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200

Years Ago When We Were Young and Charming

FATHER HENNEPIN ROAMED

And Discovered the Spot Which Now Is Venerated

CELEBRATING A NOTABLE EVENT

Which is Older Than George Washington or the Fourth of July.

AND RIGHT ROYALLY 'TWAS DONE

By the Minnesota Historical Society and Attendant Friends.

A SCENE NEVER DREAMED OF

By the Venerable Explorer Who Traveled Two Centuries Since.

SONG AND SENTIMENT JOIN

To Commemorate What Was, and Is and Is to Be.

A GALAXY OF SPEAKERS

Addresses by Gen. Sibley, Gov. Davis, Secretary Ramsey, Gen. Sherman. Bishop Ireland, and Gen. Rosser.

The Day We Celebrated.

Louis Hennepin, a Franciscan (Recollect) missionary, was born at Ath, Belgium, about 1640, and died in Holland subsequent to 1696. After his entrance to the Franciscan order he traveled through Germany and Italy and was then for a year settled at Hal in Belgium. Then his superiors sent him to Artois, whence he visited Calais and Dunkirk and at these places acquired a taste for the sea by intercourse with sailors. It was an age of adventurous explorers by sea, and sailors were to be met at almost every port who knew more of the world than was taught in the schools where Hennepin was educated, and whose narratives of the strange lands and peoples they had seen were stranger than the most romantic of the narratives of the fathers he had read. From Artois he went to Holland, and for eight months had charge of a hospital at Maestricht. At the battle of Senef, between the Prince of Conde and William of Orange, in 1674, he was present as a regimental chaplain. The next year he was ordered to Canada, and embarked at LaRochelle with Bishop Laval and the Sieur de LaSalle, with whom he became a favorite. For some time he preached at Quebec, and then in 1676 he was sent to take charge of the Indian mission at Fort Fontenac, (commanded by La Salle,) where the city of Kingston, Canada, now stands. While there he visited the Indians of the Five Nations and the Dutch settlement at Albany. In 1678, having meantime returned to Quebec, he was attached to the expedition of La Salle, designed to find the mouth of the Mississippi and establish colonies; and on August 7, 1679, embarked on Lake Erie with La Salle, and his command, on board a vessel built for their lake voyage. They sailed over Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan, and by canoes (and portages) followed the St. Joseph's, Kankakee and Illinois rivers, and built Fort Crevecœur near the present present site of Peoria. From here, while La Salle returned to Fort Frontenac for supplies, Father Hennepin was charged with a voyage of discovery to the sources of the Mississippi, which had not then been explored above the mouth of the Wisconsin. Accompanied by Picard du Gay and Michael Also, he set out in a canoe February 29, 1680, followed the Illinois to its mouth, and ascended the Mississippi, was taken captive by the Sioux, and while a captive with them, saw the Falls of St. Anthony, and gave them their name in honor of his patron saint.

Subsequently, after his return to Europe and publication of his narrative of La Salle's (first) expedition, and his own explorations, with a description of the upper Mississippi country, on account of disobedience, he was forced to leave the service of France and is said to have entered the service of William III. of England. About 1697 he abandoned the clerical dress but to the end of his life subscribed to his name "Recollect Missionary and Apostolic Notary.

Hennepin was one of the many who are types of that age of discovery, a bold, light hearted explorer, but an enthusiast, a quaint writer, but so far as his description of the upper Missisippi country and its Indians can be identified with our later knowledge, a remarkably correct narrator. But a book, purporting to be a second edition of his narration, which was published in Utrecht after, or about the time he is said to have gone into the service of the English king, contains a manifestly false interpellation—an account of a voyage down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, which Hennepin could not have made. Because of this Gather Hennepin has been bitterly denounced by various historians. Bancroft, for an extreme instance, says that Hennepin "is now remembered, not merely as a light hearted, ambitious, daring discoverer, but also as a boastful liar."

The historical society of Minnesota, who have had occasion to verify Hennepin's original narration, and found it substantially correct, being also in possesion of information that the researches of a competent American historian and antiquarian (John Gilmeray Shea) have cleared away the Utrecht interpellation and other matters, so that the first white man in Minnesota may without doubt be regarded as a worthy example of the missionary priests of his time, has had no hesitation in giving to Minnesota as a day of festival and congratulation, the two hundredth anniversary of Father Hennepin's most striking achievement, from which dates the begining of the history of our beloved State.

In celebrating the day, (fixed for convenience in absence of knowledge as to the precise day on which the Recollect missionary in 1680 first saw and named the great falls of the Mississippi,) our Historical society celebrated the birthday of Minnesota and the new Northwest of to-day. In honoring Hennepin they honored the class to which he belonged—those brave clergymen of two centuries ago who came with the first of white men into the heart of our continent and who were at once explorers, historians of discovery and heralds and martyrs of religion.

Minneapolis.

