

MINNESOTA STATEHOOD EDITORIALS

Today Minnesotans often hear by radio about events in the nation's Capital while they are taking place. In 1858, however, it took from a day and a half to two days for the people living on the upper Mississippi to learn that Minnesota had been admitted to the Union. On May 11, 1858, the bill for the admission of Minnesota was passed by Congress; two days later, on the morning of May 13, an extra issued by the *Pioneer and Democrat* and a handbill printed in the office of the *Minnesotian* announced to the people of St. Paul that their city had become a state capital. The news was sent from Washington by telegram as far as Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin; from there it was taken to the Minnesota communities by a steamboat slowly creeping up the Mississippi. Winona heard a "rumor of admission" on the evening of May 12, when the "Milwaukee" stopped there; the following morning the same boat brought the news to St. Paul.

During the weeks that followed the story of Minnesota's admission appeared in most of the newspapers published in the new state. A few, perhaps because of indignation over Congress' long delay in adding Minnesota to the list of states, ignored the news of admission; others gave it merely the briefest of formal notices; but the majority published enthusiastic reports and predicted great things for Minnesota as a member of the sisterhood of states. In many of these early newspapers the hopes and fears, the plans and dreams of the pioneers who founded the commonwealth are expressed by frontier editors. With characteristic frontier optimism and exuberance, these pioneers, who were still suffering from the effects of the panic of 1857, expressed the belief that statehood would bring better times. They hoped that it would attract immigrants and stimulate

an "influx of capital and population"; and they foresaw a prosperous future for the new state.

From the newspapers preserved by the Minnesota Historical Society, the statehood editorials published herewith have been selected. With them is reprinted a "Declaration of Independence" of the state that appeared in a Red Wing paper on April 30 as a protest against further delay in admitting Minnesota. The "Glorious News" announced by the *Pioneer* on May 13 is taken from its regular edition of May 14, since, so far as is known, no copy of the extra of the previous day has been preserved. It will be noted that the earliest paper in the society's collection to include the news of admission is the *Falls Evening News* of St. Anthony and Minneapolis, which reprinted the story from the *Pioneer* extra on May 13—the very day that it appeared.

BERTHA L. HEILBRON

MINNESOTA HISTORICAL SOCIETY
ST. PAUL

[*Red Wing Republican*, April 30, 1858]

DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and nature's God entitle them, a decent respect for the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; that, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute

new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established, should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations are practiced upon a too patient people, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has become the necessity of the people of Minnesota, which constrains them to alter their former system of government.

The history of the present Congress of the United States is a history of repeated insults and injuries towards our people, indicating a disposition to confuse and harass them as long as they will quietly submit. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:

It has treated with contempt every petition of our people for the admission of our State into the Union.

It has turned a deaf ear to every attempt made to bring our case into consideration.

It has refused to recognize our Representatives, and admit them to their positions, though their appearance before Congress was in answer to an express order from that body.¹

It has rudely thrust in our way that monster Lecompton, upon every occasion when reference has been made to our grievances.²

It has extended its protecting care over the people of Kansas, and devoted the resources of the government to the "maintenance of peace and good order" within her borders, to the total neglect of Minnesota.

In spite of our emphatic protest, it has kept among us swarms of Federal officers, to harass our people, and to eat out their substance.

¹Two senators and three representatives from Minnesota had been in Washington since the opening of the session in December, 1857. William W. Folwell, *A History of Minnesota*, 2: 12 (St. Paul, 1924).

²The attempt to admit Kansas with the proslavery "Lecompton constitution" was the chief cause of delay in obtaining the admission of Minnesota. It was the passage of the English Compromise that cleared the way for the admission of the northern state. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 10, 15.

It has obstructed the administration of Justice, by retaining in our midst a Judiciary as ignorant of the principles of justice as they are impotent in its administration.

It has interfered with and usurped a dictation in our domestic affairs:—

By declaring the Constitution under which we have organized our State Government, anti-Republican in form;

By denying our Legislators the right to hold a life lease upon the positions they now occupy;

By refusing us the privilege of sending as many Representatives to the National Capital as we desire;*

By disputing the legality of our proceedings and the propriety of our conduct.

