

Memoir of Thomas Pendleton Burnett

By Alfred Brunson

At the request of the Historical Society of the State, I have compiled the following pages, mostly from the papers and correspondence left by Mr. Burnett. Being his father-in-law, I shall be readily excused from eulogising him. I have avoided the selection of such passages in his correspondence, as might be calculated to give offence to the living, or the friends of the dead; except, perhaps, in a few instances, where it seemed necessary to do justice to the subject. I have omitted names where the subject matter might be offensive, if I could do so without marring the interest of the history.

The writing has been done in detached portions of time, snatched from other vocations, and in connection with the examination of some fifteen hundred letters and papers, to ascertain which and what had reference to the subject in hand, and of course is not as perfect in composition as it might be, not having had time to copy. But among the most sensible of readers, a simple unvarnished statement of facts is of more interest, than highly-colored, wire-drawn details of matters uninteresting in themselves.

Some matters herein set forth may be of little interest to a certain class of readers, while they will prove very much so to others. In a work of this kind, variety is necessary to suit all kinds of taste. The historian of Wisconsin and the lawyer, will find some things of interest to them; and, it is hoped, that the citizen, the student, the politician, and especially the friends of the deceased, will be gratified with the perusal of the whole.

Thomas Pendleton Burnett, son of John and Judith Burnett, was born in Pittsylvania county, Virginia, on the third day of September, A. D. 1800. Of his parentage and family I have but little knowledge. From his name and place of nativity, we nat-