

Henry concludes, from the results of his unsuccessful experiment in mining, that the copper can never be profitably mined, except for local consumption, and that the country must be cultivated and peopled before this can take place. He remarks, it was in the hopes of finding silver in sufficient abundance to make the speculation profitable, that the works were commenced. He speaks of the discovery of this metal in only one place, Pointe aux Iroquois, where, according to his authority, a Mr. Norburg, a Russian gentleman, acquainted with metals, discovered a blue stone of eight pounds' weight, which was sent to England and found to contain sixty per cent. of silver.

None of the early explorers seem to have noticed the existence of metallic silver associated with the copper, although we know that, among the numerous masses of copper which have been picked up on the shores of the lake, some have contained a considerable quantity of silver interspersed through them.

In 1819, General Cass, under the authority of the Secretary of War, directed an exploring expedition, which passed along the southern shore of Lake Superior, and crossed over to the Mississippi. This expedition had among its principal objects that of investigating the northwestern copper mines, and was accompanied by Mr. H. R. Schoolcraft, in the capacity of mineralogist and geologist. His observations are recorded in his "Narrative Journal of Travels from Detroit northwest, &c.," published in 1821.

In the spring of 1823, Major Long, acting under the orders of the War Department, and accompanied by several scientific gentlemen, started on an expedition, the object of which was to explore the river St. Peter's and the country situated on the northern boundary of the United States, between the Red river of Hudson's bay and Lake Superior. In returning, they coasted along the north shore of this lake. Professor Keating, in his narration of the expedition, remarks that they had seen native copper (boulders) strewn in many directions over the great valley drained by the Mississippi and its tributaries.

All the early explorers seem to agree in the opinion, that if deposits of copper should be discovered in this region, yet, so great is its distance from a market, and so wild and unsettled the character of the country, that there would be no hope of their being profitably worked—at least for many years to come.

The attention of the government was called to the mineral resources of the Northwest during the presidency of the elder Adams, and a commission was instituted with the view of exploring this region; but we have been unable to ascertain why nothing further was done in this matter.

Such was the state of things up to the time when Dr. Douglass Houghton, State geologist of Michigan, in the prosecution of his labors, commenced the exploration of the northern peninsula, and by his official reports awakened attention to this distant region. In his annual report, presented to the legislature of Michigan, February 1, 1841, the great features of the country were sketched with a masterly hand, and the first definite information with regard to the occurrence of the deposits of native copper in the rocks was laid before the world. After this preliminary reconnaissance of the country, Dr. Houghton entered into a contract with the United States government to execute the linear survey of the northern peninsula in connexion with a geological survey, according to the system devised by him in connexion with Wm. A. Burt, esq. Dr. Houghton