

Visiting Committee, and, as such, visited all the charitable and penal institutions of the State. The report of this committee, while recommending liberal appropriations for the institutions fostered by the State, indicated a settled purpose to ignore any claims from institutions under the care of any religious denomination.

The celebrated struggle in the legislature over the St. Croix land-grant transpired during the second year of Mr. Irish's term; and he rendered signal service on the side of the North Wisconsin Company, acting as champion of their bill. The result of that struggle has fully justified him in the course he pursued, though at the time a partisan spirit was evoked against him. The Lacrasse Bridge Bill, which was vetoed by the governor, and which veto was sustained by the votes of Mr. Irish and others, gave opportunity to test the mettle of honest men. While rumors of bribery and corruption were rife during that stormy time, no faintest breath fell upon Mr. Irish. He returned to his constituents with the satisfaction of having done his duty. In June, 1873, he was appointed register of the United States Land Office at Eau Claire, and removed there with his family, now decimated by death; his wife having suddenly died the previous winter. He retained this office until April, 1875, when he resigned the office, it interfering with his chosen profession of minister of the gospel. In January, 1871, he was again married to Miss Isabella H. Cobban of Eau Claire.

The appointments which have been held by Mr. Irish both in Church and State indicate the esteem in which he is held and the estimate placed upon his talents.

Mr. Irish is tall and portly, of commanding personal appearance. His phrenology and physiognomy betoken a high order of intellect; and his mild blue eye and genial smile rightly impress one with the idea that there is a warm heart beneath. He is exceedingly modest, and shrinks from making himself prominent among men.

**HON. DAVID ATWOOD.**<sup>1</sup>—“He was born in Bedford, N.H., Dec. 15, 1815. He belongs to a vigorous and long-lived family. His parents are natives of the town of Bedford; and his father, now more than ninety years of age, lives on

<sup>1</sup> We are indebted to the columns of *The Western Monthly*, August, 1869, for this sketch.—C. R. T.

the old homestead. The early history of Gen. Atwood is that of all sturdy New England boys who worked on their fathers' farms in summer, and attended the district schools in winter. It was hot work, wrestling with Nature in those sultry days on the stony hillsides of a rough New England farm, forcing the soil to yield subsistence. Cold and raw were the autumn months, and hard the struggle through deep drifts, and against the blustering winter-wind, on the way to the old schoolhouse. It seemed sometimes as if old Boreas lurked about the hills in ambush, waiting for a chance to blow away such boys and girls as were not anchored to the earth with plenty of bone and muscle. This course of life, until he was sixteen years of age, developed and strengthened him, and firmly fixed those habits of industry and frugality which have given him subsequent success. He thus became fitted for a fair fight with the world.

“On arriving at the age of fifteen years, he took up his residence in Hamilton, Madison County, N.Y., and commenced work at a printer's case. Five years of assiduous toil intervened before he again saw the paternal roof-tree, during which time he had the satisfaction of becoming master of his craft. For nearly three years following, he travelled extensively through the South and West. Much of the time he was in the employ of a printing-house; and his business afforded him opportunity to study the country, and become familiar with the resources and character of the people. The States of Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Illinois, were thoroughly explored; and every considerable town was visited. Gen. Atwood was first introduced to Chicago when it lay in a swamp, with a main street muddy, and almost impassable, and the business of the town centred about a forlorn wooden hotel, not far from the Tremont House, but on the opposite side of Lake Street. Declining a tempting offer to engage in business in Cincinnati, he returned to Hamilton, N.Y., in 1839, where he undertook the publication of a weekly newspaper, called ‘The Palladium,’ in conjunction with his brother. Among the types, and as a journalist, for five long years he labored on, through the ‘hard elder’ campaign, and until the defeat of Henry Clay.

“Some time during these years of journalistic employ, he received a con-