

Northwest—archæology, Indian manners, wars, customs, language, Indian nomenclature, and Indian trade; early French exploration, settlement, growth of the country, progress of education, and pioneer biography.

Not a little yet remains, in the way of details, to be developed, and wrought into historical narrative. Many doubts and difficulties have been explained in the course of these thirty odd years' discussions, so that it will be easier hereafter to investigate the sources, subjects, and details of our early history. The more modern era of settlement and expansion has yet to be grappled with and elucidated; but the gathering of the Lawe, Porlier, Boyd, Martin, and other papers will much facilitate the labor. The important part Wisconsin played in our Civil War is yet to be told, and considerable material has been gathered for this purpose.

Commencing this labor for the Society thirty odd years ago, with no pecuniary resources whatever, with only some fifty volumes, of which all but two were Wisconsin publications, and now exhibiting some one hundred and eighteen thousand books, newspaper files and pamphlets—a collection unequalled west of the Alleghanies—with a gallery of portraits, and a rare collection of prehistoric and other curiosities, with the Library performing a splendid work in behalf of our literary investigators, is a consummation most gratifying to the people of Wisconsin.

Devoutly trusting that the future may have great prosperity in store for the Society, and that my successor, Reuben G. Thwaites, may find his hands strengthened, and his heart encouraged, in the great work upon which he has entered with so much spirit and enthusiasm, I retire from the Society's service with grateful thanks for the unflagging confidence and encouragement I so constantly received from my associates, and the people of Wisconsin.

LYMAN C. DRAPER