

THE BELGIANS OF NORTHEAST WISCONSIN.

BY XAVIER MARTIN.¹

In 1853 ten families, mostly from the commune of Grez Doiceau, county of Wavre, Province of Brabant, Belgium—all of them owning homesteads there, with more or less land, upon which they were unable to support their families and provide a suitable education for their children,—conceived the idea of emigrating to the New World. With that object in view, they held meetings at each other's houses to discuss what part of America would most likely improve their condition and that of their children. After due consideration, and before deciding what State they would settle in, they sold out their homes in Belgium and, bidding farewell to their relatives and friends in the fatherland, departed for the United States.

They had contracted with a vessel agent from Antwerp, and the venturesome emigrants reached that seaport on May 14, remaining there several days waiting for the departure of the ship in which they had agreed to take passage, meanwhile making preparations to supply their wants during the voyage. May 18, they boarded the "Queenebec," an old three-masted sailing craft, which about noon set forth, with its 325 passengers, toward the land of promise.

The names of the heads of these ten families who formed the first Belgian settlement in the county of Brown, are as follows: François Petinot, Etienne Detienne, Martin Paque, Philip Hannon, Adrian Masy, Joseph Moreau, Jean

¹ Of Green Bay.—Ed.