

George W. Brownell of St. Croix occupied the same position in this convention that Mr. Holcomb had in the previous body. On the 7th of January he introduced an amendment which was essentially the same as that for which his predecessor originally fought—a straight line from the headwaters of the Montreal to a point in the Mississippi “a half degree due north of Mountain island.” In submitting this amendment, Mr. Brownell spoke at length¹ in its advocacy; he said that his proposal equitably divided the territory into two parts, according to the spirit of Mr. Douglas’s proposition in congress, and “conformed to a natural geographical division;” that the people of the proposed new state along Lake Superior were severed from the settled portions of Wisconsin by “a wide, uninteresting and unsettled region of country of some one hundred and fifty miles, which forms a reasonable barrier to a connection;” the settlements on the Black and Chippewa rivers and on Lake Superior, he said, were without any civil officers; they were distant and neglected. Finally, as a clincher, he represented that the region he spoke for was a low and flat country, of no particular use to Wisconsin; it was “characterized for its pine barrens, lakes, tamarack swamps and marshes;” and “would not pay the expense of surveying, for ages to come”—all of which reads strangely at this day, with an interval of barely forty years, to one acquainted with the development and possibilities of the marvelously rich agricultural, manufacturing, lumbering and mining regions of northern Wisconsin. Mr. Brownell said the people of that country had different pursuits, interests and feelings from the body of Wisconsin settlers, and their progress would be “greatly hampered by being connected politically with a country from which they are separated by nature—cut off from communication by immense spaces of wilderness between;” this was before the day of railroad facilities, which easily conquer such “spaces of wilderness” and cause them to resound with the hum of industry and to “blossom as the rose.” Mr. Brownell won to his side several mem-

¹ *Jour. Wis. Const. Conv.*, 1847-48, p. 241.