

THE EMERGENCE OF THE NORTH STAR STATE

Minnesota is celebrating this year its diamond jubilee as a state. At such a time it would seem to be highly desirable to view the pioneer scene in the upper Northwest in those turbulent years from 1849 to 1858, when the foundations of the commonwealth were securely laid. In the following pages a series of sketches have been brought together which describe and interpret various aspects of frontier Minnesota. They tell of the establishment of the infant territory, glance at the social side of the pioneer commonwealth, touch on the organization of a system of education, portray the modes of transportation that marked the rise of a frontier state, and trace the steps by which Minnesota won its place in the sisterhood of American states. They are followed by a broad interpretation of the meaning of Minnesota's past, fittingly contributed by the Governor of Minnesota, the Honorable Floyd B. Olson. It should be added that all six of the papers were originally prepared as radio addresses.¹ Ed.

1. THE CREATION OF THE TERRITORY

Former Justice Holmes has done much to give currency to the conception of the units of the federal system as experimental laboratories in democracy, each of which provides a testing station for new ventures in government and thus takes up a portion of the strain that would result from applying an experiment to the entire federal structure.

¹ The first five talks were given by staff members of the Minnesota Historical Society in its series from the University of Minnesota station WLB and have appeared with other talks in that series in the *Minnesota Alumni Weekly*, though most of them have been considerably revised for their present purpose. The Governor's address was delivered on Statehood Day, May 11, 1933, from station KSTP. *Ed.*

For Minnesotans the foundations and equipment of their own laboratory will have a special interest which is heightened because the history of the foundation of Minnesota democracy is in itself an intriguing story.

Two bills for the territorial organization of Minnesota were put forward in Congress before the area of Wisconsin Territory, which extended to the Mississippi, was restricted by the creation of the Badger State in May, 1848. The first bill was introduced in the House in December, 1846, while the enabling act for the organization of Wisconsin was still before Congress, but it failed to pass the Senate. The second bill was introduced in the Senate in February, 1848, by Stephen A. Douglas, but Congress adjourned without acting upon it. The admission of Wisconsin, with the St. Croix River as the upper western boundary, immediately raised the question of the status of that portion of the former Wisconsin Territory which lay between this stream and the Mississippi. Did the creation of the state destroy the territorial structure, leaving this region without organized government, or did the formation of the state simply have the effect of contracting the area over which the jurisdiction of the territorial government extended?

The Stillwater Convention, which convened on August 26, 1848, seems to have taken the view that Wisconsin's territorial government ceased with the admission of the state and that through no fault of the people of the omitted area they were deprived of the benefits of civil government. The convention sent memorials, signed by sixty-one delegates, to President Polk and to Congress asking immediate organization of Minnesota Territory. Henry H. Sibley of Mendota was appointed as a "delegate" to Washington to lobby in the interests of the proposed territory. The orderly manner in which these frontiersmen proceeded when they believed that they had been deprived of civil safeguards is a striking indication not only of their resourcefulness but of their desire to be subject to the principles of

democratic government. Joseph R. Brown, who had been an outstanding citizen of Wisconsin Territory and who subsequently was to distinguish himself in the political life of Minnesota, was among the leaders of the convention.

Hardly had the Stillwater Convention adjourned when there was put forward what the late Dr. Folwell terms a "benign fiction"—that the portion of Wisconsin Territory not included within the limits of the new state had a continuing existence as Wisconsin Territory, and that consequently the area was entitled to send a delegate to Congress. This thesis was advanced by John Catlin, who had held the office of secretary of the territory. He urged that a delegate be elected to Congress as the representative from Wisconsin Territory. The proposal was carried through. Sibley and Henry M. Rice were the only candidates in an election that was marked by charges of irregularities on both sides. Sibley was elected and proceeded to Washington in a dual rôle. On the one hand he was a delegate from the Stillwater Convention, which was petitioning Congress to establish Minnesota Territory; on the other, he was an official delegate from Wisconsin Territory, which was presumed to have a continuing existence after the admission of the state. And to complete the anomaly it may be added that Sibley's legal residence was at Mendota, west of the Mississippi, which had never been within Wisconsin Territory. He had no illusions as to the delicacy of his rôle; indeed he expressed himself as convinced that his admission as a delegate "was extremely uncertain, in fact I may say absolutely improbable." And very likely it would have been for anyone less gifted than he. He appeared before the committee on elections, and his quiet dignity and congenial manner as much as the precise logic of his arguments won him a seat in the House.

The anomaly of Sibley's status did not, however, end with his admission to Congress. True, he was seated as the delegate from Wisconsin Territory; but by refusing

to appropriate funds for the expenses of this territory, Congress declined to recognize its existence. Sibley then devoted his energies to promoting the organization of Minnesota Territory. Douglas introduced in the Senate on January 18, 1849, the same bill that he had presented to this body nearly a year earlier, with one difference. The capital of the proposed territory was changed from Mendota to St. Paul. Sibley gave evidence of his integrity as a representative of the people when he insisted, notwithstanding his own residence at Mendota, that this change be made because the majority desired St. Paul as the capital. The Senate passed this bill upon Douglas' assurance that the population of the embryonic territory was sufficiently large to warrant its organization. The partisan amendment that the Whig House attached to the bill and the alacrity with which the same House could waive this amendment when its favored department of the interior bill was endangered by the threats of influential Democrats in the Senate indicate that Sibley's political education had made him fully acquainted with the stratagems of legislative bargaining. Minnesota Territory came into existence on March 3, 1849. With the exception of the United States attorney, all the territorial appointees were from outside Minnesota, and each was from a different state; but under the able leadership of Governor Alexander Ramsey of Pennsylvania these men quickly identified themselves with the life of the infant territory.

The territorial government lost no time in coming to grips with the many problems that confronted it. Governor Ramsey's messages charted a prudent course. In addition to counseling economy and considered action his first message urged that legislation should be fair both to labor and to property "without running into ultraisms on either hand" and that there should be no social distinctions "except those which merit and knowledge, religion and morals unavoidably create." Some of the salient achievements of

the early sessions of the territorial legislature show that these law-makers knew the essentials of a solid foundation for their democracy. A system of elementary education was set up in the first session and the incorporation of the University of Minnesota followed in the next. Courts were established, and a complete legal code was adopted. Insistent memorials to Congress called for Indian treaties and the opening of the territory west of the Mississippi. Imprisonment for debt, adopted by the legislature of 1849, was abolished in 1854.

From the beginning of territorial existence bills for special legislation formed like a matrix about the more important legislative proposals—and many of them were enacted into law. The government appropriation for territorial roads apparently was an irresistible target. Bills for new towns and counties, for chartering boom companies, dams, and ferries were plentiful. About 1851 there occurred so great an increase in the number of bills for the chartering of plank road companies, none of which ever built roads, that it has been alleged that these bills were introduced simply to provide additional business for the territorial printer. The development of transportation facilities within the territory was a matter of grave concern to the pioneers, however, and earnest efforts were made to bring about rapid improvement in the situation.

Few chapters in the history of early Minnesota democracy are so charged with action and interest as the rise of political parties. Although fundamental party divisions did not take place until 1855, when the Republicans appeared in Minnesota, it would be a gross error to conclude that the political consciousness of the territory was at a low ebb. On the contrary, the frontier statesmen of Minnesota exhibited political wisdom by refraining from partisanship during the first years of territorial life. The fact that the executive territorial offices were not elective is probably only part of the explanation. The majority of the people

of the territory were Democrats, and they fully realized that it would be highly impolitic to emphasize their political affiliations when the federal aid that the new territory so much desired must come from a Whig Congress. Until 1855 the political activity of Minnesota Democrats centered largely on the personal rivalries of such party leaders as Henry H. Sibley, Henry M. Rice, and Willis A. Gorman.

The wedge that split Minnesotans into two political camps was not local differences but fundamental national issues. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill in 1854 threw the slavery issue into bold relief and brought about the formation of the Republican party in the same year. Agitation over the issue raised by the Kansas-Nebraska bill soon appeared in Minnesota Territory. Under the leadership of such men as the Reverend Charles G. Ames, Richard Chute, and William R. Marshall there were numerous meetings of protest. The meeting held at St. Anthony on March 29 and 30, 1855, is of particular interest. A committee was instructed to issue the call for a convention to meet in St. Paul on July 25 to complete the organization of the Republican party in the territory. A circular pointed out that this convention was called to take such action "as shall ensure the triumph of the sacred and beneficent principles espoused by the Republican Party, and which lie at the foundation of all good government." "In view of the fact that the Republican Party is a return of the good and best men of all parties to the platform of principles enacted by our fathers on the 4th of July, 1776," it was suggested that the Fourth of July would be an appropriate time for the selection of delegates to the convention. The organization set up by the St. Paul convention was the basis for the activities of the Republican party in Minnesota.

