

KILBOURN CITY AND DELLS OF THE WISCONSIN.

The neighborhood of Kilbourn City is in many respects, without doubt, the most interesting point in the state of Wisconsin. Here the tourist halts to visit the Dells of the Wisconsin River, a treasure-house of the wildest scenery, than which the famed beauties of the Canons of the Yellowstone or the picturesque Watkin's Glen in New York, are not greater. Nor is this locality alone interesting because of its wierd, impressive surroundings, for connected with it are reminiscences of Indian days, and tales and traditions of the wild raftsmen's life of early white settlement. Almost every spot along the banks of the river for miles hereabout is identified with some legend of tragic interest.

Kilbourn City is a small town of 1,200 inhabitants, situated on the Wisconsin river, at the crossing of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul R. R., and was named in honor of Byron Kilbourn, who was superintendent of that road at the time the village was located. It is distant from Chicago 193 miles, from Milwaukee 109, and from St. Paul 225 miles. The first buildings, a dwelling house and a printing office, were erected in 1855, and in the following year a number of settlers came in. The crossing of the railway had been anticipated at a point a little lower on the river, and there quite a settlement had sprung up; but when the bridge was finally begun at its present site, the houses were pulled down and the community almost to a family moved up to Kilbourn City. As to the general character of the surface in this vicinity, it is "generally rolling and broken by numerous ravines, the latter generally transverse to the Wisconsin river, which borders the village on the west and south. The soil varies somewhat after the fashion of a checker-board: a tract of clay covered heavily with white and black oak, alternating with a patch of light sandy soil marked with stunted burr-oaks and 'jack pines.' Clay or clayey loam predominates, about four-fifths of the land being adapted for tillage. The leading products are wheat and other cereals, hops, potatoes, and apples." Some years ago Kilbourn City was the most important supply market for hops in the state, but the falling off in prices of late years has materially diminished the production. Several manufacturing establishments are in operation in and about the village, among which a saw mill and flouring mill are the most important. There are many stores, five churches, a post office, several insurance offices, and the Bank of Kilbourn, the latter an institution of greater influence and importance than the size of the town would naturally suggest. It is presided over by the Hon. J. Bowman, who is also resident director of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul R. R., and has been honored several times with a seat in the Assembly and Senate of Wisconsin.

There is an excellent and popular hotel at Kilbourn City, the Finch House, where every accomodation needed by the traveler or summer visitor is supplied as completely as the most exacting watering place habitue could