

## *The Pioneer School*

"Shurtleff College, the oldest educational institution in the West, was founded in great faith and in great poverty; sustained for a generation by the unmeasured sacrifices of a few consecrated, cultured men; nourished for another generation by a slowly increasing body of supporters, ministering to a growing student constituency, sending out year by year young men who have since wrought largely in the world. Dr. de Blois, who was president of Shurtleff from 1894 to 1899, has rendered far more than a local or denominational service in preparing a history of the college. He has placed before the educational public of the day, busy with the pressing needs and problems of the present, a fair, unprejudiced story of educational beginnings in a typical western field. He has reminded those who might otherwise forget that there have been educated men and trained teachers in Illinois for more than a few years; that the growth of this great state from a horde of emigrants and traders to a splendid commonwealth was not wrought without the patient labors of godly men who early cast their lot in the river towns and the backwoods for the sake of God and truth. It is as "the pioneer school" that Shurtleff, with Dr. de Blois for her biographer, will appeal to many readers of this narrative. We venture to say that few who care for the records of early struggles for culture, with their humor and pathos and humble heroism, will fail to find this history absorbing, whether or not they have any personal interest in the particular institution concerned.

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"Dr. de Blois must have delved deeply into the historical records, written and printed, of the college, and more than that, he must have spent much time in research of a more difficult sort—studying the local traditions of early times, the personal characteristics of leaders now deceased, the stories of antebellum days. From the late Dr. Justus Bulkley and other survivors of Shurtleff's early years he gained many facts that help to make the history complete. When one remembers how many of these pioneers have passed away within a decade, it is most gratifying that the preparation of this indispensable chronicle was not longer delayed. \* \* \* The collection of materials for this narrative gives evi-

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