

INDUSTRIAL HISTORY OF MILWAUKEE

THE

COMMERCIAL, MANUFACTURING

AND

RAILWAY METROPOLIS OF THE NORTH-WEST.

ITS GREAT NATURAL RESOURCES AND ADVANTAGEOUS LOCATION AS A SHIPPING POINT, WITH
A REVIEW OF ITS GENERAL BUSINESS INTERESTS, INCLUDING HISTORY OF MILWAU-
KEE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, STATISTICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE, TO WHICH
IS ADDED A SERIES OF SKETCHES OF THE PROMINENT PLACES
AND PEOPLE OF THE CREAM CITY, THE RISE AND
PROGRESS OF FIRMS, INSTITUTIONS
AND CORPORATIONS.



ILLUSTRATED.

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roads, can carry on uninterrupted communication with the outer world, being a port of entry. As far back as 1859 a Milwaukee merchant consigned the cargo of the "Hanover" of this city for Hamburg, Germany. The "G. C. Trumpf," the "Gold Hunter," the "M. S. Scott," the "Juniata Patten," and other ships have cleared from this port for Europe with wheat cargoes. Various lines of steamers ply between this city and other points upon the lake daily, during summer and winter.

The custom-house records show that the number of vessels which entered this port during 1884 was 5,176. Of these, 567, with a tonnage of 354,807 tons, were side-wheel steamers; 2,061, tonnage 1,796,594, were propellers; and 2,548, tonnage 486,424, were sailing vessels.

The first vessel that ever landed goods at Milwaukee was the "Chicago Packet," a schooner of 30 tons, commanded by Capt. Brittam. She was chartered by Solomon Juneau to take a cargo from Chicago to this place in 1823.

The value of the lake marine, as reported upon the register of the Treasury Department of the United States, is over \$60,000,000, and it represents a commerce that exceeds the total foreign commerce of the United States. Milwaukee's share of the 3,087 vessels composing the lake navy in 1880 was 362, with an aggregate carrying capacity of 100,000 tons. Of these 269 were sailing vessels, and 93 steam vessels. The cash value of the fleet was estimated at \$3,677,000. As a port of construction, Milwaukee has always ranked high, because of the excellence of its shipwrights. There are two large shipyards here, giving employment to 300 men. The ship chandlery establishments of Milwaukee do a large business.

With the view of converting Milwaukee bay into a harbor of refuge, the United States government is at present engaged in the construction of a break-water some distance off shore, reaching from near the extremity of North Point three-quarters of the distance toward the entrance to the harbor proper. It is designed that under stress of weather ships shall run behind this sea-wall, into the haven, where the water will at all times be smooth. One of the government life-saving stations is located on Jones' Island, at the entrance to Milwaukee harbor. The crew has done good work on several occasions, during heavy storms, rescuing many imperiled seamen from a watery grave.

THE WATER WORKS SYSTEM.

The first water works in Milwaukee were those which supplied the old United States Hotel, at the corner of Huron and East Water streets, upward of thirty years ago. The source of supply was a spring just south of Wisconsin street, between Jackson and Van Buren streets. The pipes were of tamarack wood, bored and laid by James Brooks. The connecting pieces and taps were turned by the late Henry Bleyer. The main from the spring to the hotel went south under