A body whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a tyrant, is unfit to dictate to a free and intelligent people. We, therefore, the people of this commonwealth, *enmasse* do declare that Minnesota is, and of right ought to be, a FREE and INDEPENDENT STATE; that she is absolved from all allegiance to the United States of America, and that all political connection between her and the Government of the American States is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that, as a free and independent State, she has the power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and do all other acts and things which an independent State of right may do. And for the support of this declaration we mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor; provided we find it will pay.

[*Falls Evening News* (St. Anthony and Minneapolis), May 11, 1858]

MINNESOTA ADMITTED!

To-day was set apart in the House of Representatives in Congress, for taking a vote on the admission of Minnesota. We believe that before the reader peruses this paragraph, Minnesota is a Sovereign State *in* the Union.

* Whether Minnesota was entitled to one, two, or three representatives was a question for debate in the Senate for the greater part of four days late in March. When Minnesota was finally admitted, the state was allowed only two representatives, and the three men elected "cast lots to eliminate the odd man." Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 13, 18.

[*Falls Evening News*, May 13, 1858]

GLORIOUS NEWS!
MINNESOTA ADMITTED!!!

The following Telegram from the *Pioneer Extra* announces the fact that MINNESOTA HAS AT LAST BEEN ADMITTED INTO THE UNION!! The vote is not given, but the presumption is that the vote is similar to that on the rejection of Mr. [John] SHERMAN's proposition — 141 for to 51 against.⁴

The Despatch was brought up by the Milwaukee, which arrived at half past six o'clock this morning.

WASHINGTON, May 11, 1858.

HOUSE.—Mr. Smith of Virginia asked leave to report a bill to organize the Territory of Nevada.

Mr. Clemens of Virginia, objected.

Senate Bill for the admission of Minnesota, was then taken up; the house voted on the substitute proposed by Mr. Sherman of Ohio, requiring as a fundamental condition, precedent to the admission of Minnesota, the alteration of its constitution by a new convention, to make it conform to the constitution and laws of the U. S. It was rejected 51, against 141.

The bill was then passed in the precise form which it came from the Senate.⁵

[*Red Wing Republican*, May 14, 1858]

MINNESOTA ADMITTED

The uncertainty and suspense of the past few weeks is at length dispelled. Minnesota is admitted. The news was brought us on yesterday's boat, and proceeds from an authentic source. We must await the slower process of the mails for the particulars, but in the mean time we can settle down under the conviction that Minnesota is one of the United States.

⁴ On May 4 Representative John Sherman of Ohio offered a substitute for the Minnesota bill providing that the constitution framed in 1857 be submitted to a new convention. *Congressional Globe*, 35 Congress, 1 session, 1947; Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 16.

⁵ The full text of the message, which gives a résumé of the proceedings in Congress on May 11, appears under the heading "Congressional" in the *Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul) for May 14. An announcement identical to that in the *News* appears in the *Minnesota Republican* of St. Anthony and Minneapolis for May 14.

[*Saint Paul Daily Minnesotian*, May 14, 1858]

NO MISTAKE THIS TIME—MINNESOTA SURELY ADMITTED!

Under our latest news head, we give the proceedings in Congress on the 11th inst., obtained from the Dubuque *Express and Herald*, brought by the Grey Eagle yesterday afternoon.

They confirm the news previously brought at 6 o'clock, A.M., by the Steamer Milwaukee, that Minnesota was on Tuesday last formally admitted into the Federal Union by a vote of 157 to 38!

This makes us the 32d State of the Confederacy.

Let everybody rejoice with exceeding great joy; and then prepare for the highly beneficial consequences which it is presumed will flow from the passage of the long-looked for, but continually deferred act of admission!

HOW THE NEWS WAS ANNOUNCED

The news of the admission of Minnesota into the Union spread throughout the city yesterday morning with the celerity that fire runs over a dry prairie in a gale of wind. — The *Pioneer* issued an extra, which it scattered through town, and the *Minnesotian Office* a large sheet handbill, in which was displayed in six inch letters "MINNESOTA IS ADMITTED INTO THE UNION!" Everybody seemed satisfied, that we were at last out of that "*snarl*," and everybody said to everybody, as each drew a long breath, "Well! what next? Good times, eh?"