During the first years of the new political organization reformers of a puritanical bent had much influence in determining its policies. Abolition and temperance were central

planks in the platform. The party also attracted a number of former Whigs, notably Ramsey; an increasing number of antislavery Democrats; and a few former members of the Know-nothing group. It was only natural that there should be divergent opinions on the party platform. On opposition to the extension of slavery, however, there was unquestioned agreement. As far as the Republicans were concerned there was but one variety of Democrat—and that was a *slavery* Democrat, whether he was from the North or the South. In the eyes of the Republicans, the Democratic party was also the tool of Indian agents and fur-traders—hence the appellation “Moccasin Democrat.” Democrats, on the other hand, were not slow in applying to their Republican rivals such derisive terms as “Black Republicans,” “fanatics,” and “nigger worshippers.”

The Republican party rapidly gained strength in Minnesota. Though the Democrats carried the elections in the fall of 1855, the Republicans carried the lower house of the territorial legislature that was to sit in 1857. The rivalry of the two parties was so keen by the summer of 1857 that it was impossible for the two groups to conduct harmoniously a constitutional convention. That autumn the Democrats triumphed, but with the election in 1859 of Ramsey as the state's second governor the Republican party gained control in Minnesota.

The foundations of Minnesota democracy were firmly laid during the territorial period. The nine years of adolescence were years in which the political consciousness of the people was developed to a high point. They were eager to grapple with the problems of a state, and the winning of statehood was the next step. The men who fashioned Minnesota's government were practical. They insisted upon a reign of law for themselves and those who followed. As long as steps toward this goal were taken under the color of law they were not greatly bothered by inconsistencies of

constitutional procedure. If someone objects that this was purely a pragmatic test, the fact remains that it *did work*.

DONALD E. VAN KOUGHNET

2. THE DAY OF THE PIONEER

"The whole town is on the stir," wrote a St. Paul editor in 1849. "Stores, hotels, houses, are projected and built in a few days. California is forgotten, and the whole town is rife with the exciting spirit of advancement." Five years later another journalist exclaimed, "Enclose St. Paul, indeed! Fence in a prairie fire! Dam up Niagara! Bail out Lake Superior! Tame a wolf! Civilize Indians! Attempt any other practical thing; but not to set metes and bounds to the progress of St. Paul!" These are typical notes from the Minnesota frontier in the middle of the nineteenth century. Growth was turbulent, rapid change was in the air, and everywhere was the infection of optimism. America was moving westward, tackling with confidence the task of transforming the wilderness, glorying in the flux and freedom of the frontier. In steamboats up the great river and in wagons, covered and uncovered, along the trails and roads winding into Minnesota came thousands of eager young people, Yankees in the van, Germans, Scandinavians, and other immigrant stocks joining in the trek, all seeking lands and homes and prosperity. In ten years, from 1850 to 1860, the population shot from 6,000 to 172,000, an increase of 2,730 per cent.

The pioneer Minnesotans were busy breaking land, erecting cabins, starting farms, building roads, developing towns, organizing the economic, social, and political life of the commonwealth. The community instinct, so characteristic of the Yankee stock, sometimes found expression in colonizing land companies, one of which founded Zumbrota in 1856, with church and school as community centers, and with the Puritan influence exhibited in the local prohibition

of the sale of intoxicating liquors. Two years later Zumbrota advertised itself as one of the best communities in the West and proclaimed that "recklessness, intemperance, and profanity" were unknown in the town. A writer of the fifties, referring to the westward-moving emigrant, remarked, "In Illinois he will be met by the Illinois Central Railroad and the fever and the ague; in Iowa, by land speculators who infest the State like a famine. In Minnesota alone he will find an excellent soil, a fine climate, a healthy temperature and a pre-emption law." In 1855 the territory itself sent an emigration agent to New York to refute the allegation that Minnesota was a hyperborean region and to entice settlers.

Meanwhile every town in Minnesota considered itself a potential metropolis, and town-site speculation reached a frenzy before the panic of 1857 descended like a blight upon the territory. In three years, from 1855 to 1857 inclusive, not less than seven hundred new towns were platted in Minnesota, with lots enough for a million and a half people. Not a few of these towns prospered, survived the panic, and, if not jilted by capricious railroads, blossomed out in a later period. Others sprang up like mushrooms, enjoyed a brief day of prosperity, and then disappeared. Nininger, sponsored by the gifted Ignatius Donnelly, was a typical city of dreams, and the editor of its newspaper, the *Emigrant Aid Journal of Minnesota*, once printed a fanciful sketch telling of an imaginary visit to America in the year 4,796 A.D., when a traveler found New York to have a population of 4,892,568, then journeyed out to Nininger, the imperial city of the West, which, with 4,981,947 people surpassed even the eastern metropolis. Alas for the prophet! Today the house of Donnelly is the chief and almost the only landmark of that hopeful frontier town.

Some stages in Minnesota's economic history may be suggested by the symbols of gun, trap, saw, plow, pick, and

shovel. In the fifties Minnesota, where once trap and then saw had been supreme, was being transformed by the plow into an agricultural domain. The pioneer farmer plowed the virgin soil, knew the terror of the prairie fire, braved the fury of the blizzard, felt the isolation of the frontiersman, yet labored on in his tasks, aided by his wife, wilderness Martha, mistress of the primitive cabin. A traveler, after visiting a frontier family, wrote, "They lived in a rude log cabin, sixteen by eighteen, plastered with mud, and with a huge fireplace and mud chimney pushed out at one end. This one small room served as kitchen, parlor, bedroom, pantry, cellar, and all other purposes. The furniture was equally rude, there being but one chair with a back to it, and that quite rickety. For seats, there was a large trunk, two stools, and two empty boxes. We ate a hearty supper of pork and potatoes, and bread and black molasses. . . . There were two beds—the settler and wife occupied one, myself and chum the other, while the children made a bunk on the floor."

Transporting supplies was sometimes a problem for the pioneer. Hans Mattson, a Swedish settler in Goodhue County, once walked from Red Wing to his cabin, a distance of fourteen miles, with a smoked ham, thirty pounds of flour, a gallon of molasses, some coffee, salt, and sugar, all strapped into a pack and carried on his shoulders. Lacking luxuries, frontier farm life was bare, yet it had amenities as the communities grew, for the pioneers were coöperative and hospitable; there were raising, husking, and quilting bees; and the church and the frontier minister played an important part in the life of the people.

A noted American scholar has commented on the "power of the pioneers to join together for a common end without the intervention of governmental institutions" and to it he traces some significant American tendencies of today. Minnesota pioneers exemplified this kind of resourcefulness

in the skill with which they devised associations to protect the land claims of squatters. Though distinctly extralegal in purpose, the claim associations were organized with constitutions and officers and paid solemn attention to parliamentary procedure. When the lands had been surveyed and were opened to government auction, the usual technique of an association was to select one member to make all its bids, then to attend the auction in a body, each member armed with a club as a warning to speculators not to interfere. This technique proved successful; the threat sufficient, no heads were broken; though occasionally a grumbler complained of the "great waste of timber."

The Minnesota talent for agricultural organization seems to hark back to the frontiersmen of the fifties. As early as 1852 an agricultural society was formed in Benton County, with Oliver H. Kelley, prominent later in the Granger movement, as one of its founders. The same year saw a Ramsey County society, and in 1854 a Hennepin County society held the first agricultural fair in Minnesota. The next year witnessed a territorial fair and in 1859 the first state fair was held. The pioneers evidently liked such fairs, and eight thousand of them thronged the fair grounds at Fort Snelling in 1860 to hear Cassius Clay of Kentucky deliver a two-hour address, to see "Flying Dutchman" trot a mile in 4:11, and to witness an exhibition of fire-engine companies.

A frontier society exhibits in many ways the transit of ideas and culture to the pioneer West from older societies. A concrete illustration may be found in the Minnesota lumber camps and lumbering technique, which represent transfers from Maine, a state that left a marked impress especially upon Stillwater and Minneapolis. A more general illustration is afforded by the spirit of New England piety and Puritanism that hovers over frontier Minnesota. The first legislature passed a law placing a Sunday ban on

work and on such diversions, "to the disturbance of the community," as hunting, shooting, and sport, with a fine of three dollars for violation of the law. Desecration of the Sabbath by profane conduct was considered more serious, and was punishable by a ten-dollar fine. With a nice sense for the fitness of things, the legislators provided that all fines so collected should be used for the relief of the poor. Later, Minnesotans were forbidden by law to be present "at any dancing" or at public shows on Sunday. An early law was aimed against gambling, and particularly at the use of roulette and faro, but evidence indicates that this statute was not strictly enforced.