The young giant city at the Falls of St. Anthony has seconded the purpose of the Historical society, with liberality of expenditure and heartiness of hospitality, to which must mainly be attributed the great success of the celebration. For detasis of the elaborate preparations for the event and of the entertainment of all attending it from abroad, the reader is referred to the particular accounts below of the proceedings of the day. It will suffice to say here, and to avoid repetition, that in every respect the public-spirited citizens of Minneapolis won honor for themselves in honoring their guests of the day.

IN GALA ATTIRE.

The city of Minneapolis never saw such a day as yesterday. It almost appeared as though the inanimate earth on which the city is built—her magnificent blocks of buildings, her immense mills and even the grand falls themselves, were aware that something more than ordinary was taking place. The broad avenues were teeming with life, and every artery of the city pulsated with a glad and gleesome feeling, which developed itself in the smiling countenances of her citizens, and with the outward emblems of a general rejoicing. Most of the business houses and many private dwellings were decorated with flags, evergreens, etc., all testifying to the general joy felt by all. In fact it was Minneapolis' "Saturday out" and she enjoyed it. The privacy of home and the conventionalities of society which ordinarily "doth hedge us in" were for the nonce laid aside, and all, whether old or young, regardless of previous condition, gave themselves up to a gala day. The moving tide of humanity, the gayly decked blocks of buildings, the floating stars and stripes and the general air of pleasure everywhere visible, conspired to give the locality a holiday appearance never seen before. Certainly not since the day Father Hennepin looked upon it and pronounced it good, ten hundred years ago.

The Grand Procession.

The official programme for the day had announced that the procession would be formed promptly at 9 A. M. Committees of arrangements may propose, but it not infrequently happens that those who take part in pageants of this character, dispose of time to suit their convenience. It so happened yesterday. As early as 8 o'clock all the principal streets of the city were filled with people on foot, in carrriages, on horseback and in arms, waiting for the procession to form. It was somehow understood that General Sherman, Secretary Ramsey and the other notables were to arrive at an early hour at the University, and come from thence to the Nicollet hotel, where arrangements were to be made for assigning them positions in the grand procession. An immense throng of people assembled in front of the hotel and for over an hour waited patiently, in the broiling sun, to catch a glimpse of the distinguished visitors. About half past ten their curiosity was gratified, for at that hour a number of carriages, containing Gen. Sherman, Secretary Ramsey, Hon. E. B. Washburne and other distinguished gentlemen drove to the main entrance of the hotel. The features of nearly all were familiar to the dense throng, and as they alighted from their carriages they were greeted with a succession of cheers. A few moments were spent in the parlors of the Nicollet to allow for introductions, refreshments, etc., when the party once more took their places in carriages and proceeded to Bridge Square where the grand procession was formed in the following order, under the command of Gen. J. T. Rosser, marshal of the day assisted by some aides:

THE ORDER OF PROCESSION:

Gen. Rosser, Marshal of the Day and Aide, Officer Hoy.
Platoon of Sixteen Minneapolis Police. Commanded by Sergeant West.
Great Western Union Band.
Hon. W. D. Washburn and Mayor Rand in Carriages.
General W. T. Sherman and Secretary of War Ramsey.
Governor Pillsbury.
Ex-Governor C. C. Washburn, and Rev. Mr. Neill.
Hon. E. B. Washburne, D. Morrison and Anthony Kelly.
Members of the City Council.
Members of the County Board.
City and County Officials.
Hon. W. S. King and Friend.
Fort Snelling Military Band.
Two Companies U. S. Regulars.
Veterans of the War for the Union.
Mounted Zouave Lancers.
Zouave Drum Corps and Band.
Minneapolis Zouaves.
Minneapolis Light Infantry.
St. John the Baptiste Society.
Swede Brothers' Society.
Odd Fellows' Encampment.
North Star Lodge, I. O. O. F.
Sons of Herman.
Father Matthew Cadets.
Father Matthew T. A. B. Society.
Woman's Christian Temperance Union.
Father McGolrick and Priests.
Citizens in Carriages.

It required some time to bring order out of the chaotic mass, which had not only filled Bridge Square, but all the streets adjacent with a surging tide of humanity on foot, in carriages and in every other species of conveyance. The throng had come "from the north and south, from the east and from the west," all intent upon seeing all they could and taking part in this pageantry. The grand marshal and his aids had a most difficult task to perform, but they finally succeeded, and the procession took up its line of march across the suspension bridge, in the order above given. When the carriage containing Gen. Sherman and Secretary Ramsey reached the eastern end of the bridge, and the vast crowd recognized the familiar countenances, cheer after cheer greeted the two distinguished men, who manage and control the military arm of this great republic. This hearty greeting was continued all along the line of march, and was responded to by both gentlemen rising and bowing in response. They rode in a splendid English dray drawn by four beautiful horses gaily comparisoned and driven by Mr. R. F. Jones, the owner of the magnificent turn out.