THE STATE OF MINNESOTA!

We are a *State* of the Union. No longer "outside barbarians," we are within the Chinese wall of the confederacy, and have donned our freedom suit. There are some patches needed over some of the rents, and resewing of some of the seams, in our gaberdine called the State Constitution — perhaps an entire new garment will be ere long required; but we are rejoiced that we occupy the position henceforth, in which we can wear what clothes we please, much or little, gay or grave, and Uncle Samuel has no business to interfere, especially as we pay, or promise to pay, for them ourselves!

It is a great responsibility we have assumed before the nations: the attitude in which we have placed ourselves as one of the Empires of the World! It is a rather unpropitious moment also, for 150,000 people to take upon themselves so onerous a business; but, there

is no escaping the consequences of our own act, and we must address our minds firmly and determinedly to fill our destiny in an honorable manner, and pay our way like honest folks whatever may betide.⁶

In May, 1849, the writer of this first saw Minnesota.⁷ What changes a few years have brought about! Then it was a wilderness with 2500 inhabitants. It is not necessary to tell what we are at this day, in May, 1858! Look around—every man can see the immense contrast for himself. Nations are not quite made in a day—but rest assured, eight or nine years is about the nearest approach to it we will ever see in our generation.

Hail therefore, to the State of Minnesota! We predict that the next nine years will see her with probably half a million of people dwelling happily upon her smiling plains; and with a ten-fold greater advance in wealth, manufactures, agriculture, the mechanic arts, and in all the other elements which contribute to mental, material, and national greatness! So may it be.

[*Daily Pioneer and Democrat* (St. Paul), May 14, 1858]

GLORIOUS NEWS!

From our Extra of Yesterday Morning.

MINNESOTA ADMITTED!!

Telegraphed to Prairie du Chien expressly for the *Pioneer and Democrat*.

The following Telegraphic Despatch announces the fact that MINNESOTA HAS AT LAST BEEN ADMITTED INTO THE UNION!! The vote is not given, but the presumption is that the vote was similar to that on the rejection of Mr. SHERMAN's proposition—141 for to 51 against.

By a later dispatch we learn that the vote stood 158 for to 38 against the admission.⁸

⁶ The census required by the Minnesota enabling act of 1857 was not completed until July, 1858; it gave the new state a total population of 150,092. The apportionment of state senators and representatives under the constitution, however, was based on a guess made in 1857 of 247,500 inhabitants. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 1, 12.

⁷ The writer probably was Dr. Thomas Foster, who with George W. Moore owned and edited the *Minnesotian* at this time. Foster came to Minnesota with Governor Ramsey as his private secretary. Daniel S. B. Johnston, "Minnesota Journalism in the Territorial Period," in *Minnesota Historical Collections*, 10: 263-265.

⁸ The vote, as given in the *Congressional Globe*, 2061, was 157 to 38. The incorrect figure in the *Pioneer* was copied by a number of papers.

The Despatch was brought up by the Milwaukee, which arrived at half past six o'clock.

GLORIOUS NEWS⁹

ADMISSION OF MINNESOTA INTO THE UNION — DEFEAT OF THE ST. PAUL TRAITORS

Early yesterday morning, we received a telegraphic despatch from Washington, conveying the gratifying intelligence that the bill for the admission of Minnesota had passed the House, exactly as it came from the Senate.

The news, although expected, created a thrill of joy in the community never before experienced. Everybody was in a congratulatory mood.

The bill passed the House by a large majority. The opposition made their contest on the amendment of Sherman, of Ohio.

We presume the State government will be put into operation, as soon as official intelligence has been received that the President has signed the bill.

[*Chatfield Democrat*, May 15, 1858]

ALL HAIL!!!

MINNESOTA ADMITTED AS A STATE!!