The Sons of Temperance were organized in Minnesota as early as 1849. The first territorial legislature prohibited the sale or gift of liquor to the Indians and established a license system; and three years later the legislature was prevailed upon to pass a so-called "Maine Law," which forbade the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors save for medicinal and "mechanical" uses. Voting down a facetious amendment to impose the death penalty for its violation, the legislators adopted an amendment to submit the act to a popular referendum. In the referendum the people supported the law by 853 votes to 662, but on a test case the district court held that the legislature had delegated its power and since Congress had given it no authority to do so, the statute was ruled invalid. Later attempts to pass a Maine law in Minnesota proved unavailing and the saloons flourished, but in 1855 a St. Anthony newspaper gave prominent space to an Illinois resolution that read: "Resolved, that we young ladies . . . pledge ourselves not to keep company, or join in the sacred bonds of matrimony with any young gentleman who is not in favor of the Maine liquor law, or some other prohibitory law."

It has been said that newspaper editors were always in the vanguard of the westward movement, "setting up their

presses and issuing their sheets before the forests had been cleared or the sod turned." James M. Goodhue, a graduate of Amherst College, reached St. Paul with his printing press before the first territorial officers got there, and on April 28, 1849, he launched the *Minnesota Pioneer*, which he first intended to call "The Epistle of St. Paul." Goodhue was bold, intelligent, and honest, an exponent of vigorous personal journalism, and he made his paper a cultural and political power in Minnesota. As a consequence of one of his scathing editorials he was attacked one day by an opponent and stabbed twice, while he himself made the flurry more exciting by shooting his assailant.

The *Pioneer* was one of eighty-nine newspapers established in Minnesota in its territorial period. Among these were the *Sauk Rapids Frontiersman*, the *Red Wing Republican*, the *Wasioja Gazette*, the *Hokah Chief*, the *St. Cloud Visiter*,—edited by the fiery antislavery crusader, Jane Grey Swisshelm,—and the *Winona Argus*. The frontier newspapers brought news of the world to the pioneers, served as a literary medium in a day when magazines were few, "boosted" Minnesota with extraordinary vigor, reflected in their advertisements the economic trends of the time, and by their forthright editorial methods made their leadership felt not only in politics but also in the social and cultural life of the people.

The cultural life of pioneer Minnesota was vigorous and interesting, especially in the capital and the larger towns, where lawyers, doctors, and other professional men, many of them with fine eastern traditions, gave it tone. To the pioneers of the West we owe the discovery of the idea of studying American history from the bottom up rather than from the top down; and the cultural leaders of Minnesota made their contribution by organizing in 1849 the Minnesota Historical Society. "Let us save that which is interesting in the fleeting registers of the day," said Governor

Ramsey, "and which in the years to come will be esteemed rich mines for the historian." When it is recalled that the historical society today possesses files of sixty Minnesota territorial newspapers, let the wisdom and foresight of this frontier statesman be praised. Every considerable frontier town had its lyceum or library association, where essays, lectures, and debates were heard. St. Paul, indeed, boasted not less than seventeen incorporated cultural associations in the territorial period.

The pioneers liked the theater, supported dramatic associations of their own, and welcomed visiting troupes. Music lovers on the frontier heard Ole Bull in 1856 and Adelina Patti the next year, and welcomed the Hutchinson brothers whenever they gave a concert. The Turners were early on the Minnesota scene and their gymnastic exhibitions were popular. St. Paul supported an opera company that published its own organ, the *Opera Companion*, and in one season, at the German Theatre, presented such operas as Rossini's "Cinderella," Donizetti's "Elixir of Love," Balfe's "Bohemian Girl," and Verdi's "Il Trovatore." There was even a modest literature produced in frontier Minnesota. Harriet Bishop, the Vermont school teacher, published in 1857 her book, *Floral Home*. A periodical entitled *The Frontier Monthly* was brought out at Hastings in 1859. And in 1865 an anthology, *The Poets and Poetry of Minnesota*, appeared at Chicago, dedicated by the "editress," Mrs. W. J. Arnold, to Governor Stephen Miller, who himself contributed a number of poems to the volume.

The pioneers liked balls, such as that held in St. Paul at the Central House in 1850, when there were five sets of cotillions and Goodhue was inspired to write, "It was the largest collection of beauty and fashion we have ever seen in the West." New Year's Day, Washington's Birthday, St. Valentine's Day, the Fourth of July, Thanksgiving, and

Christmas were celebrated with merrymaking and gayety. On January 1, according to Judge Flandrau, "the whole town was alive with sport. Everybody kept open house and expected everybody else to call and see them." Apparently there were social rivalries, for he adds, "A register of callers was always kept, and great was the victory of the hostess who recorded the greatest number." A pioneer Christmas sleigh-ride party in Minneapolis was followed by a typical New England dinner, the table piled high with vegetables, jellies, cakes, pies, and puddings. At a somewhat similar feast in Winona five kinds of cake, three kinds of pies, and goose, venison, and coon were served. The pioneer considered it proper to be prepared for emergencies. A St. Paul woman wrote in 1853, "Then we have a cellar, filled with potatoes, cabbage, Turnips, Beans, Molasses, Onions, Apples, 8 Turkeys, 3 barrel flour, 20 lbs. sperm candle, 4 of chicken, 50 dozen Tallow Candle for the kitchen, 7 pound sage, 10 pound dried pumpkin, 2 bags Buckwheat, 10 dz Eggs, 30 pound butter." Such things were no doubt excellent, but a disconsolate pioneer was once heard to say, "I'm homesick to get back to Massachusetts and have a meal of good salt cod." Sometimes there were church fairs, such as that held on July 3, 1850, by the ladies of the Methodist church in St. Paul, who announced sedately, "The public is respectfully invited to attend the fair by candlelight. Articles useful, as well as ornamental, will be offered for sale." And of course there were the shops, with their beguiling announcements of marble mantle pieces, bed cords, shawls, bonnets, muffs, muslins, gingham, delaines, and bombazines. A subtle "Daguerrean" offered to do "Two heads upon one plate, \$2.50." A St. Paul shop, with a wooden Indian as sentry, boasted the "largest assortment of toys north of St. Louis." And at the bookstore one could subscribe to such magazines as Graham's, Godey's, and Sartain's, buy Fredrika Brem-

er's *The Midnight Sun* or Bulwer-Lytton's *The Caxtons*, or secure "Jenny Lind's best Songs."

The day of the specialist had not yet arrived. The pioneers stood on their own feet, forced by circumstance to rely upon themselves. And so the housewife, who could run loom and spinning wheel, make soap, and manage her household, was not shocked by the genial St. Anthony jack-of-all-trades who combined dentistry with his work as a jeweler and as a repairer of guns, locks, and umbrellas. The photographer would take your picture or pull your teeth, as you preferred. The doctor was a general practitioner and sometimes served as druggist. The lawyer could turn nonchalantly from the law to real estate or business, or, as in the case of Judge Flandrau, to military command in time of Indian trouble, and give a good account of himself. The farmer sometimes taught school in the winter; the minister might take to the plow on everydays; and few there were who were not ready at a moment's notice to plunge into the rough-and-tumble of politics.

THEODORE C. BLEGEN

3. FRONTIER EDUCATION

Minnesota was an untamed wilderness in 1847 when Harriet E. Bishop came from Vermont to open a school at St. Paul. Arriving at Kaposia on the steamboat "Lynx," she was greeted by the sight of a band of Indians from Little Crow's village crowding about the landing. With them was the missionary, Dr. Thomas S. Williamson, who had arranged for her to teach the white children in the new settlement above Pig's Eye landing. St. Paul she found to be a straggling village composed of a few log houses and the chapel from which it took its name. The only building available for a school house was a little log hovel, covered with bark and chinked with mud, which had previously been used as a blacksmith shop. It contained

but one small room, about ten by twelve. There were no orderly rows of desks for the children. Pegs were driven into the logs on three sides of the room and boards were laid upon these for seats. A chair for the teacher, a rickety crosslegged table in the center, and a hen's nest in one corner completed the furniture. School was held there for several months.