Words are inadequate to describe the appearance of the procession and the streets along the line of march. The sidewalks and the streets also were a complete moving mass of humanity of all ages and both sexes. The suspension bridge never before was put to such a test, and hereafter it may be considered safe. Every available space was occupied by people on foot, while for fully a half hour the driveway was filed with two lines of carriages from end to end. The scene on University avenue when the procession was passing, baffles discription. The procession formed across the street, but on either side of it was dense throngs of carriages, four or five abreast, while the sidewalks and private grounds of the residents were crowded with men, women and children. At every street crossing numbers of vehicles were added to the throng, and yet all moved on, slowly it is true, but without accident. Gen. Sherman was of course the lion of the day, and next to him came in for many compliments, a number of the organizations that formed a part of the procession. The Union Great Western Band; the Seventh Infantry Band from Fort Snelling, and the Minneapolis Zouave Band, Drum corps, elicited well deserved praise for their excellent music and splendid appearance. Companies C, K, and H, of the Seventh Infantry, under command of Major Benham, marched as only veterans can. The Minneapolis Zouaves made a fine appearance in their strange uniform, and the squad of mounted Lancers of the same organization were a marked feature of the procession. The Union Francaise of St. Paul, who turned out 150 strong, and were led by the Great Western Band, did themselves proud, being the largest organization in the line. Suffice it to say that it was a grand demonstration in which not only the cities of St. Paul and Minneapolis but the country for miles around united.

Over the entrance to the University grounds a grand arch had been erected beautifully ornamented with the national colors and evergreens, and bearing the inscription, "Soyez les Bienvenus."

The Appearance of the Grounds.

While so many were waiting on the avenue some hundreds had gathered on the University campus at an early hour, and before the head of the procession arrived at the green arch, under which it entered upon the field, thousands were assembled. The spacious campus—overlooking the river and falls, and a goodly part of the city—covered with a fine sward and shaded by noble trees, was supplied for the occasion with a covered stand for the historical society and its guests and seats for the audience, and also with numerous tables for free refreshment of visitors, and with many tents for their shelter and entertainment. Around the north and west sides of the campus were arranged the various tents and headquarters of the different bodies taking part in the celebration. A short distance from the main entrance to the grounds, on the right, was located seven tables, each 210 feet in length. These tables were loaded with substantial food, enough to feed thousands, and thousands were fed at this hospitable board. All were invited, and among the many thousands there not one went away hungry, except at his or her accord. This branch was under the supervision of Mr. George Brackett, Esq., and he managed it with a method and a beaming hospitality that will be long remembered by thousands whom he fed. In fact it may be said that all went away prepared to say: "I was a hungered and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and he gave me drink, I was a stranger, and ye took me in." Passing on down to the right was a tent reserved for the members of the council of the cities. Under this canvas were two tables, sufficient to accommodate the number expected to be present, and supplied with good things enough to satisfy even an alderman's stomach.

Next to this was a canopy supplied with chairs, where the weary might find rest.

Then came the grand tent, under which Governor Pillsbury had provided a repast for the distinguished visitors and the members of the Historical society. Under this large canopy was fifteen tables arranged in circular form. The tent was tastefully decorated with the national colors and evergreens, and the tables were adorned with a profusion of flowers, presenting a picture of great beauty. Under this canvas the Governor received and feasted his friends after the formal exercises were over. Never before did such a collection of distinguished men and fair women meet within sight and sound of St. Anthony Falls. Connected with this was another tent, where, during the entire day, such refreshments as lemonade, sandwitches, etc., were dispensed to the hungry and thirsty.

A number of other tents were scattered around for the accommodation, convenience and comfort of ladies, the various visiting organizations, etc., etc. Probably the most important of these tents were two—one large and handsomely fitted up where ladies could obtain lemonade, ices, etc., and the other called the "house that Jack built," for gentlemen, where they could obtain a bountiful supply of ice water. In this tent they had on exhibition specimens of water said to have been bottled by Father Hennepin at the time he dissovered the falls. It had improved wonderfully with age. A large number tasted it (purely out of curiosity) and they informed the GLOBE reporter that it was not bad to take.

The GLOBE columns might be filled with accounts of all there was to be seen and done on the grounds. The imagination of the reader must supply the deficiency. It is sufficient to say that the citizens of Minneapolis, both in their private and corporate capacity, dispensed a boundless hospitality on the occasion, and all, the many thousands present, went away satisfied that it was good for them to be there.

The Society and Its Guests.

