

the kind in the country, which was built for them by the American Bridge Company in 1876. The superstructure is of all wrought iron, for a single track railway, and consists of five fixed spans, 150 feet each, crossing the *old channel*, i. e., between the Wisconsin shore and Minnesota Island, and of two spans 164 feet each; 1 span 250 feet, and a pivot span 360 feet, crossing the *main channel*, i. e., between Minnesota Island and the Minnesota shore, thus making the total length of iron superstructure of the bridge 1,678 lineal feet. The substructure is of masonry resting upon pile foundations. The superstructure rests upon stone abutments and piers. The eastern terminus of the Southern Minnesota R. R. is also at this point, and close connections are made for Rushford, Lanesboro, Spring Valley, Ramsey, Albert Lea, Wells, and Winnebago City. La Crosse is 129 miles from St. Paul, and 280 from Chicago, by the C. M. & S. P. R. R.

The first white man to locate in the wilderness where now this thriving community flourishes, was Nathan Myrick, who came in 1841 and established himself as an Indian trader on the island, whence in the following year the natives allowed him to move to the site of the present city. Myrick was soon after joined by J. B. Miller, and in 1845 John M. Levy came in from Prairie du Chien. At this time the total white population was only twelve—seven males and five females. The city occupies an extremely eligible situation on a level prairie between the river and a line of bluffs some distance back of it. This prairie was once, and up to the time of white settlement, the great ball playing ground of the Indian tribes for hundreds of miles around. Every year the nations buried the hatchet and came to the smooth plain by the Father of Waters, to engage in friendly tournaments. The early French visitors called the peculiar game played *La Crosse*, and from the circumstance of this having been the grand capital of the aboriginal "national game," the settlement was called afterward by the same name. Just above the town the Black river empties into the Mississippi, bringing down its rapid current the wealth of the pineries, in the handling of which the place has such an important interest. Down his stream, which rises far up in the north-western corner of the state, many million feet of pine logs are annually rafted down to La Crosse, where the greater part is cut up into lumber.

A number of large establishments are devoted to the lumber manufacture. One of the principal is that of John Paul, Esq., an old resident, who came to the place in 1857. Since that time Mr. Paul has been intimately identified with the development and prosperity of the town. The disasters of that dark era in the financial history of the country, swamped the enterprises and means of this gentleman, but with a will to win success anyway, and with the aid of a clear head, good business judgment, and strong hands, he soon repaired the damages of the panic, and to-day stands among the leading men in the business in La Crosse and the whole North-West. Mr. Paul owns and operates a mammoth two-gang saw mill, in connection with which is all the machinery and facilities for producing lath, shingles,