Though Harriet Bishop is the best known of Minnesota's pioneer teachers, others had preceded her when the region was yet more wild and unsettled. Over twenty years earlier, in 1823, John Marsh taught a garrison school at Fort Snelling when there was no white settlement within several hundred miles. As there were only a few children of the officers at the post, Marsh found time during the two years he was there to study medicine under the tutelage of the post surgeon and to learn the language of the Indians living in the vicinity. Once, during the winter of 1825, he made the dangerous trip on foot to Prairie du Chien and back to carry the mail. During the winter of 1837 a school of thirty children was taught by Peter Garrioch in a settlement near Fort Snelling. The pupils there were an assorted group of English, French, Swiss, Cree, Chippewa, Sioux, and Negro extraction. Mission schools for Indian and half-breed children were established as early as 1832. Some of these accepted also the children of white settlers until other schools were provided. Belle Prairie Seminary, opened by Frederick Ayer in Morrison County in 1849, was an institution of this type. Most of the earliest pupils were the children of fur-traders and government employees, but later, others attended. Tutors were sometimes procured for the children of single families or for small groups in private homes of the more prosperous settlements. Several of these little select schools existed in the preterritorial period and some continued after public schools were provided. Parochial schools also began at an early date.

The teachers of these first schools were, on the whole, well-educated men and women. Marsh was a graduate of Harvard; two of the teachers at the Belle Prairie school came from Mount Holyoke Seminary, and two were from Knox College at Galesburg, Illinois. Miss Bishop was sent out by the National Popular Education Society, a New England organization having as its object the supplying of the new settlements of the West with competent women teachers. Other women sent by this society opened schools at Stillwater and St. Anthony in 1848 and 1849.

For the establishment of its public school system, Minnesota owes much to the interest, ability, and farsightedness of the legislators and public officers of the territory. An act to establish and maintain common schools was passed by the first legislative assembly in the fall of 1849. This law required the levying of a two and one-half mill tax to supply funds with which to pay teachers, and it authorized special taxes for the building of school houses. It recognized the township as the unit of division and provided for the election of trustees with power to examine and hire teachers. The author of the bill was Martin McLeod, a Canadian of Scotch descent who had been engaged in the fur trade for a number of years. He had been appointed chairman of the committee on schools in recognition of his own excellent education and of his support of the principle that schools would attract the best type of settlers. The first territorial governor, Alexander Ramsey, continually stressed the importance of a good system of public instruction. At his suggestion, the office of territorial superintendent of schools was created by the legislature in 1851; and its first incumbent was the Reverend Edward Duffield Neill, whom Dr. Folwell has called Minnesota's "Apostle of Education." This title was earned by his devotion to the cause of education not only as first superintendent of public instruction of both territory and state, but as chan-

cellor of the University of Minnesota and founder of Macalester College.

Public school buildings of the pioneer period were vastly different from the splendid structures of today. Though substantial buildings were soon erected in the larger towns, those of the new communities were often temporary structures with scarcely any equipment. In the wooded sections, schoolhouses were most frequently built of logs or of rough lumber from the old style sawmill. On the prairies, frame houses were usually erected. Of the 466 schoolhouses in the state in 1861, the superintendent reported that 7 were stone, 4 brick, 220 frame, and 235 log. A report from one county in 1864 states that "some are built of poles, badly chinked and not plastered. Some are scarcely fit for barns or stables. One school was held in a straw covered granary, with one door and no windows. In another the doors and windows were unclosed aperatures in the logs. A third was a small barn, fitted with rude seats, while a fourth was held in a dwelling scarcely fourteen feet square, with a family of six persons living in the same room." Patent desks were unknown and few schoolhouses were provided with blackboards.

Textbooks were at first very scarce. When Dr. Williamson wrote to the National Education Society in 1847 to secure Miss Bishop, he advised her to bring with her sufficient books to begin a school, as there was no book store within three hundred miles. The situation improved rapidly, however, for settlers poured into the territory, many of them bringing with them their old school books; and by 1856 St. Paul had three book stores. The territorial superintendent of schools was expected to introduce and recommend textbooks, and in 1852, Dr. Neill recommended Mitchell's *School Geographies*, Davies' *First Lessons in Arithmetic*, Parker's *Natural Philosophies*, Wells's *English Grammar*, Willard's *Histories of the United States*, and

Webster's *Elementary Spelling Book*. Though it is not mentioned on the recommended list, it is probable that Van Waters' *Poetical Geography with Rules of Arithmetic in Verse* was also used. From this the children learned names of lakes, rivers, and capitals in singsong verse :

Lake of the Woods, and Rainy Lake are found
Skirting Columbia on her northern bound;
Leech Lake, Itasca, Devil's and Ottertail,
In Minnesota with Fox Lake we hail;
Then Pepin Lake and Spirit Lake we see,
And Big Stone Lake there finds a pedigree.

The first schools of the territory were primary schools. More advanced subjects were taught as the children grew older, but the idea of free public high schools was not generally adopted until much later. Academies and seminaries supported by churches or by private corporations were the accepted secondary schools. That there was no lack of interest in institutions of this type is evident from the fact that over thirty were chartered by the territorial legislatures. Among them were Cottage Grove Academy, Bellevue Seminary, Excelsior College, and Gray Cloud Female Seminary. There were various reasons for the promotion of these schools. Proprietors of town sites sought to have academies located in their villages because of their advertising value. Often lots were donated and citizens subscribed liberally to the support of the projected schools. Rivalry among the church denominations stimulated the starting of several, and the desire to keep the young people in the West was another incentive. In a plea for support of Minnesota Central University by the Baptists of the state, one of the arguments presented was that if their young men went East to study for the ministry, not one in ten would probably ever return to seek a pastorate on these frontiers.

Many of the academies for which charters were granted

did not get beyond a paper existence. The great financial depression of 1857 made it impossible for people who had promised money to meet their obligations. Some of the schools, like Brunson Seminary at Hamilton in Fillmore County, started classes in temporary quarters and planned buildings on the strength of promised endowments. When the crash came, such schools were abandoned. There were, however, a number of academies and seminaries started in this period, which were active for several years. Among these were the Baldwin School at St. Paul, Monticello Academy, Chatfield Academy, St. John's Seminary, St. Paul Female Seminary, and the Minnesota Seminary at Wasioja. The Baldwin School, started by Dr. Neill in 1853, was planned originally as a school for girls. The male department was created two years later as the College of St. Paul. These two institutions were the forerunners of Oak Hall and Macalester College. St. John's Seminary, which later became St. John's University was established near St. Cloud by the Benedictine Order in 1857. The St. Paul Female Seminary, incorporated in 1856 as the Presbyterial Institute of the Presbytery of St. Paul, flourished for a number of years as a boarding school for girls. The coeducational academies at Monticello, Chatfield, and Wasioja performed a distinct service in the field of secondary education outside the Twin Cities before the high schools were started. The school at Wasioja, opened as Minnesota Seminary by the Freewill Baptists in 1860, became Groveland Seminary in 1868 and a few years later, the Wesleyan Methodist Seminary.

The courses offered in these schools ranged from the primary to the college. Their catalogues furnish an interesting picture of the educational ideas of the period. In addition to the usual high-school subjects, the girls at the St. Paul Female Seminary were taught Biblical antiquities, geography of the heavens, natural theology, mental science,

and logic. At the Chatfield Academy, modern and ancient languages were taught and pupils musically inclined could take lessons on the melodeon as well as on the piano. Here were offered also higher mathematics, bookkeeping, and a course in engineering, surveying, architecture, and drawing. Dr. Neill had likewise planned to offer practical as well as academic courses in his school for boys. "In a country so youthful," he said, "the demand is for practical men rather than complete scholars." The catalogue for the College of St. Paul in 1854 lists courses in civil engineering, chemistry of the arts and agriculture, and mercantile law.

Hamline University, the first institution of higher learning to be established in Minnesota, was started in Red Wing in 1854 by the Methodist Church, and continued there until 1869. Eleven years later it was reestablished in St. Paul. A territorial university had been incorporated by the legislature in 1851, but it was never opened as a territorial institution, and not until the late sixties was the state university launched. Minnesota Central University, established by the Baptist denomination at Hastings in 1857, maintained a preparatory department for a few years but failed to develop as a college or university. Lake, Clinton, Cedar Valley, Fremont City, Hastings, and Hobart universities, though chartered in the territorial period, existed only in the dreams of their sponsors.

In 1858 an act was passed by the legislature authorizing the establishment of three normal schools. The first of these was opened in Winona in 1860. At that time it was the only state normal school west of the Mississippi River. Its strongest supporter was Dr. John D. Ford of Winona, who was influential in obtaining the legislation and who served on the normal school board until his death in 1867. His strong argument for the support of the school was that there could be no progress in the common school system until there was an adequate supply of trained teachers.

