

The Progress, Conditions, and Prospects of Wisconsin

By Tom O. Edwards

If coming events cast their shadow before, Wisconsin must needs become the "Empire State." The youngest now of the five giant offsprings of the immortal Ordinance of 1787, she is yet in swaddling clothes—whilst Ohio, the oldest, is now fairly decking herself in the "Toga virilis." Wisconsin, altho' the youngest of the "five," has given evidence, by her vigorous growth, her sinewy, nervous frame, and her feats of infantile prowess, of what may be expected of her adult age.

As her growth in the past has not depended upon a miracle, so her future development will result from natural causes. Other States have grown because they contained natural elements of activity and wealth. These elements exist in Wisconsin to a degree not found in any other State west or east. We have arrived at this conclusion after looking over the whole course of past increase in population and wealth in this and other States, and fearing the criticism of this opinion may be the too common expression of "humbug," or be traced to that boastful spirit which abounds in vague generalities that prove nothing and satisfy but few, we append reasons for this opinion, and challenge the severest scrutiny. Geographical position is a most important element of growth and prosperity. Wisconsin is located between 42° and 47° 50' of north latitude. This is the northern temperate region, and is the one in which man has exhibited most energy and devel-