We have barely time to announce to our readers the admission of Minnesota by Congress into the Union. The bill passed the House on the 11th inst., precisely in the shape in which it was carried through the Senate, and has now but to receive the signature of the President, which will be given as soon as presented, and Minnesota then is one of the States of this great, growing, prosperous and happy Republic—having and enjoying the privileges now belonging to the original States of the Federal Union. The news reaching us is by despatch.

[*St. Paul Financial, Real Estate and Railroad Advertiser*, May 15, 1858]

EFFECT OF OUR ADMISSION

Our admission into the Union will give us a palpable government. For the past six months we have been subsisting on prospects, which

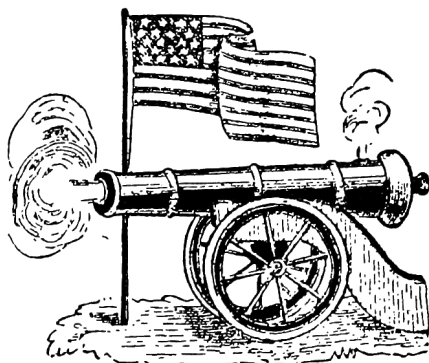
⁹ This item appears in the editorial column on the second page; the material above appears with large headlines on the first page.

experience has proved to be a bad substitute for pork. We have been doing business under a fictitious name. We have been obtaining consideration on false pretences. Our local administration has been of the epicene gender, a thing without a name—a pure abstraction of legal convenience. Our government, when we have had a government, has been simply provisional—a hermaphrodite conjunction of State and Territory;—the Legislative department of the one,—co-operating by a strange incongruity with the executive and judiciary of the other, to support the pretence of a body politic.

Our admission will give us a positive political existence,—wake us up from our active-passive state of political somnambulism and give authority to our officers, and validity to our laws. We presume that the anomalous legislation of the last session will all have to be “done over” at the June session.¹⁰ . . .

The *prestige* of permanency and stability which attaches to the idea of a State Government, has invariably in the case of other new States—stimulated the influx of capital and population. An absurd idea prevails that emigration has a tendency to avoid States and seek Territories; that the political maturity which a State Government suggests, suggests also a general appropriation of the best lands, and a preoccupation of the avenues of competition. But the statistics of the growth of the new States, after they had passed from their Territorial condition, prove the falsity of this idea, and show that the prospect of schools and of the comforts and conveniences which are afforded by the vicinity of considerable settlements, is a much more effective argument with the intelligent emigrant, than the prospect of isolation and self-exile in a wilderness, years in advance of population.

¹⁰ A survey of the activities of the “ambiguous Minnesota legislature” which met on December 2, 1857, and adjourned on March 25, 1858, is presented in Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 21.

[*Times* (Winona), May 15, 1858]**BRING OUT THE BIG GUN****GLORIOUS NEWS!!****MINNESOTA A STATE!!!****100 GUNS FIRED AT WINONA:****GENERAL REJOICING,**

The Hon. H. M. RICE promptly despatched to our address a Telegraphic communication of the news of our admission, through the Wisconsin State Telegraph Company. The despatch is dated Washington, May 12th, and it reached us, via Prairie du Chien, early on the morning of the 13th!

A rumor of the admission, reached Winona by the Milwaukee, on Wednesday evening, and the enthusiasm of our citizens rose to the culminating point.

Finn's artillery was immediately ordered out, and ONE HUNDRED GUNS fired in honor of the event; while the Band performed all the stirring National "melodies of many lands," besides our own. The prospects of the infant State are flattering in the highest degree.

The fact of our admission and the energetic work soon to be inaugurated on the line of the Transit Railroad are inducements of the most weighty character, and will draw to our borders, thou-

sands of people, who would otherwise not have turned their thoughts to Minnesota for a long time to come.¹¹

The Senate bill for the admission of Minnesota was taken up on the 11th.

The House voted on the substitute proposed by Mr. Sherman of Ohio, requiring as a fundamental condition precedent to the admission of Minnesota by the alteration of its constitution by a new constitution, to make it conform to the Constitution and laws of the United States, and it was rejected — 5 against 14. The bill was then passed in the precise form in which it came from the Senate, by 157 against 38, and received the President's signature on the 12th.