Although the Winona school was closed for two years during the Civil War, it was reopened in 1864 and, through the efforts of Dr. Ford, appropriations were secured that reestablished it on a permanent basis. The two other normal schools provided for in the original act of 1858 were established at Mankato and St. Cloud in 1868 and 1869. By this time the University of Minnesota was open and the state was gradually assuming the responsibility of providing free education from the primary grades through the professional colleges.

LOIS M. FAWCETT

4. EARLY TRANSPORTATION

The Minnesota region includes the headwaters of three great streams—the Red River of the North, the Mississippi, and the streams flowing into Lake Superior and thus into the St. Lawrence River system. The chain of lakes at the head of the St. Lawrence enticed the hardy voyagers who were working their way inland from the Atlantic to new explorations reaching ever farther to the West. Thus, the French reached Lake Superior and the shores of Minnesota. Traveling through the region south of the Great Lakes, they heard of a mighty river flowing southward—the Mississippi. Its discovery led to attempts to find its source. To the wilderness of Minnesota came Du Lhut, Father Hennepin, Le Sueur, the Vérendryes, and a host of others. In every instance the explorers traveled on the natural highways of the region—its streams. With the Indian canoe, which they adopted, the explorer and the voyageur traced the broad outlines of Minnesota before the passing of a century and a half of occupation of the North American continent by the white men.

For more than a century the canoe on the rivers of Minnesota was the means by which contact was made with the outside world. Early in the American era, however, it be-

came evident that the canoe was to be supplanted. In 1811, Nicholas J. Roosevelt of New York, steamed down the Ohio from Pittsburgh in his steamboat the "New Orleans." This event marked the introduction of a new means of navigation in the West, although more than a decade passed before a steamboat reached the upper Mississippi River country.

In 1819 Fort Snelling was established at the junction of the Minnesota and Mississippi rivers. The outpost was truly isolated, for it took from thirty to forty days to make the trip upstream from St. Louis to the fort in keel boats. It was not until 1823 that the steamboat "Virginia" overcame the obstacles of too deep draft and too little power and puffed proudly up the river to Fort Snelling, terrifying the natives and overjoying members of the garrison at the lonely post on the upper river. From this date until the day of the railroad, the steamboat was the outstanding means of transportation in the upper Mississippi River country, but almost twenty-five years passed before boats ran in regular service to the Fort Snelling region. During the forties, however, the increasing business of the upper country drew more and more boats into the trade, and in 1847 a regular line of steamboats was put into service between St. Paul and points down river. In addition, many tramp vessels made occasional calls. It is estimated that, on an average, boats made between forty and ninety calls at St. Paul each season during the decade of the forties.

The creation of the territory of Minnesota brought an immense immigration to the region. As a result, the business of the steamboat companies increased enormously. In 1850 only 5 boats were regularly in use in the down-river trade. In 1858 there were 62 boats which regularly called at the port of St. Paul, and the wharfmaster recorded 1,090 arrivals of boats during the navigation season of 236 days. Of course, not all these boats were used in the trade

from St. Paul to downstream ports. In the summer of 1850, three notable expeditions demonstrated that the Minnesota River was navigable as far as Mankato even for boats built for the Mississippi River trade. The signing of the treaty of Traverse des Sioux in the summer of 1851 opened the Minnesota Valley for settlement, and almost overnight towns sprang into existence. Since there were no roads leading into the newly opened country, the full burden of taking freight and passengers to the valley towns fell on the steamboats, and during the next decade their business flourished mightily. The people living in the communities along the Mississippi above the Falls of St. Anthony likewise yearned for steamboats, and, as a result, the "Governor Ramsey" was constructed in the summer of 1850 to ply between St. Anthony and St. Cloud. Other boats, such as the "Henry M. Rice," the "Enterprise," and the "North Star," followed. Occasionally, boats got up the river as far as Little Falls, and it was claimed that the river was navigable even as far north as Pokegama Falls.

The boats that were engaged in the upper Mississippi River trade were much smaller than were their prototypes on the lower river, but they resembled them in all other respects. They were sumptuously furnished, their fare was generally characterized as "excellent," and their officers and crews were usually spoken of as "gentlemanly" in spite of the fisticuffs that not infrequently accompanied clashes of crews of rival boats in search of cargoes. On the Minnesota River and on the Mississippi above the Falls of St. Anthony the boats were even smaller than those on the Mississippi between St. Paul and St. Louis. The streams they navigated were tortuous, shallow, and frequently all but blocked by rapids. For use on such streams, boats necessarily were of exceedingly light draft—so light, in fact, that one advertiser announced the arrival of a boat for the trade that required "only a heavy dew to run."

When the steamboats began a regular service between St. Paul and the lower river, the inhabitants of the Red River settlements in the extreme northwestern part of present-day Minnesota and southern Manitoba found that a comparatively short and practicable route to market led across country from their settlements to St. Paul. Accordingly, each year, as soon as the grass was long enough to provide pasturage, great caravans of Red River ox carts, sometimes numbering as many as five or six hundred, would set out on the trek to St. Paul. The cart was a two-wheeled vehicle constructed entirely of wood, having a rack capable of holding from six to eight hundred pounds of freight. To this cart a single ox was hitched with a rawhide harness. The season's catch of hides and furs was loaded into the carts, and the strange processions were guided by men in the colorful costumes of the half-breeds and accompanied by the weird screeching of dry wooden axles fretting against dry wooden hubs. Lubricants were rarely used. A pioneer of St. Anthony related that the noise of a cart brigade passing a quarter of a mile away made it necessary to dismiss church services one Sunday.

In general, the caravans used one of three trails on their annual pilgrimages: one followed the Red and Minnesota rivers to Mendota; another, known as the East Plains Trail, crossed the Mississippi River near its junction with the Crow Wing and followed that stream to St. Paul; the third turned eastward from the Red River near Breckenridge, and extended in a southeasterly direction to the valley of the Sauk River, which it followed to its junction with the Mississippi near St. Cloud. For almost thirty years the carts made their way to St. Paul. They ceased coming only when the railroad was extended toward the Red River and an ambitious stagecoach and express company placed a steamboat on the waters of that stream.

As soon as the settlement of Minnesota got under way,

the need for more adequate transportation facilities than were afforded by the steamboats was felt. The rivers were frozen over for at least five months of the year, and for that length of time the settlements were cut off from the rest of the world. As a result of this isolation, therefore, a road was opened in 1849 on the Wisconsin side of the river and a mail stage line was established to keep in touch with the settled country during the long winters. As the population of the territory grew, the inland towns became more and more eager for roads, and between 1849 and 1860 a large number were laid out.

The territory itself was too poor to enter into an extensive program of road-building during the early years, and the federal government, under the guise of military expediency, was induced to construct a number of important highways through the interior. In 1851 the war department laid out a military road leading from Mendota up the Minnesota Valley to Mankato, and then southwestward toward the Big Sioux River. Construction on this road began in 1853 and it was completed in 1857. In close succession followed military roads from St. Paul to Superior, to Spirit Lake, Iowa, and to Crow Wing. In addition, the territory laid out a number of very important roads, most of which were in the southern part of the region where settlement had progressed to the greatest extent. Over these, thousands of settlers made their way to homes in the frontier country; hundreds of wagons bore produce to the market towns along the river; and clattering stagecoaches took to the people of the interior settlements their express, their mail, and their friends.

In 1849 the first stage route was opened along a road laid out in Wisconsin. By 1860, a network of trails permitted access to almost any part of the settled area. In that period the greatest staging concern in the Northwest was developed—the Minnesota Stage Company, owned by

J. C. Burbank and his associates. In the winter of 1857-58 this firm made a contract with the Hudson's Bay Company for transporting goods from St. Paul to the Red River posts. It was determined that, if navigation were possible, a steamboat would be placed in operation on the Red River. In response to an offer of a thousand dollars to the man who would do so, Anson Northup hauled a steamboat across the frozen expanse of western Minnesota from Crow Wing to Georgetown in the winter of 1858-59. There, in the following spring, he assembled and launched the "Anson Northup," which was promptly purchased by the Burbank firm. In June, 1859, this company opened a stage line from St. Cloud to the Red River at Breckenridge, where a straggling settlement was springing up. The steamboat, the stagecoach, and the freight wagons of Burbank and Company sounded the death knell of the Red River ox carts. The caravans dwindled in size and importance, and, with the completion of a railroad to the Red River, they disappeared entirely.

