



HALVOR STEENERSON.

The people of Thelemarken, Norway, are mountaineers, and are noted for their great stature and physical strength. Halvor Steenerson, of Crookston, Minnesota, is a descendant of that sturdy people. His father, Steener Knudson, was a schoolmaster in Hvidseid, Thelemarken, who afterwards became a farmer. He bought the estate in Silgjord commonly called "Meaas," and was usually known among his countrymen as Steener Meaas. He came to the United States with his family in 1851 and settled in Dane County, Wisconsin. Two years later he moved to Houston County, Minnesota, and was one of the earliest pioneers in that section. When the war broke out he enlisted in Company K, Eleventh Minnesota infantry, and offered his services to his adopted country. In 1875 he removed to Polk County, where he died in 1881. He was active in public affairs and held many positions of trust. He was an active member of the Lutheran Church, and helped to organize the first congregations in Houston and Fillmore counties. His wife's maiden name was Bergith Roholt, a daughter of Leif Roholt, in Hvidseid, Thelemarken, Norway. Roholt is a large estate and has been held in the same family for generations. The subject of this sketch was born on

a farm in the town of Pleasant Springs, Dane County, Wisconsin, June 30, 1852. He attended the country schools of Sheldon, Houston County, after the family came to this state, and the high school at Rushford. While teaching school, which profession he followed for the most part in 1871, '72, '73 and '74, he began the study of law. After he quit teaching he entered a law office in Austin, Minnesota, and read law there for two years. He then went to the Union College of Law at Chicago and took the course there until June, 1878, when he was admitted to the bar in the supreme court of Illinois. He returned to Austin late in September, 1878, was admitted to the bar of Minnesota, and opened a law office on his own account in October, 1878, at Lanesboro. He practiced successfully there until 1880, at which time he moved to Crookston, Minnesota, his parents and five of his brothers having settled there several years before. Mr. Steenerson speedily built up a lucrative practice and was elected county attorney, which office he filled for two years. He was elected to the state senate and served in the sessions of 1883 and 1885. Mr. Steenerson's position in the state, especially among his own countrymen, has become an influential one. He has been very successful as a lawyer. Perhaps the most important litigation which Mr. Steenerson has conducted was the application made before the railroad and warehouse commission, in behalf of his brother Elias, for a reduction in grain rates from the Red River Valley to Minneapolis and other markets. The application was granted by the railroad commissioners, but was appealed to the supreme court by the railroad company and is still unsettled. It is a case of great importance to the farmers and business men of the Red River Valley, and the effort to secure a reduction in rates attracted wide attention. The case involves the question of the power of the state through a commission to regulate and fix charges for railroad transportation. Mr. Steenerson is a Republican, but besides the offices already indicated, has never held any political position except that of delegate to state and national conventions. He sat in the Republican national conventions of 1884 and 1888. He was one of the framers and active promoters of the railroad legislation of the state

at the session of 1885, and aided in drafting the law which created the railroad and warehouse commission and which has formed the basis of all legislation of that kind since. Mr. Steenerson is a member of the Norwegian Lutheran Synod church, and was married in 1878 to Miss Mary Christofferson. They have two children living, Clara N. and Benjamin G.

LOUIS A. EVANS.

Louis A. Evans, of St. Cloud, is a native of Pennsylvania. He was born at Philadelphia, November 22, 1822, a son of Levi Evans and Elizabeth Wills (Evans). He attended the public schools of Philadelphia, but was not favored with the advantages of a college education. While yet a young man he left his native state and went South, where he resided until the fall of 1856, when he was attracted by the allurements of frontier life. In the fall of that year he began the long and tedious journey with ox teams which ended at what is now St. Cloud, December 15, the same year. Here Mr. Evans has resided ever since. He has been repeatedly elected to offices of various degrees of importance and responsibility, administrative, legislative and judicial, and it is conceded that he has filled them all with credit to himself and to the satisfaction of the public. When the city of St. Cloud was incorporated in 1862 he was chosen as its first mayor, since which time he has held the same office four times, which of itself is an indication of the high esteem in which he is held by his fellow citizens. After coming to Minnesota, Mr. Evans pursued the study of law and was admitted to the bar in October, 1866. In 1860 and 1861 he served as the representative of his district in the house of representatives, and in 1867 was promoted to the upper house in the state legislature. In 1862 Mr. Evans was elected city justice, which office he subsequently resigned to accept that of judge of probate. After the expiration of his term as probate judge he was again elected city justice, only again to resign to accept the office of judge of probate, to which he had been elected and which he held without a break for nearly twenty years, as he did that of city justice nearly as long after being re-elected to that office. In politics Judge Evans is an old-line Democrat, and has always been



regarded as one of the reliable adherents of that political faith, even when his party was so decidedly in the minority in this state that it cut but little figure in public affairs. As a leader among men, however, he was often honored by Minnesota Democrats with the position of delegate to party conventions, and represented the state in the national convention at Cincinnati in 1880, which nominated General Hancock for president. During all this period of his public life in St. Cloud, the duties of which have demanded most of his attention, he has conducted privately the business of real estate and insurance, in which lines of activity he exercised the same energy and displayed the same qualities of uprightness and reliability which characterized his public acts. He has for many years been one of the directors of the First National Bank, and has been identified in many ways with enterprises for the promotion of the interests of St. Cloud. In early manhood he became a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and helped to organize the first lodge of that order in St. Cloud. Although now in his seventy-fourth year, Judge Evans is an active and vigorous man, in the full enjoyment of all his faculties, and actively engaged in the conduct of his professional and business interests. He was married in June, 1871, to Elizabeth W. Libby. They have no children.