It was about 10:30 A. M. when the head of the procession arrived on the grounds, and some time was necessarily taken in placing the military and societies, and in seating the people, who wished to listen to the oration and addresses. Meantime the Historical Society and its guests were seated upon the grand stand. Among this notable company the following were recognized from the reporter's table: Gen. H. H. Sibley of St. Paul, president of the Historical Society; Hon. Alex. Ramsey, Secretary of War; Gen. W. T. Sherman, U. S. A.; Archbishop Teche of St. Boniface, Manitoba; Bishop La Fleche, of Three Rivers, Lower Canada; Bishops Grace and Ireland, St. Paul; Mgr. J. de Neve, Rector of the American College, Louvain, Belgium; Rev. Fr. Desaulniers, St. Bonaventure, Canada; Rev. G. Dugast, St. Boniface, Manitoba; Rev. J. A. Andre, Inver Grove, Minnesota; Rev. James McGolrich, Minneapolis; Justice Miller, of the U. S. Supreme court; Judge Gilfillan of the State Supreme court: Judge McCrary of the U. S. Circuit court; Judge Nelson, of the U. S. District court; Gen. Terry and other army officers from department headquarters. St. Paul; Gen. Gibbon and officers of the Seventh Infantry, Fort Snelling; Col. Barry, Washington: Hon. E. B. Washburne, Galena, and Albert D. Hogan, Chicago, the latter secretary and both delegates of the Chicago Historical society; Hon. C. H. Berry, Winona; Hon. John S. Pillsbury, Governor of Minnesota; Ex-Gov. C. K. Davis; Ex-Gov. Wm. R. Marshall; Hon. C. C. Washburn, Wisconsin; Gen. R. W. Johnson, St. Paul; Hon. W. D. Washburn, Minneapolis; Hon. S. J. R. McMillan, U. S. Senator; Ex-Senator H. M. Rice; Mr. Sprague, of Minneapolis, a soldier of 1812; Rev. Mr. Ribeldaffer, of the State Reform school; Rev. E. D. Neill, Mayor Rand, Wm. S. King, W. W. McNair, Jno. H. Stevens, H. Mattson, O. V. Tousley, D. Morrison and N. B. Harwood, all of Minneapolis; I. De Graff, Russell Blakeley, E. S. Goodrich, Edmund Rice, Fletcher Williams, H. L. Moss, I. V. D. Heard and J. B. Cheney, of St. Paul; Hon. O. P. Whitcomb, State auditor; Hon. D. Burt, superintendent of public instruction; and President Folwell and the Faculty of the State University.

When Gen. Sherman escorted by Gen. Sibley, and Secretary Ramsey escorted by Gen. Terry, came upon the stand they were warmly applauded, and Gen. Sherman especially seemed to be the favorite. In fact, throughout the exercises, he could hardly move without starting a round of applause. It was evident there was present a goodly number of the boys who marched through Georgia with Sherman.

While the procession was marching into the campus, a salute was fired by a section of artillery from Fort Snelling; and as all arrangements were about concluded, at 11:35 A. M., the Union Great Western band opened the exercises by playing the national airs, after which Gen. Sibley addressed the multitude.

Gen. Sibley's Address.

Ladies and Gentlemen: On behalf of the Minnesota Historical society, I bid you warm welcome to the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the discovery of the falls of St. Anthony, by Father Hennepin. Through the courtesy of the board of regents we have been permitted to occupy the campus of the State university, overlooking, as it does, the cataract and its surroundings.

The society was encouraged to hope that many historical, geographical and other societies at home and abroad, to whom invitations had been extended, would be represented on this occasion; but the distance to be traveresed and other sufficient reasons have for the most part prevented the attendance of delegates. The presence of high officials of the federal and State governments affords evidence, however, of the general interest felt in the event we meet to commemorate.

Whatever may have been the merits or demerits of Father Hennepin, that he was a man of rare physical and moral courage, devoted to the cause of his Master, and that he was the first white man to penetrate the vast wilds of the Northwest to the falls to which he gave the name of his patron saint, Anthony of Pedua, are facts beyond controversy, and the Minnesota Historical Society deemed it peculiarly appropriate that his memory should be honored with this celebration two centuries after his great discovery, on the return of the anniversary of the birth of the American republic, the precise date of Hennepin's advent not being known.

The society gratefully acknowledges its obligations to the honorable common council and the citizens generally of Minneapolis, for their profuse liberality in perfecting arrangements for the accommodation and entertainment of the society and of visitors from inside and outside of the State.

I will state in conclusion that the order of exercises will be brief. There will be an oration by Ex-Gov. Davis, followed by a poem by Mr. Miller and an address by Archbishop Tache. I have now the honor to introduce to you Ex-Gov. Davis.

Gov. Davis' Address.

It is not without cause that nations, sects, communities and individuals, by a custom which seems world-wide, observe with commemorative ceremonies the recurrence of certain days with which events of great national, religious and personal importance commence.

There is a satisfaction in looking back into "the abysm of time" into which generations have been swallowed up and forgotten, to gaze at some luminous diurnal spot which marks the occurrence of that without which an empire could never have existed, or a faith never been defined for belief, or a human right never ceased from being an ethical abstraction to become a concrete and beneficent fact, or a person never born to taste the joys and sorrows of life and to fall heir to the inexpressible heritage of immortality.

