school district, five citizens whose views collide with those of the author; and if so, what is to prevent a case being called? Surely a word in favor of France would be resented by some; a word in favor of Great Britain would be resented by others; a word in favor of Germany would offend still others; and so on through the list. In the present mournful state of general unrest and want of confidence among nations, an author would tread unsafely on any ground outside the "three-mile limit."

It does not follow from the fact that under the law it is easy to bring cases, that convictions would be equally easy. Presumably the state superintendent has had knowledge of all books now in use in the schools and, in effect if not in form, has approved them. This he would not have done had he considered any of them purveyors of treason or excessively faulty in statement. Moreover, as judge in

cases that may arise under this law, the superintendent will be bound to take judicial notice of some things. For example, it is common knowledge that no history text is perfect either on its factual side, in its literary qualities, or in the author's perspective of events; that few writers display at all times perfect taste, and none perfect judgment, in their criticisms of men and their comments on historical actions and movements; that a given textbook may be valuable, despite minor defects in all of the above points, by reason of its superior arrangement, its psychological adaptation to children's needs, and the success with which it communicates to them the main features and the spirit of American history. He will also be obliged to rule that the truth is not malicious propaganda and he is bound to maintain an author's right to liberty of research.

It goes without saying that if a book is palpably and grossly inaccurate; if it gives the child a wholly erroneous view of history; if it is crassly censorious of America's great men; if it is written in a spirit tending to destroy American ideals; if it tends to make boys and girls ashamed of American character and achievements, not in exceptional instances here and there, but generally; then there would hardly be a question about the duty of getting rid of it with all convenient promptness. But would it not be strange if, with the superintendent and other educational experts on guard, such a book had got itself adopted? On general principles one would expect that only in the rarest cases would this law come into operation; for it ought not to be easy for a thoroughly unworthy book to elude the critical eyes of publishers, editors, school superintendents, teachers, and school boards, to be finally detected and exposed by some school patron or other private citizen. No doubt such cases are possible, but one could hardly conceive them to be of common occurrence. Misgivings are aroused, therefore, by the report that at the

legislative hearing Senator Cashman denounced, by name, five well known and widely used textbooks.

If the Senator's historical views, as published in the *Senate Journal* under date of March 1, 1923, are intended to be made the platform in a campaign to purify the history teaching of our schools, the upshot may prove widely different from what is now anticipated; for among those views, the derivation of which is not indicated, are some which it would be difficult to find expressed in any existing textbook. For example, Senator Cashman holds that our country is indebted to Holland "for town and county representation in a legislature." Americans have long been taught that, in the picturesque phrase of John Fiske, "self-government *broke out* in Virginia" in 1619 by reason of the fact that these people were English. We are aware of no investigations which have brought forth evidence compelling the abandonment of that view, though some very extravagant claims have been made for the Dutch influence upon both colonial politics and colonial education. He also holds that "our free public school system came from Prussia." If by this were meant merely that Prussian influence has been felt in the creation of a system of state supervision of education, and in the strengthening of a school system already in existence, we would gladly concur. But the statement is too sweeping to admit of such an interpretation. Wisconsin Germans ought to be very glad to assign to New England colonies and states the chief influence in giving us the public school system because, in the present state of research, that appears to be where the credit belongs. To all that the Senator says about the selection of immigrants for America, the development in the colonies themselves of a new and vivid love of liberty which found expression in the Declaration of Independence, the stupid tyranny of George III, and the heroic sufferings and achievements of patriots in the Revolution, we utter a

hearty Amen; realizing, of course, that his statement is necessarily a crowded summary, cast in oratorical mould, and not designed as a complete exposition of his views. But, in thus concurring we do not yield up our sympathy with the aphorism of Edmund Burke, that in their reaction to tyranny the colonists "are descendants of Englishmen."