the alley to Michigan street, thence along the south side of that thoroughfare to the alley at present flanked by the Chamber of Commerce and the Mitchell building, and thence south to the hotel. Many residents along Michigan street, as well as the people of the hotel, were supplied with pure, cool water by this primitive system. Long after the burning of the hotel, in 1854, the water continued to pour into its basement through the tamarack pipes. Soon after the burning of the hotel, an agitation to secure water works was begun, which at length resulted in the passage by the Common Council, in June, 1857, of an ordinance authorizing the grant of seven acres of city property and the issuance of city bonds to the Milwaukee Hydraulic Company, to aid the latter in establishing a system of water supply. The plans of the company, however, were never carried out. In March, 1859, Hubbard & Converse, of Boston, proposed to build a water works system with 25 miles of pipe, completing the same before January 1, 1861, at a cost of \$450,000. Their proposition was favorably received, and would doubtless have been accepted, but for the war cloud which loomed up while it was under consideration. In 1860, as heretofore noted in this work, a readjustment act was passed, prohibiting the city from running further into debt. Nothing of important result in the matter was undertaken until 1868, when the Common Council secured the services of E. Chesbrough, a noted Chicago engineer, to examine and report a plan for securing a water supply and improving the sewerage system of the city. His report was made to the Council in the following year, and by that body referred to a special committee. As, however, under the provisions of the readjustment act of 1860, the city could not add to its indebtedness for municipal improvements while its outstanding liabilities amounted to \$500,000, the water works project continued to sleep until 1870, when the debt had been reduced to within \$250,000 of that amount. A committee appointed by Mayor Phillips, of which John Black was chairman, reported in August, 1870, favorably upon taking immediate steps to secure water works. A bill for submission at the legislative session of 1871 was prepared, empowering the city to issue water bonds, and appointing a board of water commissioners, constituted as follows: Edward O'Neill, President; Matt. Keenan, Secretary; David Ferguson, Treasurer; E. H. Brodhead, George Burnham, Alexander Mitchell, John Plankinton, Fred. Pabst and Guido Pfister. The bill passed the Legislature, and the board organized in April, 1871, making its first report in the following December. The City Engineer, Moses Lane, in company with Matt. Keenan, had meantime made a tour of examination among the Eastern cities having water works systems, and in September, 1871, had commenced work on the Milwaukee system in conformity with one of the plans proposed by Mr. Chesbrough. Water was first pumped into the reservoir October 24, 1873, the length of pipe laid at that time being about 55 miles, and the supply being temporarily taken from the Milwaukee river, north of the dam. Water was first pumped from the lake into the reservoir through the

force main across the aqueduct bridge, December 23, 1874. In 1875 the commissioners turned over the works to the Board of Public Works. The disbursements to that date aggregated \$1,948,009.60. The West Side branch pumping works were constructed in 1878 at a cost of \$165,000.

THE SEWERAGE SYSTEM.

Previous to the year 1869 about three miles of sewers had been built in Milwaukee, but no general plan of sewerage had been adopted. E. S. Chesbrough, the Chicago engineer who was employed by the city to furnish plans for systems of water works and sewers, recommended a system of sewers conveying the drainage of the city into the Milwaukee, Menomonee and Kinnickinnic rivers, to be carried by them into the lake. By the first of January, 1879, 93½ miles of sewers were in existence—partly small brick conduits, and partly pipe not exceeding 18 inches in diameter. The rivers being sluggish at most seasons of the year, the emptying of so much sewage into them was found to be attended with unpleasant results. In 1879 a committee of experts, which had been engaged to determine upon the best means for the abatement of the nuisance, reported in favor of the construction of a system of intercepting sewers, and the pumping of all the sewage directly into the lake. In 1880 the State Legislature passed a bill, introduced by Senator Paul, prohibiting the deposition of any obnoxious matter from any slaughter house or factory in any of the rivers, and making it the duty of the Board of Public Works to provide for the disposal of all the filth of the city. The intercepting sewer plan was adopted. It contemplates the interception and removal by gravitation to one or more pumping stations of the sewage proper and liquid refuse from an area of 8,700 acres included within the limits of the city, together with one-fourth of an inch of rainfall in 24 hours from the same area. The capacity of the works embraced in this plan is calculated for a prospective population of 280,000 inhabitants, within the present area of the city. A portion of these works is already built. The cost of the whole system will be \$600,000. The pumping works for the South Side sewerage district are located on Jones' Island. The sewage passes from the mainland to the pumping works through an inverted syphon 520 feet long and 50 inches in diameter. The syphon is the largest in the world.

THE GAS COMPANY.

The darkness of the city was dispersed by the benignant rays of the Milwaukee Gas Light Company for the first time on the evening of November 23, 1852. The company at the outset consisted of John Lockwood, James Kneeland, W. P. Lynde, James Rogers, and D. P. Hull. On the evening of November 24 a banquet was held at Young's Hall to celebrate the event. Eighty guests were present, most of whom are now dead. Now there are about 6,000 meters, with 1,000 miles of pipe. The number of street lamps was 2,105 on September 30, 1885. The city's