At one day in each year the Christian traverses the tract of eighteen centuries, and gazing from obscure Bethelem over the civilized world and over the enormous epoch of his faith traces the sublime consequences of the nativity. He sees that in a period so short that it attests the miracle, the entire skeptical, dogmatic and practical Roman world was penetrated and possessed by the cardinal idea of a faith which sprung from the despised Semitic province, and overcame the indurate prepossessions of the Aryan family. He sees the vast and unending political consequences of the event which he commemorates. He sees how thoroughly Christianity took possession of the place providentially left for it in the instertices of the Roman structure and speedily transformed it in color, shape and proportions. He appreciates the fact that the functions of a kingdom not of this world needed to make efficient its propagandizing idea of personal equality the aid of secular institutions. It found them in the marvelous machinery of the Roman polity. He sees the submergence of all this under the northern torrent, a submergence so complete that nothing but the cross can at times be seen over that waste of waters. The hopes of civilization and progress seem ended. But barbarism itself was in time subdued by that which it had conquered. It had brought from its northern forests the practice of parliamentary participation in affairs by every free man which by elective affinity combined with the religious dogmas of personal equality, and the Christian world was at once placed upon a line of logical consequences which, by asserting the freedom of the individual and the equality of man to man, has found its most perfect development in the United States.

The Mahometan, mindful of the ignominious Hegira of the Prophet, commemorates its day, and standing at Mecca, sees the crescent, within the period of seven hundred years, compassing nations with its arc of conquest, one point touching Grenada, and the other shining over Vienna.

What day more than this thrills every sensibility of the American citizen—this day of days—when our charter of human rights was signed with dedications to its maintenance of lives, fortunes and sacred honor—which has been for more than one hundred years preserved inviolate, which has been confirmed by an extension of its extremest declaration that all men are created equal, by the emancipation of the slave and his participation as a free man in the administration of the institutions by which he was committed to ignorance and bondage?

Two hundred years ago the Franciscan father Hennepin, saw the Falls of St. Anthony. He was the first white man who ever saw and heard the throbbings of that great artery of power which now gives life to thousands of people and moves those great mechanical agencies which in our hearing almost, are doing the work of hundreds of thousands of men. For unnumbered ages the cararact had spent its powers wearing away the ledge over which it fell, receding northward through gorges which it cut, and in which it has recorded its recession. The wildest dreamer of two hundred years ago could not have foretold of the wondrous changes which would be worked upon the scene.

The indomitable courage of the French in discovering and opening up the territory west of the Alleghanies, their utter failure to hold it and its relapse into obscurity form one of the most interesting and obscure problems of our history,

By the year 1680 La Salle, a gentleman by birth and a scholar by education by the Jesuits, then the best schoolmasters in the world. had built a ship above Niagara Falls, made the circuit of the great lakes, landed near the western extremity of Lake Michigan, traversed what is now the State of Illinois, and rested at a point on the shores of Peoria lake, where he built a fort. Attached to this company of adventurers was Hennepin. He was a man of great resolution, faithful to his vocation, and of remarkable power of observation—so remarkable that his footsteps can be traced today in the changed condition of this region, most distinctly, by the account which he left of his adventures.

During the winter of 1679-80 he, with two companions, had by the order of La Salle, descended the Illinois river to its mouth, and was directed also to explore the Mississippi river above the Illinois. They ascended the river without molestation, probably as far as the mouth of the Wisconsin river, when they were captured by a war party of Sioux, and from that time their journey northwards was an enforced one. Their captors held debate over their lives, but finally concluded to spare them. They were brought by the Sioux up the river to a point doubtless a few miles below where St. Paul now stands, where the band then left the river and followed the trail over the country to Mille Lac. A journey of five days brought them to the Indian villages in the valley of the Rum river, and there the captives were separated, each band conducting a Frenchman to its village. They seem to have been treated with rude kindness. Hennepin now endeavored to acquire the Indian language and to instruct the savages in the faith, but they were indifferent and he made no converts. He baptised and christened by the name of Antoinette a sick Indian infant who shortly afterward died. He seems to have inspired his captors with a certain feeling of awe and yet at the same time to have been regarded by them quite contemptuously.

He settled, however, an important geographical question. The hope of a direct westerly ocean route to the East Indias which inspired Columbus and resulted in the discovery of America in the search for India, was at this time an inspiring cause of the persistent intrusion of the French into this region. It was supposed that the Mississippi river emptied into the Gulf of California. The northwest passage was laid down on maps as through the Straits of Anian, which were represented to be not far from the water system which has its source in Minnesota.

While Hennepin was detained in this vicinity of Mille Lac four Indians came to the village who stated that they had come from the west fifteen hundred miles, and that their journey had occupied four months. They were questioned by Hennepin and told him truly that they had seen no sea nor any great water. They described the country northwest of here with general accuracy, saying that it contained no great lakes, that it had many rivers, and that there were very few forests in that region. From this narrative Hennepin concluded that the straits of Anian as delineated upon the maps of that time had no existence, and he conjectured that the route to the Pacific was by the rivers of which these Indians told.

