

HISTORICO-GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, FROM CASS LAKE TO LAKE ITASCA.

BY ELLIOTT COUES.

The following notes are derived mainly from observations made during my canoe voyage to the source of the Mississippi, in August and September, 1894. The article is extracted in substance from advance sheets of my new edition of Z. M. Pike's Expeditions, now in press and about to be published by Francis P. Harper, New York.

Le Haut Lac aux Cèdres Rouges of the French, Upper Red Cedar lake of the English, was so called in distinction from the one of like name much further down the Mississippi, near Aitkin. The valuable species of *Juniperus*, commonly known as "cedar" or "red cedar," is not a very abundant tree in N. Minnesota, and its prevalence about each of these lakes duplicated their designation. Pike's description of Upper Red Cedar lake is not good, and his map is so far out as to omit entirely the entrance of the Mississippi into this lake; for what he delineates as and mistook for the entrance of the main river is merely the discharge of the Turtle River chain of lakes from the Beltramanian or so-called Julian source of the Mississippi, which falls in at the extreme N. border of the lake. Thus, what Pike's text means by saying "from the entrance of the Mississippi to the strait is called six miles," is the distance from the mouth of Turtle river to the strait which divides off Pike's bay from the rest of the lake; "thence to the south end," etc., is the length of Pike's bay; the "bay at the entrance" of the supposed Mississippi, i. e., of Turtle river, means the general recess of the lake on the N.; and finally, the "large point," given as $2\frac{1}{2}$ m. "from the north side," is the point of Colcaspi or Grand island, which is almost a peninsula, and which marks off Allen's bay from the rest of the lake.

With this much by way of comment on Pike, we will look further at this interesting body of water, which I have lately crossed twice. Its first English name, after the one above given, was Lake Cassina, bestowed by Schoolcraft in 1820, in honor of Governor and General Lewis Cass (b. Exeter, N. H., Oct. 9th, 1782, d. Detroit, Mich., June 17th, 1866), leader of the expedition which made its nearest approach to the true source of the Mississippi in July of that year. Their camp was on the N. shore, close by the mouth of Turtle river, on the W. side of that mouth, directly opposite the site of the old Northwest Company's



Ellis Coney.

trading-house. The name "Cassina Lake" stands on Schoolcraft's map of the Cass expedition of 1820; item, "Cassina L." appears on Long's map, 1823; the adjective "Cassinian" also occurs in Schoolcraft and elsewhere; but the latter afterward clipped the name to Cass, and it has become fixed in this form—the same as that of the county later dedicated appropriately to this eminent statesman and soldier. The Schoolcraft map of 1820 also lays down the Turtle River system with approximate accuracy, and on this map was first traced the course of the Mississippi to Lake Itasca. The latter had not then received its present name, but stands as "L. Labeish," i. e., Lac La Biche, or Lac à la Biche, translating the Chippewa Omoshkos Sogiagon, and translated Elk lake in English. The main defect of the 1820 map was in laying down the Itasca source to the N. W. instead of to the S. W. of Cass lake—thus really on the line of the Turtle River source. This mistake was corrected in 1832, the year that Schoolcraft's party was guided to Lake Itasca itself by the Chippewa chief, Ozawindib or Yellow Head. Schoolcraft's nomenclature, in the main, was accepted by the greatest geographer who ever saw the source of the Mississippi, and Nicollet's example in this respect has been generally followed.

