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CENTRAL WISCONSIN

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Its Possibilities
and Future

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By

PROFESSOR W. A. HENRY
Wisconsin Agricultural College
and

HON. FRED RIETBROCK

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**WISCONSIN
HISTORICAL
LIBRARY
ANY FARMER**

*Can give a good reason
owns his farm but no
can give a good
why he does not
one*

*"Be sure you are right
Then go ahead"*

JOHN P. HUME

Of Marshfield, Wisconsin, is one of the pioneers in the development and settlement of central and northern Wis-

consin and hundreds of farmers in Wood,

Clark and Marathon counties can testify

to his reliability. If you want to

at these locations, get a larger farm for

yourself or your boys; if you want to

invest for yourself in a small way write

to me and I will aid you in every way.

Northern Wisconsin

...Its AGRICULTURAL POSSIBILITIES...

From a Closing Farmers' Institute Paper by Prof. W. A. Henry, Dean Wisconsin College of Agriculture.....



PEOPLE familiar with agriculture in the southern half of the state are the very class of people to build homes in the northern part. This is especially true of the sons and daughters of our farmers. Familiar with our customs and practices, and knowing of our interests socially and politically, these people drifting northward, become the very best of farmers and citizens. They are proud of Wisconsin and loyal to its every interest.

Thousands of readers of this article need not be told what can be produced in the northern half of our state. For the benefit of others let it be noted that grasses and clovers flourish particularly in this region. Timothy grows everywhere and Kentucky blue grass seems indigenous for one finds it creeping along the roadsides and through the bare spots in the timberlands. The clovers are particularly at home. Red and alsike clover usually give two crops a year. These plants are not so easily killed out in winter as in southern Wisconsin, because when winter comes

on in our northland, cold weather prevails continuously and there is the absence of freezing and thawing which is so fatal to clover life. White clover is found everywhere in the north, and, like blue grass, seems indigenous. We all know that the potato plant thrives best in a cool summer climate on rich soil. Central Wisconsin is already widely advertised for its great crops of magnificent potatoes. In that region this tuber has paid off many a mortgage. What is true of the central portion of the state holds equally well for large regions further north. Northern grown potatoes are more completely filled with starch and possess a higher, better flavor than the soggy, half-developed specimens of the same tuber growing further south in this country. Rutabagas, sugar beets, common peas and garden vegetables generally are of the highest quality when grown in the north. A plant that should be particularly dwelt upon is the common field pea and garden pea. We all know that Canada grows a choice brand of field peas. Northern Wisconsin can easily equal Canada. The same variety of pea vines which will grow 2.5 feet high in southern Wisconsin will stretch up to 3.5 and even four feet in northern Wisconsin. The yield of field peas is from twenty to thirty-five bushels per acre. They are free from the pea weevil, Peas can be grown for hay and the grain is an excellent food for dairy cows and fattening hogs. In the not distant future there will be factories established all over northern Wisconsin canning this delicious vegetable when in the best stage for preservation.

But I am asked: "What about Indian corn; will it grow in northern Wisconsin?" By the proper selection of varieties and growing one's

own seed, this greatest of all crops in the Mississippi valley will become a common one all over the north. If the farmers can grow corn as far north as Winnepeg, Manitoba, as they are doing, what is the use of questioning the possibilities of growing corn in northern Wisconsin? Oats, barley, and wheat, especially the former, yield good crops in northern Wisconsin. The finest field of oats the writer ever saw was in northern Wisconsin. Under favorable conditions as much as 100 bushels of oats per acre have been produced, although the common yield is from forty to fifty bushels per acre.

With all of these facts firmly established, there is no need of longer discussing what crops can be grown in our new north. The next question is: "What industries will flourish there aside from mere crop growing?"

First of all let it be known that northern Wisconsin is particularly adapted to dairying, and in dairying, cheese production should be the leading line. The farmers of Iowa and northern Illinois can produce milk which will make fine butter. These farmers, however, cannot send milk to the factory that will make the highest grade of cheese. Milk for cheese making must be purer and more wholesome than that which will make good butter. Now, because of its abundance of luscious grasses, its healthful climate and its cool, purer waters everywhere present, the farmers of northern Wisconsin have special advantages for the production of milk of unusual excellence, and from such milk there can be made a quality of cheese that is equalled nowhere else in all this great country. We all know the high quality of Canada cheese. Wisconsin's climate is much the same as that of

Canada, the difference being in our favor if anything. Farmers should endeavor therefore to secure cheese factories and engage extensively in the manufacture of cheese, remembering always that if they will follow reasonable rules they can soon be producing a brand of cheese that will bring a higher price in the market than that produced further south, and that a reputation once established will be worth a great deal of money to them. In order to rear the calves and thus keep up the herds, it is well to have a combined butter and cheese factory, making butter in the early spring when the calves need the milk, and then turning to cheese making later on when that article commands a good price and the price of butter has fallen.