The time came in June for the departure of the Indians to the hunting grounds west of the Mississippi river. The assemblage of the bands for this purpose brought Hennepin and his companies together again. They descended the Rum river and encamped where Dayton is now. Starvation threatened them and Hennepin was of course anxious to be released. By stating to them that he expected to meet a party of Frenchmen at the mouth of the Wisconsin river with goods for the Indians he prevailed upon the savages to allow him and his companions to go to meet them. One of the Frenchmen preferred to remain with the Indians, and staid. A small birch canoe was given Hennepin and Du Guy: they started down the river and came to the falls of St. Anthony.

It was a sacred spot with the tribes. Indians were there invoking the spirit of the waters in voices of lamentation and hanging offerings of beaver skins upon the trees.

Hennepin named the cataract in the Falls of St. Anthony in honor of St. Anthony of Padua. He proceeded on his journey and at some distance below the falls encountered Daniel Greysolon, Duluth and four other Frenchmen who had made their way from the head of Lake Superior to the Mississippi river. The Frenchmen then returned to Mille Lac with a party of Indians, remained there till the following autumn, and then resumed their southward journey by the way of Rum river and the falls of St. Anthony. They proceeded to Green Bay by ascending the Wisconsin river. From thence Hennepin made his way to Europe and in 1683 published at Paris an account of his adventures.

After the death of La Salle and about fourteen years after the publication of this book, Hennepin published in Utrecht another edition of his travels, in which he pretended for the first time that before he started up the Mississippi river, he had followed its course from the Illinois to the sea and returned in time to start northward from the mouth of the Illinois river by the eleventh of March, 1680. The dates in the two narratives show that he must have done all this in a month and of course conclusively establish the falsity of this portion of his second narrative. The first narrative, published in 1683 is, however, undoubtedly a true one. His topography, capable of verification to-day, and his use of Sioux words, fully establish the fact.

The edition of 1694 was dedicated to the King of England and the surprising claim which Hennepin then advanced was doubtless due to some political reason, for it is stated that its contents caused William to send vessels to the Gulf of Mexico to enter the river, and Callieres, the Governor of Canada, wrote a letter to Pontchartrain, the French minister, warning him that William was about to take possession of Louisiana upon the relation of Hennepin. Louis XIV was greatly incensed at Hennepin, and hearing that he intended to revisit Canada, directed Callieres in that event to arrest him and send him to Rochefort. He died, probably in Italy, after the year 1701.

Hennepin's experience as a discoverer was small compared with that of other adventurous Frenchmen. The most illustrious of those men who two hundred years ago followed the Mississippi valley from the falls of St. Anthony to the Gulf of Mexico was undoubtedly Robert Cavelier La Salle. This heroic man starting from Montreal ascended the St. Lawrence, sailed the great lakes, made the portage to the Illinois river, and descending thence into the Mississippi reached its mouth in the year 1682 after years of incredible hardships. In the month of April of that year, standing where jetties now spring from the unstable shore, and through which the commerce of the world passes rejoicing in stately ships, he planted the cross, took possession of a vast country for and in the name of Louis XIV, while the voices of the great hearted companions of his quest joined in the *Vexilla Regis*.

The region thus claimed was the entire valley of the Mississippi and of all its tributaries. It stretched from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains. It was the most imperial domain which ever accrued to a king by the claim of discovery. Far seeing men of that age foretold that it would in its time be what it is now. Its military importance and commercial and agricultural capacities were quite well understood. The energies of a church whose sons have set their feet in tropic jungles, on polar snows, in Saharas of sand—on every place on earth where there are souls to be saved—the sagacity and power of the greatest king and the wisest statesman of that age—the adventurous private spirit inspired by the hope of gain—the romantic gleams of El Dorados which even then shone in the west like golden sunsets—the colonial policy then cardinal with the great European powers—all these confederated to make this imperial domain a province of France.

Had it remained so the French possessions would have extended from the mouth of the St. Lawrence nearly to the Rio Grande; the domain of England would have been east of the Alleghanies. Spain would have had only the province of Florida and the whole of all the remainder of North America, east of the Rocky mountains excepting Mexico, would have belonged to France to colonize and civilize by way of the Mississippi river instead of by that painful and slow process overland from east to west by which this country has been occupied.

Why France did not succeed in so doing is a most recondite yet instructive question.

There was at that time every reason why she should have done all this. Louis XIV was then at the zenith of his power. His intellect was in its prime; his pride was at its height; his will had never been curbed; his armies were victorious everywhere; he had the finest navy in the world; his treasury overflowed.

The grandest statesman whom France—perhaps Europe—ever produced had been at the head of affairs, and the propulsive force of his genius still operated unspent. It is doing its work to-day. Colbert had wrought the work which Louis was then enjoying. He was so great to the men of his own age that the Mississippi river was named the Colbert, but the great stream—greater than the stream of history—has effaced even his name from the water in which it was written.

England, as a power, was utterly contemptable. She was panting under the incubus of the disreputable old age of that heartless voluptuary Charles II, and he was a pensioner of the French king. Her finances were disordered, her army was despised, her navy was weak and rotten, her statesmen were profligate and corrupt, her literature was mere bawdry, and she was throughout a state diseased.