Cass is a beautiful lake, the third largest in the drainage-area of the uppermost Mississippi, being exceeded in size only by Winnibigoshish and Leech. The greatest length is nearly meridional; including Pike's bay it is $9\frac{3}{4}$ m.; the greatest breadth is almost due E. and W.; including Allen's bay it is $7\frac{1}{2}$ m. In position with reference to the 5th meridian, the range line of townships 30-31, and the line of townships 145-146, decussate at right angles in the center of the lake, just off the E. shore of Colcaspi island. The body of water thus occupies portions of four townships. In figure Cass lake is more irregular than Lake Winnibigoshish, less so than Leech lake. Pike's bay, on the S., is almost shut off from the rest of the lake by a long, narrow peninsula which stretches nearly across from E. to W., leaving but a very narrow thoroughfare. Pike's bay is of rounded form, about 3 miles in any diameter. Allen's bay, on the W., is almost equally well marked off by Colcaspi island; it is $2\frac{1}{8}$ miles long, with an average width of over a mile, and includes two small islands, Elm and Garden. Red Cedar island lies in the S. E. part of the main body of water; but the most conspicuous feature of the lake is the island known as Grand or Colcaspi. The latter curious name is one of those verbal wind-eggs which Schoolcraft was fond of hatching; he tells us it is compounded of fragments of the names of "the three prior explorers;" and as this was in 1832, he means Cass and himself, 1820, and Pike, 1806. This island is shaped like a blacksmith's anvil; its greatest diameters, along conjugate diagonal axes, are $2\frac{3}{4}$ and $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles; aside from its horns the island would yield a square of about $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles. The Chippewa village of Ozawindib, where Schoolcraft was camped July 10th and again July 15th—between which dates he went to Lake Itasca and back—was on the point of the anvil. I should advise canoeists to give this point a wide

berth; for a shoal runs far out northward, and the birch-bark may thump on a stony bottom if there is any sea. This shoal reaches out directly across the straightest traverse from the inlet to the outlet of the Mississippi. Colcapi island is almost a peninsula in relation to the N. shore of the lake, but a canoe can generally be floated across the isthmus. I waded and dragged my boat on going up, but on returning was obliged to make a portage of a few paces, as the water had lowered. But even if it be found a carrying-place, it is the shortest and best way across the lake from the inlet of the Mississippi, either to its outlet or to the inlet of Turtle river. The latter falls in at the extreme N. of the lake, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles N. W. from the outlet of the Mississippi, in the N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 18, T. 146, R. 30. Here came David Thompson in 1798, along the usual traders' route from the Red River country, which was in part along what was then supposed to be the course of the Mississippi itself above Red Cedar lake. Here, in Roy's Northwest Company's house, on the E. or left bank, Pike came on the 12th of February, 1806, when he was at the highest point on the Mississippi he ever reached. Here were Cass and Schoolcraft in 1820; here came the Chevalier J. C. Beltrami in 1823, down this same Turtle river, from his Lake Julia, and so along the Julian source of the Mississippi. A mission once stood here; there is now an Indian village at a little distance westward. The place may be recognized at a distance by a high ridge on the right or W. bank, and on nearer approach by a stout post with historical inscriptions, erected by Hon. J. V. Brower, in August, 1894. About a mile up, Turtle river expands into a lake, called Kichi by Nicollet in 1836. No other considerable stream enters Cass lake, except the Mississippi itself. The Mississippi leaves the lake in a recess on the N. E. shore, easy to find by good land-marks; there is a clump of trees on the right of the outlet as you approach it, and a house on the first rising ground to the left. The position is in the N. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 21, T. 146, R. 30. From this point the river flows about E. S. E. into Lake Winnibigoshish (makes $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles of southing in $8\frac{1}{4}$ miles of easting—air line about 9 miles).* The general course is about straight, but the reciprocal bends are numerous, giving an actual course of nearly 17 miles. This is the most beautiful part of the Mississippi—good flat water and plenty of it at the lowest stages of canoeing, with a moderate current and no rapids, shoals, or snags to speak of, and good camping-places all along on the wooded points or knolls. The only tributary of this "interlaken" course of the Mississippi is from the S.,

* This comparatively short distance between Lake Cass and Lake Winnibigoshish has been grossly exaggerated by various writers. Thus, Mr. Schoolcraft once called it "45" miles, and twice spoke of it as "50" miles. Lake Winnibigoshish is much larger than Lake Cass, having an area of about 72 square miles. Besides the Mississippi, which flows into it from the West, it has three principal feeders, from the north and northwest: First or Cut Foot Sioux river; Second or Pigeon river; and Third or Brower river—the latter recently named in honor of the accomplished monographer of the Itasca basin.

about half way between Cass and Winnibigoshish; being the discharge from Horn lake (Eskabwaka lake of Owen), $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile (direct) E. of the boundary between Itasca and Beltrami counties, in the S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 30, T. 146, R. 29.

