

Prefatory Note

The publication of a comprehensive index of the contents of the *Wisconsin Historical Collections* has long been a desideratum to those responsible for the administration of the affairs of the State Historical Society. In 1913 the State legislature gave sanction to the project, and since that time the enterprise has been prosecuted as vigorously as circumstances permitted. The editorial work was concluded with the end of the year 1914, and but for unexpected delay on the part of the State printer the volume would have been issued from the press some months ago.

The index now published is the composite product of a number of workers. Credit for the conception of the project, and for the general plan of the index belongs to the Society's late superintendent, Reuben Gold Thwaites. A considerable portion of the actual work of indexing the earlier volumes of the series has been performed by the late Emma Helen Blair, and Ada Tyng Griswold, formerly of the Society's staff. The indexing of the remaining volumes, and the assembling and incorporating of the whole, has been done by Dr. Louise Phelps Kellogg of the Society's staff. To the preparation of the present volume, the laboriousness of which only those who are familiar with the making of indexes will be able to appreciate, she has devoted over a year of faithful toil, and the principal part of whatever credit may attach to the production of the volume belongs to her. The labor of seeing the volume through the press has fallen upon Annie A. Nunns, assistant superintendent of the Society, and Eleanore E. Lothrop, the superintendent's secretary.

The statement may safely be hazarded that the world still awaits the making of an ideal or perfect index. In the nature of the case it is possible only to approximate the ideal. That