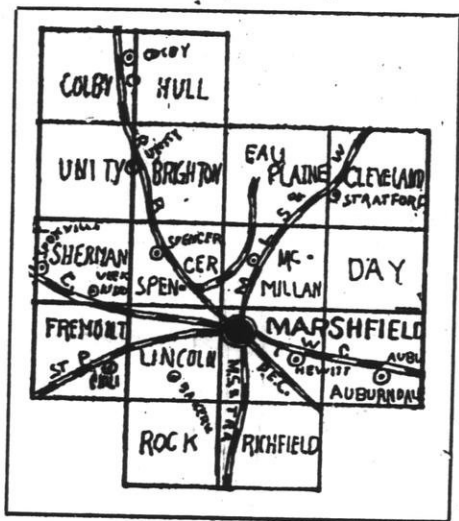
Next to dairying comes sheep rearing, which should become a most extensive industry in this great region. There are many kinds of vegetation in our north suited to the sheep. Mutton produced in that cool summer climate will have a firmness and flavor unequalled by the softer, more greasy product from sheep reared further south. The Wisconsin Agricultural college has been an easy winner in competition with other institutions showing sheep at state and international fairs. This is in no small measure due to our superior climate, and if we can produce better sheep than the average at Madison, then our farmers still further north can easily lead us in the excellence of their muttons. Pork production will also prove a most profitable industry in our new north, because of the abundance of clover pastures, the numerous by-products from the dairy, the fair yields of corn and especially the large crops of field peas which can be raised. By growing rape and peas, and turning the hogs

into these fields to do their own harvesting, and finishing with a little corn, pork can be cheaply produced. Northern Wisconsin should raise no grain for sale; neither should it produce hay for the market. Hay and grain production for direct sale means the ruination of the agriculture in any country where such practices are followed. Farmers should let hay go off their farms only in rare cases.

Feed all these products at home, keep up the fertility on the land and ship to market only finished products like butter, cheese, eggs, pork, mutton and beef.

The landseeker need make no mistake in purchasing if he will but move cautiously, dealing with reliable firms and taking his time to look over different sections. Let him never forget that while northern Wisconsin is a good region for farming, it nevertheless contains large tracts of land that should be severely avoided. In determining whether lands are suitable for agriculture and whether the soil is rich or not, let the land seeker be guided largely by what settlers already in the region are doing. If the soils seem of fair quality by direct observation, and if the crops, the more thrifty settlers are growing, are satisfactory, then one need not hesitate about buying similar lands. Railroads penetrate every portion of our new north. There are settlers in every township. Roads are largely laid out and the newcomer will have but few privations to suffer. If he find the right kind of lands, he will soon have a farm on which he can grow crops of some kind every year without fail. He is sure of markets. He is certain of lumber at reasonable prices, of abundance of firewood, of pure water and of

living in a region where there is no malaria or other diseases incident to the soil or climate. Thus his conditions are very different from those living on the plains where rain fall is uncertain, where lumber must always be hauled from the town lumber yards at high prices when fuel is scarce and where neighbors are far distant and advantages of civilization but scant indeed.



For Further Particulars address
JOHN P. HUME
 Marshfield, Wis.

Northern Wisconsin For DAIRYING

Fred. Rietbrock's Address to the Wisconsin
Dairymen's Association

NORTHERN Wisconsin is no new territory or unknown district. Indeed, northern Wisconsin was land when southern Wisconsin and all the territory directly south of it to the Gulf of Mexico was covered with water, so the geologists would have us understand. At the same time to most people that we meet in southern Wisconsin, the northern half of the state is a new country but little understood by them, and in order to form an idea as to its desirability for dairying it is necessary to some extent to study its location, its accessibility, character of soil, water and climate. This we will undertake to do as briefly as possible.

Northern Wisconsin embraces practically one-half the area of the state, or about 17,000,000 acres of land and extends from east to west at its greatest width about 225 miles, and in its greatest extent from north to south about 160 miles. To the east of it is Lake Michigan; to the north of it Lake Superior, to the west of it the Mississippi river.

In the northern border we have what is

known as the Penokee range, an elevated territory, extending east and west, the summit of which is not more than twenty-five to fifty miles from Lake Superior.

The whole territory south of this elevated range is an inclined plane sloping to the eastward, to the westward, but mainly to the southward. The surface of this plane in most parts is gently rolling.