The same reservations might be made with reference to Senator Cashman's statement on the constitution. And yet a fair interpretation of what he says on that subject compels us to class him with those extreme worshipers of that document who, like the authors of the New York teachers' test oath, would maintain the constitution, unchanged, at any cost. Speaking of the fathers and their work, he says: "Then they wrote and the states adopted the supreme law of the land, the American constitution, the most sublime public document that ever came forth from the mind and soul of man, establishing a system of government based upon the consent of the governed, with religious liberty protected, inherent rights guaranteed, *to be written in indestructible letters into the pages of the nation's laws.*" [Editor's italics.] It is a well known view of the present progressives, as it was of the framers themselves, that, great as was the original constitution, it was still far from being perfect. Also, most progressives now accept in principle the conclusions of Charles A. Beard, the historian whose recent investigations on this point are now well known, that the constitution represents a partial reaction from the democracy of the Revolution, and was designed in part to set limitations upon the popular will. While venerating the constitution, progressives in the main believe that such restrictions as the legislative election of senators, the appointment and life tenure of judges (some would include the mode of electing the president), were intentionally anti-democratic, and that these and other defects which time has revealed ought to

be subject to modification whenever the people desire the changes. The mode of amendment having been designed to make changes difficult, or impossible (though in recent years several changes have been adopted), leading progressives have long held that that fundamental article ought to be amended first in order to facilitate other changes. This was Justice John B. Winslow's opinion, put forth in 1912; it was the burden of an important plank in the La Follette national platform the same year; that doctrine was preached, at least in spirit, by the late President Roosevelt. In short, it is a progressive principle that the constitution must cease to be a fetish—a dead hand upon the present and the future—and must be adjusted, from time to time, to existing social, economic, and political conditions. The document represents, for the time, a mighty triumph of constructive statesmanship, so progressive leaders believe, and it should not be changed "for light or transient causes," much less revolutionized, but "it was designed for a rural or semi-rural state." The men who made it "however able could not anticipate or solve the new problems of life and government which have come upon us in the last half century."[3]

To follow Senator Cashman's outline of American history into the recent period to the all-engrossing event of the World War and America's participation therein would be fruitless. Not one of us can conscientiously claim to be an impartial investigator with respect to things which have wrenched our souls. We cannot abdicate our own personalities. In treating the war, all that any historian at present could hope to do would be to state his views with becoming restraint and concede that those views may ultimately prove to be quite wrong. A censorship law of fifty years hence (if our people shall then still adhere to the censorship idea) would be sure to condemn the

[3] John B. Winslow, quoted in *La Follette's Magazine*, vol. iv, no. 20, p. 6.

teaching of what some of us now piously believe with reference to this feature of history; just as a censorship law of today, if it included in its scope the Civil War, would condemn the teaching of some things which nearly one-half the voters of Wisconsin sincerely believed in 1864. "Time is the great sifter and winnower of truth," and we must consent to leave these matters to the investigators of our grandchildren's generation. Yet the gravest danger to be feared from the law we are now discussing lies in the psychological probability that every second man's opinion of a given history will be based not on what the author says about the Revolution, or the Constitution, or the War of 1812, but on what he says about the recent war and the League of Nations. In other words, the reader who is prejudiced against an author on account of his last chapter, which is almost sure to be unsatisfactory to many, will find the first, the middle, and all other chapters reeking with faults, and this even while personally he may be unconscious of having imbibed a prejudice at all.

There is a possibility that, as an engine for expelling books now used, the law will become a dead letter, first, because it may prove unexpectedly difficult for a dissatisfied citizen to persuade four others to act with him in making complaint, which however is not probable; second, because of the clamor of those in the district who are not keen for or against the book, but who realize that if it is thrown out all old copies will be worthless and they will have to pay for new books at the opening of the next school year; third, because the first cases brought may go against the complainants and discourage others from multiplying complaints. But, the popular psychology being what it is, there is an equal chance that the law may foster a widespread disposition to attack history books, geography books, civics books, and even readers; that it may keep educational matters in a state of turmoil, engendering much social

bitterness due to the clashing of parties and interests over questions raised in the school-book fights. In such controversies teachers would be the first to suffer, because their opinions would be called for at once, which would place them between two fires; and no surer way could be found to degrade the social influence of our schools than by keeping the teachers in a state of perpetual anxiety.