William of Orange, constitutionally weak of body and broken by sickness, was battling for mere existence with the overwhelming power of France, and was thought to be a vanishing factor in the problem of national and personal supremacy.

Why then was it that, though France held for almost one hundred years, nearly all that La Salle proclaimed, was hers east of the great river, and held until the reign of the great Napoleon, nearly all that was proclaimed as hers west of the great river, she eventually lost everthing, and left but little or no trace of her presence, excepting what is now the State of Louisiana?

The cause was not conquest. Conquests then were, but they were merely the secondary and proximate agencies of the transfer.

And here we are presented with one of the grandest examples which time has given to history, of the divulsion of a great region from one empire and its attachment to another, by the moral power of contending institutions. For this was effected by the collision of institutions, and by nothing else. We have seen France, starting from Montreal, engirdle the North American continent from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Mississippi, and shutting up the English occupancy into a tract which was practically bounded by the St. Lawrence, the Alleghanies and the Savannah. We understand the proportions of the physical competitory powers by which these rival institutions were sustained.

I do not think that differences of dogma or victories in proselyting had anything to do with the result. The Puritan of New England, the Quaker of Pennsylvania, the Catholic of Maryland, and the Churchman of Virginia, each represented a political tendency, with which his religious faith had little to do either by any of creation or modification. The result would have been the same had James the Second succeeded in restoring England to the ranks of the Catholic powers.

Behind and beyond the mere questions of faith, ruling and overruling them by providential destiny, carrying them along as the world revolving west carries a ship that is sailing east, were the great and peremptory ideas of personal freedom and of self government, based upon Christianity and not upon any of its creeds, which were fighting their way to institutional recognition in the person of every English-speaking man.

Englishmen had fought for centuries this momentous fight. They had extorted Magna Charta from John. They had enacted in parliament the declaration of rights, and so far annihilated the feudal system, as to leave nothing but its fictions. They had passed the statute of habeas corpus. They had increased the powers of the commons, until that house became the immediate agent of the people in the administration of the State. More than all, they had so dilated their capacity for self-government through their love of freedom that it was as certain then as it is to-day that the mountains would be removed into the sea before the stock of that people could ever be forced back into the dungeons of absolute power.

In France there was no counterpart to all this. There was, on the contrary, a complete system of antithetical institutions. The whole kingdom was feudal. It was enfeoffed to despot over despot through all the ascending degrees of tyranny, until the king was reached, who absorbed into himself the sum of all these despotic powers. There was no parliament. Judges were so purchasable that judgments were finally sold as common commodities. The land was filled with private prisons, in which the seigneurs incarcerated their offending underlings without pretext of trial. The king took away personal liberty by simple *letter de cachet*. There was no liberty of conscience, nor was there anything in the tendency of the institutions which promised it. The system of taxation was an abominable device of spoliation by which a host of intermediaries tolled the product so that but a fraction reaches the royal exchequer.

Such were the two systems which started in the race of empire upon this continent. The French colonial system was feudal, and was governed from Versailles. The English colonial system was allodial and substantially governed itself. Each, in short, was a reproduction of its original. That of the French was cumbrous and difficult to transport. The Frenchman who founded a colony laid off a seigniory and had his vassals. The English colonists, on the contrary, owned their farms and their houses were their castles. They had their provincial parliaments and enacted their own laws. Every English settlement was a nucleus from which growth upsprang. Every French settlement was a lordship or fort—it stood by itself; its neighbor was another lordship or fort. The English settlements were confluent. Those of the French were marked by boundaries established from the beginning. The former tended to identification; the latter were indurated into separation; contact was friction and private war.

Under such conditions of growth it is easy to understand how the French, moving with the celerity of organization, at first covered so much territory. After the first act was done progress stopped.

The French settler looked to his landlord, and was attached to the soil. If he removed he entered a vagrant life. The English immigrant, who was his own man, bettered his condition. His children stood higher in the scale of wealth and society than he did. The result was, that when the English became ready to pass the Alleghanies, they took with them ready made all of the machinery of an independent government. The mere presence of Boone and his companions in Kentucky ended the shadowy French claim to that region. The capture of Kaskaskia by Gen. George Rogers Clarke, who was sent upon that campaign by Thomas Jefferson while governor of Virginia, seems to have ended the French domination over all the country east of the Mississippi. The passage of the ordinance of 1787 gave to the territory northwest of the Ohio a republican constitution, and from that time English immigrants poured into that region and the French institutions disappeared like a cloud.

The hold of France upon the territory west of the river became less eager. She ceded it to Spain and then took it back. The iron hold of Napoleon became flaccid there and he finally ceded it to the United States in 1803, and nothing was left of France upon this continent save Louisiana, which exists like an area of geologic drift, and the names of counties and cities where French and Indian words alike mark the former presence of vanished institutions.