The Mississippi enters Cass lake at the west end of Allen's bay, by a crooked S shaped thoroughfare about a mile long, from the next lake above. The inlet into Cass opens in the center of Sect. 29, T. 146, R. 31; the outlet from the other lake is in the northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of the same section. So close, in fact, are the two lakes, that at two places they are only separated by a hundred yards or less. At the northern one of these short portages stands a dilapidated old chapel, once a mission-house, and other buildings are scattered about, chiefly Chippewa cabins. I could learn no name for this next lake, though it is the one Schoolcraft, in 1855, called "Andrusia." The curious way of complimenting President Andrew Jackson has been followed by nobody. A letter before me from Hon. J. V. Brower, Itasca State Park Commissioner, dated St. Paul, September 15th, 1894, says: "This beautiful body of water situated upon Sects. 7, 8, 17, 18, 19, 20, 29 and 30, T. 146, R. 31, 5th M., above Cass lake, and through which the Mississippi takes its course, has this day been named by me Lake Elliott Cones, as a slight recognition of your services to the public, and for the purposes of a more accurate and correct geographical description." This lake is $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by $1\frac{1}{4}$ miles in greatest breadth, with its long axis meridional. The Mississippi runs across its south end, about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, from west to east, the inlet being in the northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 30 of the same township and range as the outlet. A trader's house is situated on the north side, in a Chippewa village. A winding course of the Mississippi of 2 miles brings us to another lake—that called Pamitascodiac or Tascodiac by Schoolcraft in 1832, and Vandermaelen by Nicollet in 1836; this and Lake Elliott Cones being both designated "the Andrusian lakes" on S. Eastman's map of 1855. Lake Tascodiac is hour-glass shaped, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by about a mile across either bulb. The Mississippi enters it at the north and leaves it at the east, the inlet and outlet being within half a mile of each other, in Sect. 25, T. 146, R. 32.

For two or three miles above Lake Tascodiac canoeing is easy, through the flat water of marsh and meadow land; but then begins the trouble which hardly intermits thence to Lake Bemidji. The canoeist may as well put on his rubber boots at the start and keep them on, for he will have to wade most of the way and drag or shove his boat through almost incessant rocky rapids, shoals and snags. My canoe drew only about three inches of water when my man and myself were overboard, yet we had great difficulty in getting along at all without portaging. Where the water is flat, it is shoal and snaggy; otherwise it is all rocks and rapids. The distance from Lake Tascodiac to Lake Bemidji is only 8 miles in an air line, but this is the chord of a considerable arc the river describes northward, which, with the minor bends around the wooded points, makes $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles of water-course. The people call it 20

miles, but that is because it is such a hard road to travel. It took me a day and a quarter to make Lake Bemidji from Lake Elliott Coues; but I did the same distance in less than one day coming down. Beltrami calls this course "Demizimaguamaguén-sibi, or River of Lake Traverse;" which reminds me to say that among the Indians each section of the Mississippi between lakes takes the name of the lake whence it flows. The Bemidji section issues from the lake of that name in the northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 2, T. 146, R. 33, near the middle of the east shore. This outlet is hidden in a maze of rushes, and as there is no conspicuous landmark on shore, it is not easy to find. Lake Bemidji is a large body of water, $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles long north and south, by $1\frac{3}{4}$ to $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad, of somewhat pyriform figure, lying athwart the course of the Mississippi; whence the French name Lac Traverse, which we render Traverse, Travers and Cross lake. Schoolcraft renamed it Queen Anne's lake in 1855, but the Indian name is usually said. Among the forms of this are Pamitchi, as Schoolcraft; Pemidji, as Nicollet; also Bermiji, Permidji, etc., and with an additional element Bemejigemug, Pamajiggermug, etc. The spelling with B and not P is preferable, as first done by A. J. Hill. The north end of Lake Bemidji is only $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from the south end of Turtle lake, so that the Julian sources may be here easily reached by portage. From the outlet as above described to the inlet is $2\frac{3}{4}$ miles, on a southwest course: for the Mississippi enters at the extreme southwest angle, in the northwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 16, T. 146, R. 33. A short open thoroughfare of about 40 rods leads directly from Lake Bemidji into Lake Irving, so named by Schoolcraft in 1832 after Washington Irving, and still so called. This is only $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles broad by $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile long, lying chiefly in Sects. 16 and 17; the Mississippi comes directly across its short axis from south to north. The inlet is at the southeast corner of section 17. On Nicollet's published map "L. Irving" appears out of place altogether, on another stream. But this is a mere accident of cartography for which the admirable geographer is not responsible.