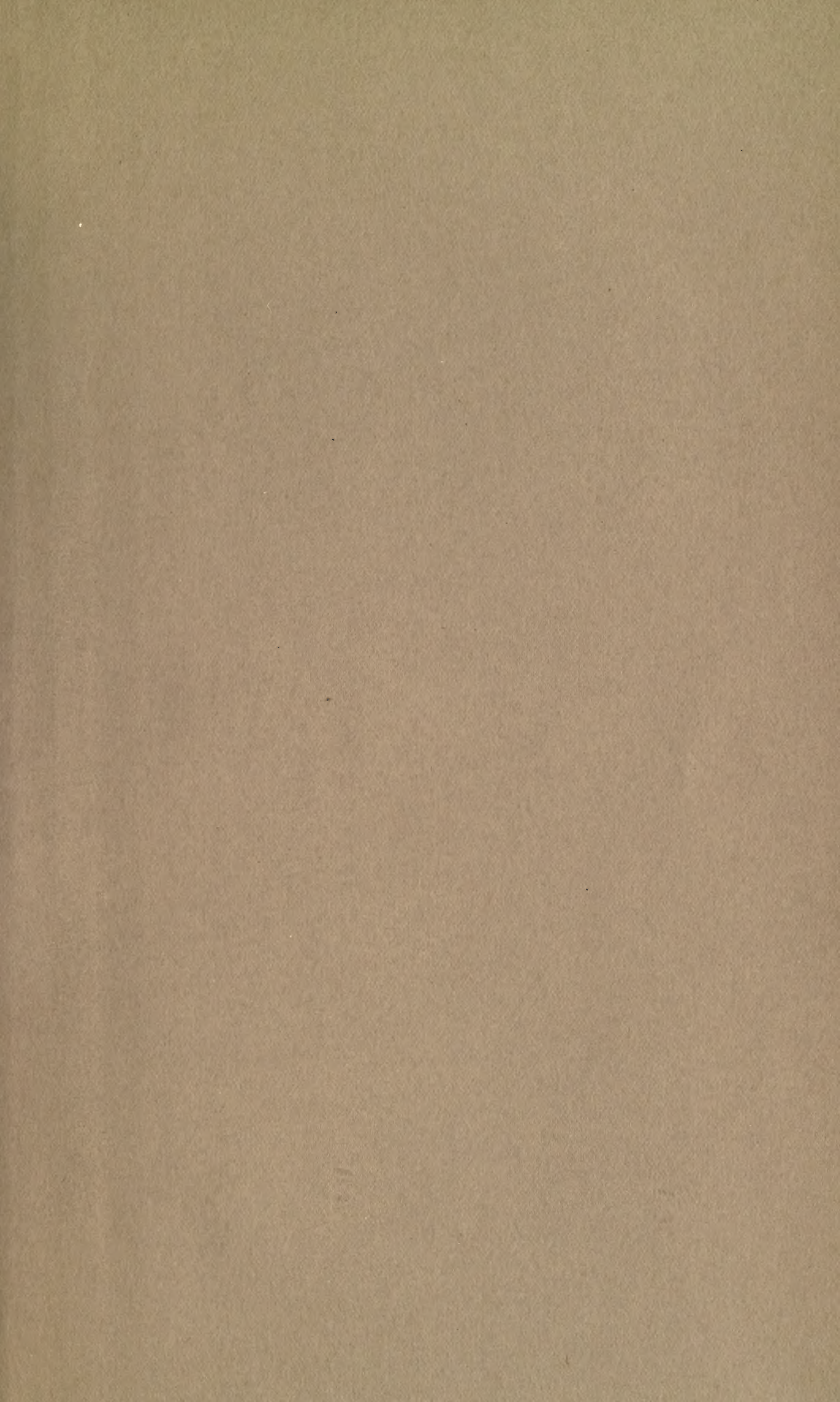
We have reason to think that Senator Cashman, an acknowledged friend and promoter of education, would deeply deplore such a result. If he had anticipated anything of the kind, doubtless he would have refrained from offering his bill. But laws, like children, when they get out of hand, have a way of surprising their progenitors. However, we have the law and must use it to the best ends.