In Minnesota the stagecoach served needs that were later met by the railroad. The isolation of the upper Mississippi territory rendered it peculiarly susceptible to schemes for linking it by rail with the settled East. Indeed, as early as 1849, James M. Goodhue of the *Minnesota Pioneer* listened eagerly to a plan for the construction of an "ice railroad." Rails were to be laid on the frozen Mississippi, over which trains would be run between Galena and St. Paul. The "ice railroad" failed to materialize, but the politicians of the territory were busy conjuring up schemes that would give Minnesota a real railroad. The trans-continental railroad question, as agitated in Congress, raised the hopes of Minnesotans, and between 1853 and 1857 plans and schemes to win from Congress grants of land to railroad companies in Minnesota were numerous and notorious, but unsuccessful. In 1857 Congress passed an act

providing for liberal grants of land to five Minnesota companies. The terms of the grants required that construction should be started at once and that a stipulated amount of work must be done before the land would be made available.

The panic of 1857, however, struck Minnesota with such force that the railroad companies were paralyzed. It was at this time that the people of Minnesota ventured into the field of public railroad financing. The framers of the state constitution, harking back to the lessons learned from the panic of 1837, specifically forbade the use of state credit for financing private enterprises. The state's credit, however, was precisely what was wanted, and so in the spring of 1858, an amendment to the constitution was voted whereby the credit of the state could be used to the extent of five millions of dollars to aid the construction of railroads. Accordingly, the Minnesota state railroad bonds, for which the lands of the companies were held as security, were issued. For a few months railroad financiers enjoyed a period of frenzied activity. The money secured by the loan of the state credit was dissipated, however, and though some grading was done, not a foot of railroad was built.

The failure of the "Five Million Loan Bill" to provide the coveted railroads dampened public enthusiasm for some time. During the early sixties, however, new charters were granted to take the place of those forfeited after the collapse of building schemes that the loan bill had failed to bring to fruition. The new companies prosecuted the work with vigor, and in the summer of 1862 the first railroad in Minnesota was put in operation. Though it extended only from St. Paul to St. Anthony, a distance of ten miles, it heralded the approach of a new day—when Minnesota should be bound by the railroad to her sister states.

ARTHUR J. LARSEN

5. ADMISSION TO THE UNION

The territorial period of Minnesota's history is one of swiftly moving drama, but no portion of that period is more dramatic or more colorful than the three years that climaxed Minnesota's transition from a wilderness territory to a full-fledged member in the union of states. The march toward statehood got under way in 1856; in 1857 Congress authorized a constitutional convention; and on May 11, 1858, Minnesota officially became a state.

The advantages of statehood were first pressed home to the people of Minnesota in 1854, when Congress, heeding the plea of the northern territory for railroads, made a generous grant of lands to aid in the construction of the roads. This was soon revoked on the ground that it was fraudulently claimed by one of two companies chartered by the territorial legislature in 1854. Many Minnesotans resentfully felt that, had they had voting representatives in Congress, the railroad grant would have materialized. Statehood seemed to offer a solution for Minnesota's railroad problem.

Between 1854 and 1856 the movement toward statehood gathered momentum in part because of this desire for a railroad, and also because of the tremendous increase in population during those years and the fierce sectional and political rivalries that sprang up. Territorial Minnesota from the first was controlled by a clique of Democratic politicians who represented St. Paul, St. Anthony, Stillwater, and the northern part of the territory. Any political plums to be distributed naturally went to these regions. The great immigration into Minnesota during the middle fifties brought the largest increase in population to the southeastern counties. Representation in the territorial legislature was not adjusted to this increase, however, and a strong resentment at the inequality sprang up. The newly organized Republican party, which was just entering

Minnesota politics, fed on this discontent in the southeastern counties and gained a strong foothold there. Jealous of the political power of the ruling Democrats and eager for a more equitable apportionment of representation in the legislature, the Republicans looked upon statehood as a means of attaining their ends.

Minnesotans almost unanimously desired statehood, but they were not agreed on the question of boundaries for the new state. It was inconceivable that Minnesota should enter the Union without a curtailment of its area, which, as a territory, included not only present-day Minnesota but also a vast stretch of the Dakota plains area extending as far west as the Missouri and White rivers. The question resolved itself, therefore, into one of dividing the territory. The Democrats felt that the logical division would be along a line following the Red River from the Canadian boundary to Lake Traverse and thence southward to the Iowa line. Most of the population was in the eastern half of the territory, and this was, therefore, the most equitable method of division. Many Republicans, however, favored a division along an east and west line passing either just north of St. Paul or a short distance south of the territorial capital. Such a division, the southern Minnesota group felt, would reduce the power of the Democratic strongholds, for, if the cities of St. Paul, St. Anthony, and Stillwater were not excluded from the proposed state, they would at least be placed in an isolated position within it. The people of the state would then be justified in demanding the removal of the capital to a more central location and the power of the Democrats would be broken. Furthermore, by excluding the Democrats of northern Minnesota, such a division would give the southeastern Republicans increased influence in the government.

When the territorial legislature convened in 1856, therefore, the stage was set for the statehood movement. Gov-

ernor Gorman, in his opening address to the legislature, advised against precipitous action, saying, "We can afford to be called political infants, while we are enlarging and developing the bone and muscle which are to give us energy, vigor, and power, when we arrive at manhood." Nevertheless, two proposals looking toward statehood were introduced in the state legislature in 1856. Joseph Rolette of Pembina, recognizing that a north and south division of the territory would place his district in a commanding position in the northern half, introduced a memorial to Congress requesting such a division, and St. Andrew Balcombe of Winona presented a joint resolution calling for a squatter convention to form a constitution for the state of Minnesota. Both measures were defeated by the Democratic majority.

During the summer of 1856, there was intense activity on the part of Minnesota's political leaders. Statehood was in the air and there were rumors that Congress was considering a northern railroad to the Pacific. Henry M. Rice of St. Paul, the territorial delegate in Congress, remained at Washington throughout the summer and numerous delegations of Minnesota politicians journeyed there to consult with him and administration leaders. Late in the summer John E. Warren, a former United States district attorney for Minnesota, wrote a series of letters to the *Pioneer and Democrat* advocating statehood. About the same time a well-organized lobby was dispatched to Washington from Winona and St. Peter, ostensibly to work for a railroad in Minnesota. The route favored by this group extended westward from Winona through St. Peter toward the Missouri River, thus leaving St. Paul entirely out of the picture.

Rice would not forsake his St. Paul constituents, however, nor could he afford to neglect those in southern Minnesota. His problem was to procure statehood on the

most satisfactory terms, to obtain railroads for the state, and to soothe the warring factions. On December 24, 1856, he introduced two bills in Congress. One authorized the people of Minnesota east of a line following the Red River and extending southward to the Iowa line to form a constitution preparatory to entering the Union; the other provided for the cession to Minnesota of an immense land grant to be used in the construction of railroads, the routes of which he indicated. Four of them were to terminate in St. Paul, while a fifth, to satisfy the southern Minnesota group, was to extend westward from Winona through St. Peter and to the western state line.

The news of Rice's proposals reached Minnesota on January 1, 1857. On January 14 Governor Willis A. Gorman, who, although a Democrat, was at loggerheads with the Democratic leaders of the territory and had aligned himself with the southeastern Republicans, addressed a joint session of the legislature, advocating that the people take the initiative in preparing a constitution without waiting for Congressional action. Among the advantages of statehood that he stressed were those of self-determination and of having voting delegates in Congress when that body should decide on the eastern terminus of a northern railroad to the Pacific coast. When it began to seem probable that the Rice proposals would become law, the southern Minnesota group obtained the passage of a memorial to Congress requesting that Minnesota be allowed to fix her own boundaries. On February 6 they made a last desperate attempt to save their plan when they introduced a bill in the Council providing for the removal of the capital from St. Paul to St. Peter, the site of which belonged to the St. Peter Company, which the legislature had incorporated in 1856. The bill included a contract with the company binding it to donate a site for the capital and a hundred thousand dollars for the erection of buildings. The meas-

ure was passed by both houses despite the strenuous efforts of the St. Paul group to defeat it and notwithstanding the opinion of the attorney-general of the territory that it would not survive a test in the courts. An amendment to substitute "Nicollet Island" for "St. Peter" was defeated by a vote of 18 to 19 when four of the seven representatives from Hennepin County voted against it. The St. Paul group, preferring Nicollet Island to St. Peter, voted solidly for the amendment. It seemed that the removal of the capital to St. Peter was inevitable, for it was understood that the governor, who had a large interest in the St. Peter Company, would sign the bill. An unexpected fate, however, awaited it.