Three short bends and then a straight course of a mile bring us up the Mississippi to the mouth of a river from the south, to be particularly noted for several reasons. It is the largest remaining tributary of the Mississippi, and one of its sources is a lake no more than five miles from Itasca itself. This river joins the Mississippi in the southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of Sect. 20, T. 146, R. 33. Going up it we at once fall upon the very small Lake Marquette; next, Lake La Salle (Lasale on Nicollet's map), larger and hour-glass shaped; next, Lake Plantagenet, a two-legged body of water, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles long by $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles broad. Two of these three were named in 1832 by Schoolcraft, who also said that the largest one, was called Kubba Kunna, or Rest in the Path lake—these terms becoming Rabahkanna and Resting lake in Lieut. James Allen's report. Continuing through Lake Plantagenet and up this "Plantagenian source" of the Mississippi, as it has come to be known, we find that it forks in Sect. 21, T. 144, R. 34, at a direct distance of 7 or 8 miles from

Lake Plantagenet. The fork on our left as we go up takes us 5 or 6 miles further to Lake Naiwa, called Neway lake by Nicollet, and recently re-named Lake George. Alongside and emptying into this is Nicollet's Lake Bowditch, lately renamed Lake Paine. These two are in sections 15, 16, 22 and 21, township 143, range 34. Going up the other fork, we find in about 3 miles that it forks. The fork on our left as we go up comes north from a number of small lakes, one of them lately become known as Lake Chenowagesic; and this is probably to be considered the main course of the river we are now on. The other fork comes from the west; if we follow it up we proceed directly toward Lake Itasca, and find our stream heading in a lake which occupies portions of sections 2 and 11, township 143, range 35. This is Lake Assawa—Ossowa and Usawa of Schoolcraft, Usaw-way or Perch of Allen, Assawe of Nicollet; also Lake Alice of the Rand-McNally map (Chicago, 1894), whose compilers unfortunately and injudiciously adopted the names bestowed by a certain late disreputable adventurer. Another name this dishonest person gave this lake is Elvira. It is historically of the greatest possible interest, for from Lake Assawa did Schoolcraft's party proceed by portage to discover Lake Itasca in 1832, and from it also did Nicollet proceed by portage to Lake Itasca in 1836, and so on to discover the actual source of the Mississippi, which Schoolcraft missed in his hurry on that happy-go-lucky 13th of July. As to the name which the little stream thus sketched should bear, there may be two opinions. Schoolcraft maps it with the legend "Plantagenian or South Fork of the Mississippi," and makes the Assawa lake fork the main source, calling the Naiwa lake fork by the name of this lake. Nicollet names the main stream R. Laplace, after the celebrated astronomer, as he did Lake Bowditch after the translator of that author's *Mécanique Celeste*; and he considers the main stream to be that middle one which comes from Lake Chenowagesic, furthest from the south (over the border of Hubbard county, in fact). This view is undoubtedly correct, and I, for one, should like to see Nicollet's designation of Laplace river stand. But the river is in fact called the Naiwa, and this current designation will probably prevail. I observe that our best maps in the present uncertainty omit any name, excepting the Rand-McNally map, which legends "Schoolcraft river," apparently after Eastman, 1855. Yellow Head is another name of this same river. Should the main stream come to be known to geographers as the Naiwa, I would suggest that its east fork be called the East Naiwa, agreeably with Schoolcraft's designation in 1832; and the other the West Naiwa.

