

feature of the perfected instrument, but helped mold all portions alike. F. S. Lovell, of Kenosha, was another man with a broad, general mind, without a specialty but overflowing with good sense and apt suggestion. Of course there were many others whom I might mention with justice, but Dunn, Whiton and Lovell are those who stand out most prominently in my memory as the leading general workers in the body.¹

There were many men in the convention who appeared to have an eye to their political hereafter and were continually looking after their fences. But as a whole it was a sensible body. There were no serious mistakes. The constitution evolved was, I thought, about what the best class of our people desired it to be. Of course the debates were not without some extreme talk. There were some members whom I thought to be quite visionary on the women's rights question,—not as to the suffrage of women, but as to their exemptions and property holding. There was a wide difference of opinion in the convention, on these topics, but the majority thought it best to leave the people, represented in legislature, to determine the matter. The members of the first constitutional convention made their gravest mistake in determining and fixing exemptions; and the popular discontent with their work was largely on this score. The second convention started in to avoid the rocks upon which the instrument of the first had been wrecked. Several mooted questions were thus left to the people for subsequent legislative decision,—banks, for instance. The object of the second convention was to draft a constitution that would be popular, and this could only be done by allowing the people to fight over such questions of policy among themselves.

The first movement by the general government towards the improvement of the Fox-Wisconsin river highway,—with a view to making a continuous line of navigation from

¹ Brief biographical sketches of the members of both constitutional conventions may be found in Tenney and Atwood's *Fathers of Wisconsin* (Madison, 1880), a useful publication.— Ed.