[*Chatfield Republican*, May 19, 1858]

ADMITTED AT LAST

Late papers from Washington confirm the previous intelligence of the passage through the House of the Senate bill making Minnesota a sovereign State. The vote in the House on the final passage of the bill was 158 for, to 38 against; Some of the latter it is said being influenced to vote *nay*, by a private letter sent to them by a Quixotic gentleman residing in St. Paul, who represented that it was the wish of the people of Minnesota not to come into the Union.¹² We think leather medals should be distributed both to the man who wrote and to the representatives who acted upon his statement, let them belong to whatever party they may. The idea of the people of Minnesota not desiring to come into the Union! Isn't it rich? To give up the chance of "coming out" on our own hook, in our

¹¹ The Transit Railroad Company was incorporated on March 3, 1855; under the Minnesota railroad act of 1857 it was authorized to build a road from Winona westward to St. Peter and the Big Sioux River. This was one of the roads involved in the "Five Million Loan Bill" of 1858. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 42, 45.

¹² The reference is to a "Secret Circular" prepared by Lorenzo A. Babcock, a prominent Minnesota Republican, and forwarded to Washington for distribution among the Republican members of the House. His letter contains the statement that "there is not a Republican in Minnesota now that wants to be admitted under our present Constitution, (and I will show hereafter that a majority of the Democrats are not in favor of the Constitution as it is.)" A copy of the circular, which was meant "to delay and defeat our admission as a State," appears in the *Pioneer and Democrat* for May 9, 1858. Dr. Folwell points out a connection between Babcock's circular and Sherman's substitute for the Minnesota bill. *Minnesota*, 2: 17.

own clothes, and being on equal terms with all the States and the rest of mankind, for a few reluctantly granted mail routes, and still more reluctantly granted appropriations, was not exactly—oh private letter writer, and ye valorous 38—our aspiration. But we are in now, and full is the measure of our content.

[*Faribault Herald*, May 19, 1858]

MINNESOTA A STATE

We are finally admitted—tardy justice has been received. The many embarrassments under which we labored as a body politic, have been removed. The mist which enveloped the entire machinery of our State government has passed away.—The acts of our legislature will now be received with confidence by the people, the judiciary, and by capitalists at home and abroad. Tuesday May 11th, the house concurred in the senate bill for the admission of Minnesota by a vote of 158 to 38.

The admission of a free state into this confederacy is an event to be hailed with joy and when such a degree of unanimity prevails as marks our admission, we cannot believe that we shall falter in our strides towards strength and greatness. Minnesota the thirty-second state, Kansas and Oregon upon the threshold. Arizonia, Nebraska and Dakotah about to be organized; the state of Superior projected;¹⁸ the immediate disintegration of Mexico probable; the abandonment of the immense regions north of us by the British fur company, as an unprofitable investment, already a fixed fact, and the Canada's already a burden to the mother country; the visionary idea of a North American Republic may yet be realized. It would be a fit closing up of the work which the nineteenth century has already wrought. In the mean time let the friends of freedom be on the alert, let each accretion make room alone for freemen.—Deny admittance to none who seek our embrace, if they acknowledge the equality of man, and posterity will have reason to honor us as we now honor our fathers.

¹⁸ The "state of Superior" was suggested much earlier, in 1846, when the Wisconsin constitutional convention was discussing the boundaries of the proposed state. Settlers from the western part of Wisconsin Territory, which extended to the Mississippi River, proposed that the valleys of the St. Croix, the Chippewa, and the upper Mississippi be organized as a "new state to be called Superior." William Anderson and Albert J. Lobb, *A History of the Constitution of Minnesota*, 17-19, (Minneapolis, 1921).

[*Henderson Democrat*, May 19, 1858]

ALL HAIL, MINNESOTA!

LET THE CANNON ROAR!

The question is finally settled, and Minnesota, in all her queenly pride, is now a member of the fair sisterhood of American commonwealths.