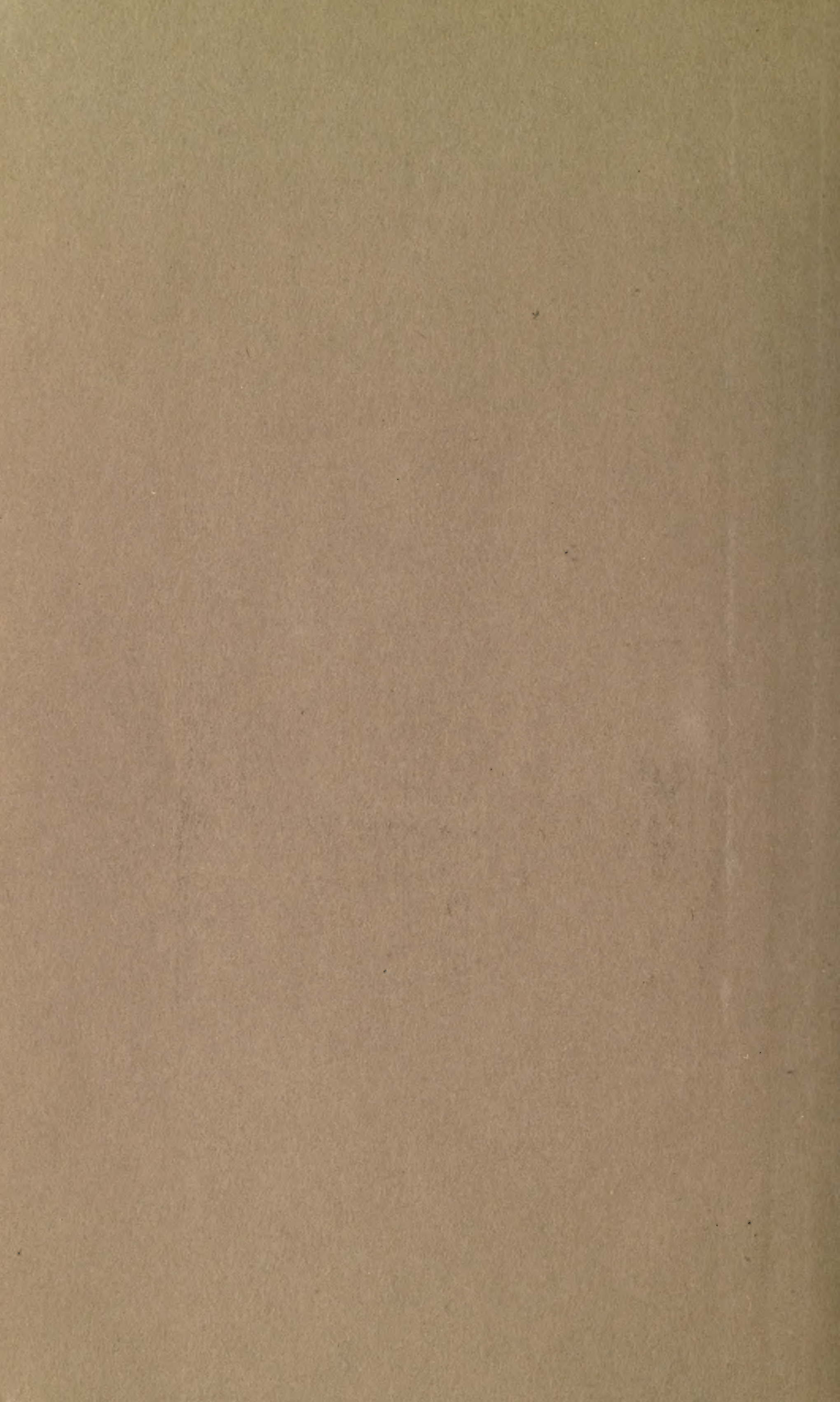
If every one in position of leadership or authority in relation to it—and among those are members of this Society—shall feel a responsibility for guiding discussion into proper channels; if debate on school-book questions shall be kept not merely free but also parliamentary in form and spirit; if we all insist that differences of view must be treated tolerantly; if we can secure from the public toward the arguments and facts in these cases a measure of that openness of mind which characterizes the American juror sworn to try a case fairly on the evidence, it may be possible to mitigate or prevent the evils apprehended.

And if, without discouraging research, the law shall merely enforce through future adoptions the idea that good taste is as obligatory upon the textbook maker as good manners are upon the private individual, one point will have been gained. We trust this may not be won at the expense of a disposition to whittle down the truth to fit a supposed demand, or that it will result in substituting books written by dishonest or spineless persons for those written by men and women of real character and scholarship.

In the midst of the late war the school supervisors of

a western state discovered what they believed to be propaganda favorable to one of America's enemies, and demanded the expulsion of the book from the schools. The superintendent, being a wise and thoughtful man, prepared and printed a page of corrective criticism, which all teachers were asked to paste in the accused book and to teach to the children with the regular text. By that simple device he saved the people of the state many thousands of dollars which would have been paid for an inferior text, if the book had been expelled. If the law shall permit such a handling of the borderline cases, does it not seem that in a time when we are at peace with all nations, we could act with equal calmness, equal justice to authors or publishers, and equal regard for the interests of the people who have to buy school books?





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