After its passage, the bill was sent to the enrolling committee. There it remained an unusually long time. At last the approving majority demanded that it be reported for consideration. A call of the Council, requested by an opponent of the bill, revealed that one councilor, Joseph Rolette of Pembina, was absent, and a report from the enrolling committee disclosed that the bill was missing. No further progress could be made on the measure, for the rules provided that a two-thirds vote was necessary to suspend a call of the Council. The vote stood nine to five in favor of the measure, and the extra vote could not be garnered in. For a whole week the Council remained at a deadlock with but two short truces interspersed for the transaction of essential business. Special messengers searched for Rolette, but no trace of him could be found. Just as the Council adjourned, the door opened and Rolette walked in and took his seat. Intentionally, he arrived too late; the Council had adjourned and the capital removal bill was lost. The whereabouts of "Joe" Rolette during that week was long a subject of conjecture. Many years after the episode it was ascertained that the bill was locked in a St. Paul safe, while Rolette spent the tedious hours of

that week playing poker with congenial friends in a top floor room of the Fuller House. The year before he had favored a north and south division of the territory, but Rice's plan of division, which provided a railroad for Pembina, was much more advantageous to Rolette's constituents. The St. Peter Company, hoping that the removal bill was valid, fulfilled its contract. The site was set aside and a capital building erected. For years it stood empty, and in 1881 it became the courthouse of Nicollet County.

The enabling act, which, with the land grant act, was passed on March 3, 1857, provided for the election to a constitutional convention of two delegates from each representative district in the territory. Immediately upon the adjournment of the legislature, Gorman went to Washington. What actually transpired there is not known, but he returned to Minnesota a proponent of the Rice plan for statehood. As soon as he returned he issued a call for a special session of the legislature to make provision for holding the constitutional convention. So tempting was the land grant for railroads, however, that the greater part of the extra session was spent in disposing of it, and not until the next to the last day of the session was the convention bill passed. This bill, through a misinterpretation of the enabling act, provided for the election of two delegates not only from each representative district, but from each councilor district in the territory as well.

The first Monday in June, scarcely more than a week after the passage of the convention bill, delegates were elected. On July 13, the seventieth anniversary of the adoption of the Ordinance of 1787, fifty-eight Republicans and fifty Democrats assembled in St. Paul. Partisan rivalry was bitter, and each party sought to gain control of the convention. Rival chairmen simultaneously called the assembly to order, and, amid a bedlam of motions and coun-

termotions, proceeded to organize the convention. While John W. North for the Republicans attempted to bring the meeting to order, a motion to adjourn, made by Willis A. Gorman, was entertained by Charles L. Chase, secretary of the territory and temporary chairman of the Democratic group. The Democrats claimed that a number of Republican delegates shouted "No!" to the Democratic motion and thus recognized their organization. This the Republicans stoutly denied and when neither side could gain a concession from the other, the two groups separated. Thereafter, two conventions were held, two constitutions were prepared, and only by the drudgery of a committee of five from each group was a compromise constitution drawn up. Even then, two copies had to be prepared, for the members of one group refused to sign a document signed by the others. There were inaccuracies in copying, and as a result, Minnesota today is in the singular position of having two slightly different, but equally authentic constitutions.

On October 13, 1857, the voters of Minnesota accepted the constitution and elected state officers, members of the judiciary, and representatives to Congress. The constitution was ratified by the surprisingly large vote of thirty thousand to about five hundred. This unanimity was achieved by a trick. The ballots contained the phrase "For Constitution" at the top, followed by a list of candidates for office. Few men had the temerity to vote for officers of a state to be governed by a constitution they simultaneously declared themselves against. The Democratic party obtained majorities in both houses, elected its candidates for state offices, and sent three representatives to Congress. Henry H. Sibley won the race for the governorship by the narrow margin of 240 votes over his Republican opponent, Alexander Ramsey.

On December 2 the state legislature met in conformity

with the new constitution, although Congress had not yet accepted that document. It was confidently expected by the Democratic legislature that a Democratic Congress, meeting at almost the same time, would recognize the new state and give validity to its acts. Under the terms of the constitution, however, the governor and other executive officers could not take office until the act of admission had been passed. The state legislature was recognized, however, by Samuel Medary, governor of Minnesota Territory, who addressed a formal message to it, in spite of the protest of seventeen Republican senators against his claim to "exercise any of the rights, authorities, privileges, powers or functions of the Governor of the State of Minnesota."

On December 19 the members of both houses assembled in joint session and elected two senators to Congress. It was a foregone conclusion that one place would go to Henry M. Rice. The other place had been expected by Henry H. Sibley, Willis A. Gorman, Joseph R. Brown, and Franklin Steele. So close was the contest, however, that a rank outsider, General James Shields of Faribault, was elected by a majority of five votes over his nearest competitor. Each member had been allowed to vote for two men, and Shields was the second choice of a sufficient number to win the election. Thus, this versatile character—for he was soldier, politician, jurist, colonizer, and town-builder—was well on his way to achieving the unique distinction of being a United States senator from three states. He represented Illinois from 1849 to 1855; he was senator from Minnesota in 1858; and in 1878 he served a brief term as senator from Missouri.

The legislature continued to assume that it had a right to function despite the failure of Congress to admit Minnesota as a state. In January and February, 1858, ten general and thirty-eight special laws were passed. These were signed by Charles L. Chase, secretary of the territory, as

acting governor, for Medary departed for Washington late in 1857. To aid the railroad companies, which were in sore financial straits as a result of the panic of 1857, the first legislature proposed an amendment to the constitution to permit the state to lend its credit to these companies. Shortly thereafter, the legislature, piqued at the delay of Congress in admitting Minnesota, also voted to amend the constitution to permit the state officers to take office on May 1, 1858, instead of waiting for the admission of the state. On April 15 these two amendments were adopted by overwhelming majorities in a state-wide election. The editor of the *Minnesota Posten*, the only Scandinavian newspaper in the state, appropriately remarked that "our coat of state was altered a little even before it was put on for the first time."

In December, 1857, Senators Rice and Shields, together with the three representatives to Congress, William W. Phelps, James Cavanaugh, and George L. Becker, had proceeded to Washington, where they cooled their heels in the antechambers of Congress while that body deliberated the question of admitting them. Despite the efforts of Stephen A. Douglas to rush through the admission bill, Minnesota was caught in the slavery controversy, and until the problem of "Bleeding Kansas" was settled, little was done. Strangely enough, when Minnesota's case was ready for consideration, it was the Republicans who fought against admission. Sometime in March, Lorenzo Babcock, secretary of the Republican wing of the state constitutional convention, published a "Secret Circular," which was widely distributed among the Republicans in Congress. This circular critically surveyed Minnesota politics since the convention, and cast doubt on the legitimacy of the legislature that convened in the fall of 1857. Simultaneously with the appearance of the circular, John Sherman, representative from Ohio, launched a bitter attack on the irregularities of the

convention, the unauthorized elections, and the audacity with which Minnesotans had taken their statehood for granted. The Democratic press in Minnesota denounced the authors of the circular as traitors, and placed the blame for its publication on a group of Republicans, who were "known to be most bitterly opposed" to the railroad loan. When partial harmony in Congress was restored, that body decided that Minnesota was entitled to only two representatives. Accordingly, lots were drawn, and George L. Becker—probably the most able man of the three—was eliminated. On May 11, 1858, the president signed the admission bill, and Minnesota formally became a state.

For Minnesota the delay in the admission of the state had proved exasperating. Six months had passed since the constitution was ratified by the electorate. In the meantime, Minnesota had assumed the mantle of statehood, notwithstanding the failure of Congress to act. Irritated at the delay, the editor of one newspaper late in April published a "Declaration of Independence of the State of Minnesota." Numerous other papers expressed their impatience. On May 13, two days after the signing of the bill, the news of the admission of the state reached St. Paul, where apparently it caused little excitement. In Winona, however, it was the occasion for the firing of a salute of a hundred guns and an impromptu parade. On May 24 the state officers, who had wisely refrained from taking office before the admission of the state, were formally inducted into office. Minnesota was at last a full-fledged state.

ARTHUR J. LARSEN

6. THE HERITAGE OF MINNESOTA

It is appropriate that on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the attainment of statehood by Minnesota we should remind ourselves of the rich heritage of our commonwealth. Though it celebrates today its diamond jubilee as a state,

it is more than two and a half centuries since white men lifted the curtain of mystery upon this land, then inhabited by the native red men. Sons of old France in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries explored the Minnesota wilderness, paddled its streams, mapped its lakes, built forts, and left a legacy of name and story that has not been forgotten.