Another bright star has been added to the glorious "red, white and blue," the brilliancy of which, we trust, will never be dimmed by the madness, or folly, or political blindness, of her own citizens. Minnesota is no longer an apprentice, has passed through the degree of fellow craft, and now occupies the proud position of master mason. All hail to the youthful Hercules of the north-west! may she ever be found true to the Union and constitution—faithful to the principles of exact justice and well regulated liberty. The antecedents of our young state give promise of a noble and heroic future.

There is no western state that has better prospects than Minnesota. With fertile soil, a healthy climate, abundance of timber, noble rivers, a hardy, patriotic, industrious population, who, should a foreign foe ever desecrate American soil with their presence, would "crowd the way to death as to a festival," she can secure complete success at home, and respect from the other members of the confederacy. The admission of Minnesota will add to the durability and cohesive power of the American Union—a "plural unit"—destined, we trust, to exist, in its original beauty and simplicity, until the "latest syllable of recorded time."

[*Rochester Free Press*, May 19, 1858]

MINNESOTA ADMITTED

The long agony is over and Minnesota is now a sovereign State of this confederacy. The Bill passed the House on Tuesday of last week by a very large majority, in the precise form it passed the Senate—and consequently allows us two Representatives. We are exceedingly obliged to the Democracy for having admitted us at all, and, taking into consideration, the extreme reluctance they have manifested this session of Congress to do any thing for the benefit of the free States, we ought, we presume, to esteem their condescension an act of extreme and unexpected generosity.

[*Minnesota Free Press* (St. Peter), May 19, 1858]

MINNESOTA ADMITTED

At long and last, after having been kept dancing attendance upon the pleasure of the South, we are very graciously permitted to come into the Union. For ourself, we don't feel very highly flattered, especially when we think of how it has been done. Our citizens generally appear to be of the same mind as not the slightest sign of enthusiasm was perceptible.

[*Winona Republican*, May 19, 1858]

MINNESOTA A SOVEREIGN STATE

That which every Minnesotian, (Mr. L. A. BABCOCK, of "secret circular" fame alone excepted,) has been most devoutly praying for ever since last December is at length fulfilled. MINNESOTA is now an independent member of the Federal Union—equal in power and influence in the Senate—equal in character and ambition—equal in her physical resources and the intelligence of her citizens, with any of her sister States.—That dependence upon the will of other States—that series of beggings and petitionings for Federal support, to which the *Territory* of Minnesota was for nine years subjected—is all done away with, and the young STATE enters upon her new career hopefully, bravely, and with an apparently glorious future in store.

But this freedom and independence so long aspired after, come not unattended with heavy responsibilities. As a Territory, Minnesota stood before the world in perhaps a fairer light than any that preceded her.—As a State, she has yet a position to achieve, worthy of her Territorial history and fame. She has a character for ability, honesty, and integrity, in her State capacity, to establish. Her credit is to be tried by the exacting money-lenders of the nation and of the world, and she must come forth from the ordeal with untarnished honor. Education, Science, General Intelligence, Virtue, Liberty—all fondly cherished in the hearts of the people already—have to be built as it were upon new and stronger foundations, that with the coming years they may acquire a firmness and a solidity not to be overthrown in the most severe struggle with Error, Ignorance, or Fanaticism. Her waste places are to be inhabited and cultivated—

her works of internal improvements are to be constructed—her trade and commerce are to be extended—all without assistance from any one, and even in the face of an opposition which from her first existence as an organized Territory she has been destined to encounter.

But that she will be fully equal to the contest, and that she will establish and maintain for herself a name and character unexcelled among her sister States, we have the most abiding faith. It does not require the gift of prophecy to foretell for Minnesota the high destiny which she is to achieve in the not very distant future.

The prestige of greatness and success is hers, and it is not within the ability of friend or foe to wrest it from her.

[*Rochester Democrat*, May 20, 1858]

MINNESOTA A STATE

Minnesota was admitted into the Union on Tuesday, the 11th prox. We are glad of it. We should have been admitted four months ago, and would have been had it not been for some of the leading Black Republicans of Minnesota, and the nigger-driving slave propagandists of the South.

