

## GOVERNORS OF MINNESOTA.

left continuous tribes, endowed with money and with brains. But many of our early noted and strong men, save in their noble and useful lives, are perpetuated only in names of counties and towns. Possibly the Washburns may prove an exception.

> The progenitors of William R. Merriam's family on the paternal side were of Scotch origin; on the maternal side they were French. John L. Merriam, father of the governor, traced his ancestry to that William Merriam who was born at Bedford, Massachusetts, in 1750, and served with the "Minute Men" in the war of the Revolution. He took part in the memorable fight at Concord Bridge, April 19, 1775. He was chairman of the Board of Select Men in Bedford, 1777. He was a prominent and well known citizen. The members of this particular branch of the Merriams located in northern New York. The father of the governor was born in Essex county, in 1828, and in time became a merchant at Wadham's Mills, and was also engaged in the iron trade, as were many others of the family. At one time, 1857, he was the treasurer of the county. His wife, Mahala De Lano, who, as the name indicates, was of French descent, was a woman of many estimable qualities, and strong, vigorous character.

To this excellent couple was born William Rush Merriam, the future governor, July 26, 1849, in Essex county, N. Y., a region of beautiful and picturesque scenery. His birthplace was in a small village, called Wadham's Mills, where there were iron mills and manu-

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WILLIAM RUSH MERRIAM.

facturing industries, and the few citizens were intelligent, industrious, and thrifty.

His middle name, Rush, was for the celebrated Dr. William Rush, of Philadelphia, a family relative, of Revolutionary fame.

When William was but twelve years of age, in 1861, his father removed to Minnesota and settled at once in St. Paul. It was years before the advent of railroads, and in connection with those vigorous pioneers, James C. Burbank, Captain Russell Blakeley, and Colonel Alvaren Allen, he engaged in the stage and transportation business, under the name of the "Minnesota Stage Company." This firm secured all the mail contracts of the Northwest, and, with their passenger and express business, were men of great business affairs. John L. Merriam at once exhibited the pushing, energetic business qualities which made him eminently successful. In 1870 he was elected to the legislature, and again in 1871, and in both sessions he was made Speaker of the House. The son, as events proved, followed the footsteps of his father.

Colonel John L. Merriam was known as one of the most enterprising and valuable citizens, whose unblemished character and fine social qualities gained him the esteem of all.

From the time of the family's arrival in St. Paul till he was fifteen years of age, young William led an uneventful life, and was habitually in attendance at the public schools. In 1864 he was sent to school at Ra-

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