

Having definitely outlined the drainage basin to the south of Itasca, it is worth while to trace the principal feeders of the lake to their springs, to determine the area drained by each, the volume of their flow, and the rapidity of their currents, to measure the elevation of their extreme sources above the level of Lake Itasca, and to find how far they are perennial, and how much of their course is dry during a portion of the year. Investigation will also show what changes have occurred in the amount of natural water-supply in this region; what alterations in the levels and dimensions of lakes and ponds have been occasioned by the choking up of their inlets or outlets by natural causes, or by the operation of beavers and other animals; and whether any of the lakes or marshes are drained at any time by both the Mississippi and the Red River of the North. It will not take long, also, for an intelligent explorer to satisfy himself whether, at any time, Elk Lake and Itasca Lake were a continuous body of water connected by a broad channel.

These are some of the questions to which the future explorer should address himself, and such questions are the only ones whose investigation will justify any one in considering himself an explorer, or his work entitled to the consideration of geographers and geographical societies. It is, at the same-time, safe to venture the prediction that the more thorough the investigation of the Itasca basin, the clearer will be the conclusion that Lake Itasca is the first considerable gathering-place of the great flood of waters which goes to make up the Mississippi River; that Nicollet's rivulet, with its chain of three lakes, is, indeed, its most important feeder and principal tributary, and that it is still entitled to be called, as heretofore, the head and source of that mighty stream—Captain Glazier and his lake to the contrary notwithstanding.

#### FINALLY.

Already the settler is taking up land and felling timber on the shores of Lake Itasca; and with the clearing of the forests, and the systematic drainage and cultivation of farms, the smaller streams and ponds will dry up and disappear, while other lakes and creeks will cease to have the importance that they may now possess. These changes, however, cannot affect the shape and conformation of the basin of Lake Itasca, or the location of the