TO THE POINT

Just now, when a few babblers are prating about the Democracy keeping Minnesota out of the Union, and denying that the Black Republicans conspired with the South to prevent our admission, the following article from the *St. Paul Times*, the *organ* of the Republican party in Minnesota, is very pertinent.¹⁴ We commend it to the Blacks hereabout:

NO EXCITEMENT

There was no particular excitement on the announcement of the news that Minnesota had been admitted into the Union. A yellow blanket flaunted from the windows of a Press whose conductors had sought to keep us out of the Union, but with this exception our citizens were sensible enough to keep quiet. We see no occasion for any rejoicing. Had it not been for the Slave power, aided by certain REPUBLICANS of Minnesota, we should have been admitted a

¹⁴ Since the Minnesota Historical Society does not have a file of the *Times*, its reaction to the admission of the state is here quoted from another paper.

long time ago.¹⁵ As it is let us put our State machinery in order as soon as possible, and give a care to our finances instead of getting *drunk* over an act which by right ought to have been performed a month ago.

[*Mantorville Express*, May 22, 1858]

THE STATE OF MINNESOTA

The long delayed act of the admission of Minnesota into the Union, is at last accomplished. The Bill passed the House on Tuesday of last week, by a vote of 157 to 38, in the precise form in which it came from the Senate. As our readers will recollect it allows us two representatives in the House.

We do not feel disposed to make any low bows of acknowledgement, or warm expressions of gratitude to Congress, for this long delayed concession of our rights, and would not have the people of Minnesota forget, immediately, the indignity to which they have been subjected, by the administration party. Neither are we at all exhilarated by the idea, that the freedom loving people of Minnesota, are to be misrepresented by a majority of pliant doughfaces, who are willing to be made the tools of a slave holding oligarchy. But we console ourselves with the reflection that the sovereign people will hereafter set that matter right, and visit upon those traitors to principle and liberty the deserved penalty.

It is a matter for sincere rejoicing, that we are at last free from the perplexing and somewhat ridiculous situation, into which we had been drawn by our blundering Constitution makers, and are really vested with the sovereign rights of a State. Our growth has been so rapid that our Territorial habiliments were entirely unfitted to our needs. The machinery of a Territorial Government was inadequate to meet the wants and demands of the population. The destiny of Minnesota is now in the hands of her own people. May it ever be onward and upward! May she ever be found among the foremost in moral and political reform, as well as in physical wealth and happiness!

¹⁵ The "certain REPUBLICANS" are, of course, Babcock and his backers. The press referred to probably is that of the *Minnesotian*, whose editor, Dr. Foster, is supposed to have had a hand in the preparation of the "Secret Circular." *Pioneer and Democrat*, May 9, 1858.

[*Minnesota Posten* (Red Wing), May 25, 1858]¹⁶

"THE STATE OF MINNESOTA"

we are now called. We are now the thirty-second of the United States with the same privileges as the others. On the eleventh of this month Minnesota was taken into the Union by a vote of 157 to 38. Our swaddling clothes are now discarded never to be used again; we have donned the coat of state and if it does not fit us in every particular, at any rate we have the satisfaction of knowing that we can make a new and better one when this is worn out. The first coat usually does not last long; and our coat of state, as if for a fitting, was altered a little even before it was put on for the first time.¹⁷ Consequently, whatever is wrong in the constitution can be changed in time.

Probably no state has given Uncle Sam more hidden anxiety than has Minnesota. True enough, we had to stand at his door and wait impatiently for a long time—not because Uncle Sam was unwilling to incorporate us, but because Kansas, poor Kansas, stuck in his throat like a bone. He wanted to swallow that morsel, but it tore his throat; it caught in his windpipe; he coughed it up, chewed it better, and finally swallowed it, although he has convulsions of the stomach from it. After that bite, Kansas, was out of the way, Minnesota was downed with a crocodile's gulp, so easily and so without opposition from the administration that it seemed as if it had been the greatest delicacy for Buchanan. And who can wonder at that? Our entire representation, with but one exception, is on the side of Buchanan, the slave king. One wonders if he knows every hireling who is ready to let himself be used for any kind of vicious and low deed. It was, therefore, a great advantage to the present administration to admit Minnesota into the Union. But we trust that Buchanan and the slavocracy will get less help from Minnesota in the fall of 1860 than they are planing upon. We shall see.

