THE DISCOVERY OF THE OLD NORTHWEST AND ITS SETTLEMENT BY THE FRENCH

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The Discovery of the Old Northwest and Its Settlement by the French by James Baldwin

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JAMES BALDWIN

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AND ITS SETTLEMENT BY THE FRENCH

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JAMES BALDWIN

Anthor of "Baldina"s Boulers," "The Story of Sugirant"

"The Book Lovies" (18).



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PREFACE

While every American is familiar with the events connected with the discovery and colonization of the eastern shores of our country, the history of the Old Northwest—that magnificent section of our country lying west of the Alleghanies and bounded by the Mississippi, the Ohio, and the Great Lakes—is comparatively unknown. It has a history as varied, as interesting, and as important as that of any other portion of the North American continent, and yet few persons realize the extent to which the events attending its early exploration, its conquest, and its settlement have determined the destiny of our country as a whole.

So far as is known to the writer, no attempt has hitherto been made to relate the story of these events in a connected order, free from extraneous details and adapted to the comprehension and tastes of younger readers. Parkman, in his monumental series of historical narratives, has told this story in connection with many others having but slight relation to the Old Northwest; Justin Winsor, in his very scholarly volumes relating to the French régime in America, has done the same. But the works of these writers are too voluminous for general readers, and being designed for mature thinkers they fail to be attractive to the majority of young people just beginning to acquire a taste for historical reading. The author of this volume,

while indebted to Winsor and Parkman and many other writers for the facts which he relates, has followed his own method of telling the story, keeping always in mind as the central thought the discovery and development of the Old Northwest and its final conquest for freedom and civilization.

He has not attempted a complete history, but rather a connected series of sketches, selecting from the very large number of events and incidents that might have been related those which seemed to him most necessary to the interest and the continuous unfolding of the narrative. It is confidently believed that young readers of these sketches will rise from their perusal with some new conceptions of the history of our country, and especially of that portion of it which seems destined to be— if it is not already—the "commanding field whence men and institutions will communicate their will to the nation."

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