

of his life, would doubtless be considered as unimportant by most historical writers trained in modern methods. Draper, however, considered no detail regarding his heroes as too trivial for collection and preservation. His design was to be encyclopædic; he would have his biographies embrace every scrap of attainable information, regardless of its relative merit. He has more than once confessed to me, with some sadness, that he felt himself quite lacking in the sense of proportion, could not understand what were meant by the terms "historical perspective" or "historical philosophy," and as for generalization he abhorred it. Yet his literary style was incisive, and he sometimes shone in controversy.

"I have wasted my life in puttering," he once lamented, "but I see no help for it; I can write nothing so long as I fear there is a fact, no matter how small, as yet ungarnered." A newspaper editor, fearing to put his journal to press because something else might happen when too late to insert it in that day's issue, would not be a success in his profession; an historian must also realize the fact that others will surely follow him, each one with fresh material to add to his own. Draper not only feared to go to press, but even refrained from writing up his notes, literally from an apprehension that the next mail might bring information which would necessitate a recasting of his matter. At the time of his contract with Lossing, he had completed some twenty chapters of his proposed *Life of Boone*—perhaps half of the number contemplated. It is likely that this manuscript was written before he came to Madison; it seems certain, from its present appearance, that he added to it nothing of importance during the succeeding thirty-four years. Of his other projected biographies, I cannot find that he had written more than a few scattering skeleton chapters.

On the twenty-ninth of January, 1849, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin was formed at Madison. It had at first but a sickly existence, for there was no person at its service with the technical skill necessary to the advancement of an undertaking of this character. Larrabee, Draper's old college mate, had drifted to Wisconsin, and was now a circuit judge. He was one of the