We return from the excursion up the Naiwa or Laplace river, which forms the Plantagenian source of the Mississippi, and proceed up the Mississippi from the mouth of the Naiwa. We hold a due west course on the whole for $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles in an air line, but on a zigzag, with multitudinous minor tortuosities, making the distance more than twice as far; part of the way winding among wooded points, working our way over shoals and among snags, to a point in the northwest quarter of

section 28, township 146, range 34. Here is a small tributary sometimes called Allenoga river, on our right from the north, discharging a small, crooked lake which lies mainly in sections 16 and 21. Knowing no name for this, I call it Cowhorn lake, from its shape and from the trivial circumstance of finding a horn stuck on a stake in the river. We go on through a monotonous, swampy tract of reeds, rushes, wild rice, and lily-pads, alternately approaching and receding from tamarac clumps as the river winds about, for $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles further west in an air line, and more than three times that distance in actual paddling, till we reach some haying-meadows, and soon find the entrance of a notable stream on our right. This is in the northeast quarter of section 25, township 146, range 35; it is the discharge of Pinidiwin river, through a lake about a mile wide, completely filled with a fine crop of wild rice. Hence it is one of those many lakes which are called Rice, Manomin, or Monomina; but it had much better keep the distinctive name of the river which flows through it. This is a Chippewa word, which Schoolcraft translated Carnage; and he also called the same river De Soto, in one of those freaks of renaming to which he was addicted. I paddled up into Pinidiwin lake and was surprised at the volume of water it discharged, as well as at the strength of its current. But the river is a large, forked stream which drains a very extensive area north of the Mississippi. The volume of the Mississippi seems diminished nearly one-half above the mouth of the Pinidiwin.

The course up the Mississippi is now southwest to a point in the southeast quarter of section 35, township 146, range 35; where, at a bend, it receives a sizable tributary from the south. Nicollet charts this stream, but has no name for it, and I know of none that has been published excepting "Hennepin river," which appears on the Rand-McNally map. But the true Ojibway name of this stream is Wakomiti, as we are informed by the Rev. J. A. Gilfillan; and this designation is adopted both by Brower and myself. Wakomiti river rises as far south as about the middle of township 144, range 35, and flows nearly due north. Rounding the bend here we go northwest into the middle of section 28, township 146, range 35, and turn southwest to the corner of this section, on the property of Mr. A. J. Jones, a bona fide settler and cultivator of the soil. The situation is also marked by a small creek (say Jones') which falls in hard by from the west; but it is more notable as a sort of "Great Bend" of the Mississippi; for here is the place where, our course thus far having been on the whole westward, we turn quite abruptly southward to make for Lake Itasca, distant about 14 miles as the crow flies, but at least twice as far as that by the way we paddle. It has been good flat water, with no obstructions to speak of, for many miles back; but a little distance above Jones' place we come to rocky rapids for half a mile, reminding us of our experiences below Lake Bemidji. As we proceed other obstacles offer; snags abound, the Mississippi becomes in places too shallow to float a canoe, and in others bushes begin to meet across the channel, or fallen logs re-

quire to be chopped out of the way. We pass an insignificant creek on the right, and then soon sight quite an imposing pine-clad ridge on the left. Here, in the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 19, township 145, range 35, is the mouth of a creek on the left. This is marked on Schoolcraft's map "Cano river," which stands for Canoe river; the same author also has Ocano, for Au Canot, and moreover uses the Chippewa word Chemaun. The stream appears on Eastman's map of 1855 as De Witt Clinton river. It is charted by Nicollet, without any name. It has lately been properly described by Brower as Andrus creek, and was once named La Salle river by an unscrupulous person. Above Chemaun creek, in the southeast $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 26 of the township last said, a small creek comes in on the right, at "Dutch Fred's" place. I heard a man call it Bear creek, but very likely he is the only person who ever did so. Here the Mississippi enters (or rather leaves) a haying-meadow, and within a mile receives a small creek on our left, from the south, locally known as Killpecker or Chillpecker creek. It is less than a mile hence to the house of one Searles, in the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 35, township 145, range 35. There is still visible evidence on the ground that this was the site of an old trading-post, and most probably the very spot we hear of from William Morrison, who was the first known of white men at Lake Itasca, in 1804. From this place upward to Lake Itasca the Mississippi is practically unnavigable, at least in such a low stage of water as that I found—not so much on account of the extensive rapids as from snags and brush. The distance is called 20 and even 25 miles, but I think 12 miles would cover it. The air-line distance from Searles' to Lake Itasca is just 6 miles, and though the river is tortuous, besides having a general westward curve, it can hardly be much more than twice as far as the direct distance. One creek comes in on this course, called Division creek by Brower. It falls in from the west in the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 27, township 144, range 36. A tolerable wagon-road leads from Searles' house due south to the lower end of the north arm of Lake Itasca. The distance is about seven miles by this road, which keeps on the ridge east of and some distance from the Mississippi the whole way, till it ends at the lake, close by the outlet of the river, in the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 35, township 144, range 36. It is consequently almost on the line between township 144 and township 143, which cuts the end of the north arm, and forms the northern boundary line of Itasca State Park. In this situation Mr. Brower has recently (in October, 1894) discovered the site of a prehistoric village, and collected a large number of specimens of pottery, stone implements, etc. I had the pleasure of bringing this interesting discovery to the notice of the National Geographic Society of Washington, D. C., in a lecture on the Sources of the Mississippi delivered before that learned body on the 20th of January last; and I understand that Mr. Brower's full report on the subject will soon appear.