When the gallant day of the French had passed, the British established dominion over the region and exploited its resources of furs in a vast trade that centered at Montreal. Grand Portage, on the north shore of Lake Superior, was one of its most important stations, and this village on Minnesota soil throbbed with life in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Blazing the trail of American occupation, Lieutenant Zebulon Pike headed an American expedition into Minnesota a hundred and twenty-eight years ago, challenging at Leech Lake and other places the authority of the British traders. Fourteen years later, in 1819, a lonely frontier fort was built at a strategic point in this Minnesota Northwest, and with it a new period in the story of this state dawned. The post was Fort Snelling. With it as a nucleus for civilization on the upper Mississippi, soldiers, fur-traders, lumbermen, surveyors, and explorers made their contribution to the development of Minnesota and prepared the way for the pioneers who were to build a territory and a state, the founders of a commonwealth whose memory is recalled by this Minnesota jubilee today.

In the nine years from 1849 to 1858 Minnesota grew tremendously. Indian treaties opened up marvelous lands to settlement. Pioneers by the thousands swarmed up the trails to the Northwest, in wagons, covered and uncovered; and they crowded the steamboats that churned their way up the Mississippi. From New England, the Middle States, the Old Northwest, and even the South came American-

born searchers for new frontiers. From Germany, the British Isles, and the Scandinavian North came immigrants as to a New Canaan. All joined in the common tasks of the frontier.

The pioneers builded more than a political structure in those important years. They began the conquest of the land; they developed industry; they set up a system of education; they established a press; they built churches; they started hundreds of towns; they constructed roads and planned railroads. They were a young people, strong and vigorous, filled with optimism, looking with courage to the future.

The pioneers were interested in politics, and were believers in democratic self-rule. There were only a few straggling settlements when they pressed home their demand for territorial status and won it from the federal government. Alexander Ramsey came out from Pennsylvania in 1849 to be the first governor of that territory. In the fifties a sharp political rivalry developed. Perhaps no better illustration of it could be found than the fact that the delegates to the constitutional convention in the summer of 1857 found it impossible to meet in one convention. The result was that two conventions were held concurrently and two separate constitutions were adopted. Common sense exhibited itself, however, in conference and compromise at the end. Though Minnesota's constitution was drafted in the summer of 1857 and endorsed by the electorate in the fall of that year, the state was not admitted to the Union until May 11, 1858, exactly seventy-five years ago today. The explanation of this delay is the slavery controversy, then approaching a white heat, with Kansas the battleground. The question of admitting Minnesota became involved, with one contingent in Congress unwilling to open the door to Minnesota until the Kansas question had been settled. Ultimately a compromise was reached on that

question, and then Minnesota was received into the federal family. Henry Hastings Sibley, who had come to Minnesota as early as 1834 and won a reputation as a fur-trade magnate and a frontier statesman, was inaugurated as the first governor of the state of Minnesota.

Let us not suppose that we are the only ones who have had to face and solve difficult problems. The pioneers of Minnesota, even at the time they were celebrating the achievement of statehood, were in the grip of panic and depression. Many of their great dreams of prosperity had crumbled; money was tight; banks had closed; business failures were common. The leaders of the young state sought by one means after another to improve conditions, to restore prosperity, and incidentally they proved themselves able to practice economy; and in 1860 the state legislature, acting upon the recommendation of Governor Ramsey, who had succeeded Sibley as the state's executive, reduced the expenses of the state government from about a hundred and fifty to under a hundred thousand dollars a year. Economic conditions soon took an upward turn, but the turn had scarcely started when the country was plunged into Civil War. Governor Ramsey, who was in Washington when the war broke out, offered a thousand Minnesota men for national defense—the first state tender of troops for the war, in which twenty-four thousand Minnesotans bore arms for their country. The Civil War was only a little more than a year old when the third great crisis came to Minnesota—the devastating Sioux Outbreak in the summer of 1862. A severe and appalling test, but Minnesota met it with vigor and courage. Sibley, who in the thirties and forties managed the fur trade, and in the late fifties acted as the state's first governor, now, at the call of Ramsey, managed a frontier army and with it he quelled the outbreak and drove the Sioux from the state.

So Minnesota emerged from its pioneer trial by ordeal,

and in 1865, the panic of 1857 nearly forgotten, the Sioux War over, and the boys in blue returning from southern battlefields, it faced a new era in its development.

Thousands of new settlers pushed into western Minnesota. What had once been a fur commonwealth and then a lumberman's domain now became an agricultural state. A system of transportation was created. The early dreams of railroads had been shattered by the panic of 1857 and in 1862 the only railroad operating in the state was the St. Paul and Pacific, which notwithstanding its impressive name was restricted to a ten-mile line between St. Paul and St. Anthony. Intensive railroad building soon followed, however, and by 1870 the state had nearly eleven hundred miles of railroad. Panic times in the seventies placed the roads in desperate straits, but with economic revival building again progressed rapidly, and by 1880 there were more than three thousand miles of railroad. So Minnesota was bound together with bands of steel.

With a spreading network of railroads, unparalleled expansion of crop acreage, the appearance of improved farm machinery, and armies of settlers swarming onto Minnesota's fertile lands, one might have expected a farmer's paradise to be created. But glutted markets, falling grain prices, mounting farm mortgages, and other factors soon indicated that this was not to be the case. An "agrarian crusade"—the Granger movement in the seventies, the Farmers' Alliance in the eighties, and the Populist revolt in the nineties—followed, with men like Oliver H. Kelley and Ignatius Donnelly in the vanguard. This movement sought to do away with specific abuses, but its larger objective was an economic democracy that had seemed to be the birthright of the frontier. Popular control of government and increased government regulation of business that was of public concern were sought. The movement made a considerable contribution, but many of its gains were

minimized as the industrialization of America continued at an ever increasing pace.

Other pictures that form part of the Minnesota panorama as we survey three-quarters of a century from the perspective of today are the development of the iron mines; the building of a great flour milling industry; the transition of agriculture from one-crop specialization to a diversified system; the building of cities and towns to meet the needs of a population that has grown from about five thousand in 1849 to two and a half millions today; the adaptation of government, in changing times, to serve better the needs of the state and its people; the creation of a great system of highways; the creation and development of a great structure of popular education, designed in its main outlines by the pioneers themselves, but expanded and perfected with the passing decades under the leadership of such men as Dr. Folwell, Dr. Northrop, and their successors; the development of a culture that has met some of its needs and expressed some of its power in such institutions as a great symphony orchestra, a college choir that is known in Europe and throughout America, a number of distinguished art galleries, and an efficient system of public libraries. With all this and more as part of the Minnesota that has grown from pioneer beginnings, it is only natural that the state should have had its interpreters — a Dr. Folwell in history, a Jacob Fjelde in sculpture, a Melius Christiansen in music, a Maria Sanford in education, an Oscar Firkins in literature and criticism, an Arthur Upson in poetry, and not a few writers of fiction. Nor should we forget on such a day such distinguished sons of Minnesota as the young man from Little Falls who sailed the "Spirit of St. Louis" from New York to Paris; the two surgeons at Rochester, who with their pioneer father have made that Minnesota city a world center in medicine; captains of enterprise such as James J. Hill, builder of a railroad empire; devoted church-

men such as Archbishop Ireland and Bishop Whipple; and the roll of Minnesotans, including Knute Nelson, Cushman K. Davis, John Lind, John A. Johnson, and a score of others, who have served Minnesota and the nation well in the fields of politics and statesmanship. But, as the nations of the world have honored their "unknown soldiers" in the war, so let us also honor the unknown maker of Minnesota, the toiling farmer, the pioneer mother, the worker on railroad and in factory, the teacher in the country school, the craftsman, the doctor who has served his community, the lawyer who has devoted his training and ability to the furtherance of justice—all those, who though their names are not singled out, yet have helped to build Minnesota, no matter how humble their part has been. There are no monuments to the unknown citizens save the very commonwealth itself.

It is with thoughts such as these that, as Governor of Minnesota, I have proclaimed this year Minnesota's "Diamond Jubilee Year." I ask the citizens of Minnesota to take stock of what Minnesota has been and is—not in a boastful spirit, not with any closing of the eyes to the shadows in the picture, not with any less concern for the difficult problems that confront us today, but with a sense of honoring our pioneer mothers and fathers for what they did, with a sense of appreciating our debt to the past, and with a sense that this Minnesota of ours is a trust to be passed on to our children and our children's children, not impaired but improved and further developed to the coming generations.

FLOYD B. OLSON



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