Meanwhile we are and ought to be glad that Minnesota at last is admitted. Though taxes will be heavier under a state govern-

¹⁶ Translated from the original Swedish by Arthur J. Larsen.

¹⁷ Before Minnesota could be admitted, in March, 1858, the legislature provided for the amendment of the constitution in order to "authorize the loan of the credit of the state to certain railroad companies." See Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2: 22. A reference to the loan is made in the last paragraph of this editorial.

ment, there are advantages in becoming an independent state with our own legislature. We can thus govern ourselves. The character of the government we established will hinge upon how we vote at the election. If we elect good men to the state offices and the legislature, we can hope for a good administration. But if we support anybody unreflectingly, then we can prepare ourselves for the "Fall of Jerusalem."

News of Minnesota's admission caused little or no joy or sorrow; here in our own good city we didn't hear a single hurrah! and when no one else hurrahed, neither did we.

But we have thus earnestly waited for the admission because we looked forward to better times. We do not believe that any rapid change in conditions will be discerned, but that little by little conditions will improve. That more money will be available in the summer and fall is not to be doubted. The state loan that was decided upon can now be considered, and if the loan advocates have been right, we naturally should have better times. The safest thing, however, is not to set one's hopes too high; it is disappointing when the bow breaks with the bird on the wing.

[*Glencoe Register*, May 29, 1858]

THE STATE OF MINNESOTA ADMITTED

After a delay of more than four months since the Minnesota constitution was presented to Congress, that very august body has seen fit to admit her as a member of the confederate Union.¹⁸

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In the Senate, on the 12th, Mr. [Robert] Toombs presented the credentials of Hon. Henry M. Rice, and Mr. [John J.] Crittenden those of Gen. James Shields, Senators elect from the State of Minnesota. The oath of office was administered to both Senators, and they immediately assumed their seats as members of that body.

On the presentation of the credentials of Mr. Rice, Mr. [James] Harlan, rep., of Iowa, laid before the Senate charges accusing him of fraudulent conduct, as a government agent, in disposing of public

¹⁸ A copy of the Minnesota constitution was delivered to the president by Henry M. Rice on January 6 and was presented to the Senate on January 11. Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:9.

lands.¹⁹ After taking the oath of office, Mr. Rice promptly replied to Mr. Harlan and referred him to the records of the War Department for evidence that the charges were false. Mr. Rice also submitted a resolution, which was adopted, that a committee be appointed to investigate the charges preferred against him.

This is perfectly characteristic of the man. Mr. Rice has reflected honor upon himself in thus boldly meeting these charges, and, we doubt not, will come out unimpeached, in spite of all the combined cliques and intreagues [*sic*] of jealous political opponents.

In the drawing of lots designating the term of office, Gen. Shields drew the short term, expiring in 1859, and Mr. Rice the long term, expiring in 1863. This is as it should be, and will receive a hearty "glad of it" from a vast majority of the citizens of the new State of Minnesota.

We hear that Messrs. [William W.] Phelps and [James M.] Cavanaugh were admitted to seats in the House, on Monday last, by a majority of ten. The Republicans and South Americans voted against Minnesota being represented in the House of Representatives until another session of Congress.²⁰ Had they succeeded, the citizens of Minnesota would have been put to the trouble and expense of another election.

All Hail! State of Minnesota!

¹⁹ The alleged frauds were connected with the sale of lands to the settlers on the Fort Crawford reservation. *Congressional Globe*, 2075, 2079.

²⁰ The Minnesota representatives were admitted to seats in the House on May 22, a Saturday, by a vote of 135 to 63. The division on party lines mentioned in the *Register* probably took place on May 13, when a vote was taken on a motion to refer the credentials of the Minnesotans to the committee on elections. The Republicans hoped that the Democratic representatives from Minnesota might be rejected and a new election ordered. *Congressional Globe*, 2110, 2315; Folwell, *Minnesota*, 2:18.



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