Itasca Park, created by Act of the Minnesota Legislature, approved April 20th, 1891, is 7 miles north and south by 5 miles east and

west, thus being 35 square miles, 19,701 $\frac{2}{3}$ acres, consisting of sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 33, 34, 35, 36, of township 143, range 36, in Beltrami county, with sections 1, 2, 3, 4, of township 142, range 46, in Becker county, sections 6, 7, 18, 19, 30, 31, of township 143, range 35, and section 6 of township 142, range 35—these in Hubbard county. The rectangle thus delimited includes nearly all the natural features about to be noted in the area designated as the ultimate reservoir bowl of the Mississippi by Brower, to whose admirable official report I am indebted for particulars which did not come under my personal observation on the spot, August 24th and 25th, 1894. The brim of the bowl is the Height of Land, Nicollet's Hauteurs des Terres, sc. between Hudsonian and Mexican waters; for all the water in the bowl runs into the Mississippi. The political boundary of the park is somewhat less than conterminous with the area of this bowl. The latter is conveniently divided into the greater and lesser segments, according to whether the waters drain into the west or the east arm of Lake Itasca; the greater segment contains the primal sources of the Mississippi. The brim of the bowl has a maximum elevation of 1,750 feet above sea-level. The southernmost lake in the bowl is Brower's Hernando de Soto, supposed to be 2.555 $\frac{1}{4}$ miles from the Gulf of Mexico, at an altitude of 1,558 feet. Another is Morrison lake. There are too many small lakes to mention, all beyond or beside any actual permanent surface connection with the Mississippian stream; two little ones which come near to such connection are Whipple and Floating Moss; but all contribute, either by seepage or flowage, to the Mississippi; their waters vary with season. Brower's important and fruitful studies of the hydrography of the Ultimate Reservoir Bowl have developed the unquestionable fact that all these lakes are to be considered collectively as Mississippi sources; and especially that by far the greatest volume of their waters flows through Nicollet's Infant Mississippi into the west arm of Lake Itasca. This effectually disposes of the recent fictitious and fraudulent exploitation of Elk lake as the true source of the "father of waters."

The Mississippi springs from the ground under a hill which I call the Verumontanum; the first collection of living waters, or what may be termed Fons et Origo Springs, occurs about the contiguous corners of sections $\frac{28;27}{33;34}$ in township 143, range 36. The rill which issues thence runs northward in sections 27 and 28, and collects in a pool worthily named by Brower Upper Nicollet lake, after the keen-eyed geographer who first spied and mapped it in connection with his immortal discovery of the Mississippian *Verum Caput*. But this Lacus Superior Nicolleti is not now connected by surface flowage with the continuation of the Mississippi; Brower is correct in designating its feeder as the "detached upper fork" of the Mississippi; for the Upper Nicollet lake is separated by a dry ridge a few yards wide, forming a sort of "natural bridge," under or through which water seeps, but over which it certainly never flows. Stepping a few paces over this *pons naturalis*, we descend into