The political consequences of the tendencies and results of which I have spoken, were most momentous to the cause of liberty. Did any body ever conceive of a declaration of independence by French colonies? Had the French institutions at all kept pace with those of the English over what is now the United States, there would have been no declaration of our own independence, for Louis XVI and George III, assisted by their colonists, would have been fighting a war of conquest and defence.

Mere political speculation might pause at this point. But standing to-day at the great anniversary of our independence, and seeing what forces contended against each for a century before it was declared we cannot help recognizing the work of Providence in all this. Through all time this new world had slumbered, hidden by the ocean from conquest, preserved from the operations of the events which in the long course of thousands of years had brought the Europeans to civilization. The Greek and the Roman did their work and passed away, and not a hint of this great world came to them from sea or shore. The long night which settled over Europe and in the hours of which were slowly formed the models of our present institutions, were not illuminated by a single gleam from the west.

The Mongol peopled this continent from the northwest, but by some process left behind him his institutions and his faith. Precisely at the time when man was ready to fill the sphere of his natural rights; when printing was discovered which enabled men to reason together and to come to think alike over vast areas, when conscience was beginning to assert its liberty, when slavery was denounced by the church and by publicists, when war become more humane and required some real justification for its commencement, when the law rose from its tomb and, reasserting itself as a science superseded the canonical jargon which had been administered by ecclesiastical incompetence, when the divinity which inheres in science was breeding wings for its flight among the stars, when the real rulers of men were rising from the people and the world was ceasing to hope or dread the results of dynastic chance, when force and fraud were becoming merely the "crownless metaphors of empire"—this watery veil of ocean was first withdrawn from the new world and every agency which works under the Providence of God for the well being of man entered upon its heritage. It took possession. The Englishman, the Dutchman, the Frenchman, the Irishman and the German here found refuge and gratified the aspirations for that personal liberty of thought, speech, belief and action, without which the most exalted man is but a splendid slave. In all this the wondrous works of God who holds the nations in the hollow of his hand are as plainly to be seen as if some unpeopled planet had touched this earth on its way and taken from it its agencies for the well being of man.

The Franciscan priest died in obscurity and his burial place no man knows. His monument is here. His name is written ineffaceably upon this very place in the county which bears it. Where he stood two hundred years ago a despised captive, sit to-day the rulers of a great state: the professors of a university: the brave men and the lovely women of his race: the general of the armies of the most powerful and the freest people on earth: the judges of its greatest courts and the ministers of Christianity. Everything has changed. Two great cities occupy the scene. The cataract has been manacled by the hand of man and works like the blind Sampson in his mills. And the final results have not yet been reached. In all that we see there is nothing but the infancy of a great people. From the west and the northwest comes the murmurs of awakening empire, and the prophecies of that riper time when a race—composite of the mingled blood of the nations of Europe—shall present to humanity its highest type of physical, intellectual and moral development. One hundred years from to-day they who shall stand in this place and repeat these ceremonies, may, from their vantage-ground of knowledge, refinement and luxury, look upon us as their crude forerunners merely. Let us play well our part however, and cause them to say of us as we say of those who have preceded us, that we acted well our part, and secured that larger liberty, that greater knowledge, that more perfect civilization which we of to-day know must forever bless this favored spot if we do our duty as our predecessors did theirs.

Gov. Davis was in the first part of his address interrupted by the conclusion of the artillery salute. Throughout he was listened to with great interest by probably not less than seven thousand people, while three or four thousand more, unable to get within hearing distance, were scattered about the grounds.

"Minnesota," the Poem.

At the conclusion of the address the Seventh Regiment Band played an appropriate selection, and Gen. Sibley then introduced the poet of the day, Mr. A. P. Miller of the Worthington *Advance*, who read his poem, entitled "Minnesota," as follows:

Down these great rocks the mighty river poured,
And like an endless tempest beat and roared,
Ages on ages of uncounted years,
Before its thunder fell on human ears;
In one great song that made the woods rejoice,
Praising its maker with a ceaseless voice!
Then the Mound Builders came, with awkward toil,
And built their mounds and tilled the barbarous soil,
Yoked the wild bison to some uncouth plow,
And cleaved the rivers with a birchen prow.
How long ago? Perhaps ere Tubal Cain
Began to build his cities on the plain,
Perhaps ere Eve and Adam, hand in hand,
Went out from home to tame the savage land.
Then came the Red Man, stoical and brave,
Of whom no power on earth can make a slave
True to the true and good toward the good,
And, like his Christian brother, spilling blood.
Human as we, whate'er his savage arts.
For veins of gold run through his heart of quartz?
Here round the Falls he built his rude tepee,
Made love and danced and fought and died as we.
And centuries went by, and then there came,
For love of Mother Church and France and fame,
The man who gave the Falls their saintly name.
O Priests! destined to pierce the wilderness,
Yours to explore and ours to possess,
Yours to uplift the cross by every stream,
And ours to build and realize your dream!
Anon the Saxon came, whose iron hand,
Has one strong finger laid on every land