a boggy place where the several Nicollet springs issue from the ground and form a rill whose waters are continuous to the Gulf of Mexico. If one wishes to "cover" the Mississippi in any sense, one may do so literally here, where the river is a few inches wide and fewer deep, by lying at full length on both sides of the stream and drinking out of the channel. This rivulet is the principal feeder of the Middle Nicollet lake, which is of oval figure, less than $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mile long, lying chiefly in the southeast quarter of section 21. The outlet of this lake is close to the inlet, by a well-defined stream say $\frac{1}{8}$ of a mile long, which starts west, receives a small tributary called Howard creek from the south, and then curves north into the Lower Nicollet lake, one-sixth of a mile west of the Middle Nicollet lake. This is in size between the Upper and Middle lakes; it receives two rills, one of them called Spring Ridge creek; the Mississippi issues from the north end of this lake, and thence pursues a general northeast course for about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a mile in an air line, though crookedly and with several small bends, to fall into the head of the west arm of Lake Itasca, in the southwest $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 15. On its way it receives Demaray creek from the west. Thus is constituted, entirely above or south of Lake Itasca, the infant Mississippi, discovered by Nicollet in 1836, and by him poetically styled the Cradled Hercules. The cradle is now known as Nicollet Valley; it is bounded on the west by the Hauteurs des Terres, now Nicollet Heights, and on the east by a long, curved and somewhat broken ridge, which I have named Brower Ridge, after the accomplished gentleman whose name will always be associated with the history and geography of the Itasca basin. This ridge is the best walking from Itasca up to the Fons et Origo springs—though in the present state of the ground this is not saying much in its favor, yet this way is less laborious than following up the Infant Mississippi. When the Park has been laid out and adorned, Brower Ridge will be an eligible avenue or carriage drive. The north end of the ridge rises on Morrison hill, which overlooks Itasca on the one hand and on the other gives a fine view of Elk lake; it is only a few steps down to either lake from the summit, where stands the Brower post of 1889 with its historical inscription, a sign-board commemorating Nicollet, and a granite boulder graven with a name. Elk lake is the largest body of water in the bowl after Lake Itasca, being of irregularly oval figure, about a mile long by $\frac{2}{3}$ as broad. It lies almost entirely in section 22, immediately south of the head of the west arm of Itasca, and thus alongside the Herculean Incunabula, from which it is separated by Brower ridge. Elk lake has the bad luck of a bad name, with the more serious misfortune of a vainglorious record of attempted fraud. In the first place the name—with due deference to Gen. James H. Baker, who in 1876 caused "Elk" to become official on the plat of township 143, section 36—seems to me badly chosen. For, as we have already seen, "Elk" was originally the English name of Lake Itasca, translating F Lac la Biche, and Chippewa Omoshkos Sogiagon; so its transfer to the smaller lake is liable to create confusion. It would have been better

could we have adopted the name of Breck lake, given by Rev. J. A. Gilfillan in 1881, or used the original Chippewa word Gagiwitadinag, meaning "lake embosomed in hills." In the second place, a certain unworthy person magnified the size of this lake, stretched out its principal feeder southward, lengthened, widened, and deepened its discharge into Itasca, labeled it Lake Glazier, and trumpeted his false claim of discovering the one and only true source of the Mississippi, to the scandal of geographical societies and other learned bodies. Elk lake was well described in 1872 by Julius Chambers, who called it Lake Dolly Varden; its discharge into Lake Itasca is now known as Chambers creek. This is a small side-stream about 333 yards long, in the bed of which I walked dry-shod, yet which has been exploited as the course of the Mississippi. Elk lake has several feeders, among them three called Elk, Siegfried, and Gaygwedosag—the latter named for Nicollet's guide of 1836, whom Nicollet called Kegwedzissag. All the features thus far noted are in the greater ultimate reservoir bowl, in relation with the west arm of Lake Itasca. Turning to the lesser part of the bowl, whose waters drain into the east arm, we find a chain of small lakes, whose names from south to north are Josephine, Ako, Danger, Twin, and Mary—the last of which was named in 1883 by Peter Turnbull, for his wife, who was the first white woman, and had the first white child, at Lake Itasca. Mary lake has continuous surface flow by Mary creek into the head of the east arm.

Such, in brief, are the main features of the Mississippian waters which drain from the south into Lake Itasca; but I suppose there are a hundred little lakes or pools in the bowl which seep through the bibulous soil; in fact, this flowing bowl is full of lees. The large lake which forms its strongest feature is of a three-pronged or triradiate figure—mostly arms, with little body, like a star-fish. It is said that the early name refers to the head and antlers of the elk, respectively represented by the three projections. There is not very much difference in size and shape between them, though each has its particular form. Where the three prongs come together as the main body of the lake is the small but picturesque Schoolcraft island, where the party of 1832 camped July 13th, as Nicollet did in August, 1836; it is decidedly the most eligible spot for the purpose before making one's periplus of the lake. The island is in section 11, township 143, range 35; its absolute position has been dead-reckoned by Mr. A. J. Hill to be lat. $47^{\circ} 13' 10''$ N., long. $95^{\circ} 12'$ W. Mr. Brower has this summer (1894) set up a very stanch oaken commemoration post, which bears a suitable legend and looks as if it might stand for a century. The island was named by Lieut. James Allen (Rep., p. 332). Near it is a shallow place called Rocky Shoal. The lake is $3\frac{3}{8}$ miles in greatest length from the end of the north to that of the east arm; the ends of the east and west arms are $2\frac{3}{8}$ miles apart. The west arm is marked off by Ozawindib point; the east arm by Bear point; and Turnbull point projects into the latter arm about opposite the place where Nicollet struck the lake in portaging over from Lake Assawa. The

best view of the lake is to be had from Rhodes Hill, near the base of the east arm. Itasca has several feeders besides Mary creek, Chambers creek, and the Infant Mississippi; four of these are Island creek, from the west, opposite Schoolcraft island; Floating Bog creek, falling in by Bear point; Boutwell creek, on the west side of the west arm; and Shaw-inukumag creek, a little rill close by the mouth of the Infant. There is one point about the lake I wish to signalize by the name of Point Hill, after my esteemed friend, Mr. Alfred J. Hill of St. Paul. When you come to the north end of the north arm, at the usual landing or embarking place there, where McMullen's house stands, your view of Schoolcraft island, as you look southward up the north arm, is intercepted by a promontory from the west side, near the center of section 2, township 143, range 36; this is Point Hill.

The altitude of Lake Itasca is given by Brower as 1,457 feet; its distance from the Gulf of Mexico, by the channel of the Mississippi, is probably about 2,550 miles—by no means those "3,184" miles which the Rand-McNally map exploits. The general situation is: 150 miles west of Lake Superior; 125 miles south from the north border of Minnesota; 75 miles east from the west and 252 miles north from the south border of the same. The lake is reached from St. Paul by 240 miles overland; take the G. N. R. R. to Park Rapids, and go thence in one day by wagon. The distance from St. Paul by the Mississippi is said to be 560 miles: it is ineligible as a route, because of obstructions to navigation, especially by logging-booms. A much easier way than I selected for my own excursion is, as just said, to the lake by rail and wagon, thence down the Mississippi by canoe or skiff to Deer river or Grand Rapids, where you strike the railroad to Duluth, or even down to Brainerd, where the N. P. R. R. crosses.

The names most prominently associated with discovery and exploration in the Itasca basin are: William Morrison, 1804; Henry R. Schoolcraft and James Allen, 1832; Jean R. Nicollet, 1836; Julius Chambers, 1872; James H. Baker and Edwin S. Hall, 1875; Hopewell Clarke; 1886; and J. V. Brower, 1889-94.

EACH GENERATION, as it takes its place in the long succession, owes a debt to the past and to the future. The obligation is most sacred to collect every shred of testimony throwing light upon the history of the past and of the present, and to transmit the record to the ages that come after. Only thus can the evidence be accumulated upon which a final judgment can be safely pronounced. Whilst contemporaneous testimony may be tinged with prejudice and passion, historic criticism will censure it only as the iron in the marble which sometimes discolors its polished surface.—Address of Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer, of New Orleans, before Louisiana Historical Society.

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