There are numerous small lakes, especially in the northeastern parts, and innumerable springs, creeks and rivers which discharge their waters into Lakes Michigan and Superior, but mainly into the Mississippi river.

The water in this territory is clear and in most places soft. Trout, bass, perch, muskallonge and other game fish abound in the lakes and rivers.

Character of the Soil.

The soil, according to location, varies from a light sand to a heavy clay, but by far the largest portion of this territory has a clay loam soil. It is safe to say that the soil of two-thirds of the whole territory is clay and that one-third of it is sandy.

The sandy districts are mostly in the southwestern part of this territory in the lower valleys of the great rivers, as the Wisconsin, the Black and the Chippewa, and these sand valleys are so wide that they run into each other, as it were, a sandy belt, extending from Waupaca county west to the Mississippi river.

There are also considerable sand patches in the upper tributaries of the Wisconsin river.

Then for about fifty miles in the course of that stream the sand valley is narrow, being not more than about five miles wide, with great stretches of territory on either side of rolling clay loam land.

Throughout the most part of northern Wisconsin the soil rests on rock bottom, the underlying rock being a fire rock, of a granite nature, said to be of the first incrustation of the earth.

An abundance of water is found in this rock. The upper surface of the rock for a distance of four to six, and sometimes ten feet, is very much broken. This upper surface is soft. There are innumerable depressions in this rock surface all of which are filled with water.

The overlaying clay bed is generally from twelve to twenty feet deep, so that it may be said the soil is in connection with the soil water without an intervening strata of sand or gravel, as is so common in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois.

In its primeval state the most part of northern Wisconsin was covered with a dense growth of timber, the sandy territory being occupied by pine, and the clay loam territory mostly by what is called hardwood timber, such as maple, basswood, elm, oak, birch, ash and butternut.

Northern Wisconsin was first explored by the lumbermen who entered by way of the streams that were large enough to float logs and lumber. The timber thus obtained was mostly pine cut from the sandy regions, in consequence whereof it was quite easy and natural for the impression to go out that northern Wisconsin was a pinery, and its soil was only sand and unfit for agriculture.

As the woodsman penetrated further inland,

and especially since the coming in of railroads, the true character of the country has become more generally known.

Conditions of Climate.

The climate of northern Wisconsin is not essentially different from that of southern Wisconsin. It has a little greater altitude and lies some northerly, but it also extends more westerly. The lines of equal temperature run in Wisconsin about from the southeast to the northwest, and not east and west as some people might suppose.

The climate is healthy, as is general in Wisconsin. The people are strong, active and progressive as people generally are in a country that has a snug winter in its change of seasons.

During winter the ground is covered with snow, which as a rule, comes between the middle of November and the 10th of December, and remains on the ground until into the forepart of March, so that during the entire cold period the ground is so covered that frost seldom penetrates deeper than about two feet and which is nowhere under this snow cover frozen as hard as it is in the southern sections that are not so covered.

In the summer it does not become as excessively hot and dry as we often experience it in southern Wisconsin, showers are more frequent. The excessively dry and hot winds from the southwest do not seem to penetrate northern Wisconsin, but when the wind does prevail from that quarter it is generally followed by rain.

Until recently the abundance of timber was often assigned as the cause for this difference in rainfall, but Dr. Wilson, director of the United States weather bureau at Milwaukee, in his lecture at the closing farmers' institute at

Oconomowoc last year, effectually exploded the notion that timber had very much to do with the abundance of rainfall and asserted that our rains come almost exclusively from the Gulf of Mexico. Thus we are compelled to seek out another theory for this summer climatic difference. It may be that it is on account of its peculiar triangular position between the two great lakes, so that when the wind prevails from the southwest, driving the air in between rising cooler currents from Lakes Superior and Michigan, a condensation of moisture is affected and rain the consequence.

This theory seems to me plausible, but certain it is that during the growing season there is more even rainfall in northern Wisconsin than there is in southern Wisconsin. This, together with the great depth of soil, accounts abundantly for the greater growth of vegetation throughout this section.

Increase in Population.

While some portions of northern Wisconsin have been settled pretty nearly as long as the southern part of the state, the great clay loam domain, however, has been too little occupied until within a recent period. The surplus population of twenty and twenty-five years ago was altogether too prone to go to the western prairie country. The northern part of the state thus lost a class of people that it would have been very desirable to have had and whose condition would have undoubtedly been very much better had they stayed in the state rather than to have gone to the treeless, windswept prairies beyond the Mississippi. The people who settled upon the hardwood timber sections of northern Wis-

consin have never suffered the privations and vicissitudes that have befallen so many people who did go to the western prairie country.

During the last few years there has been a very rapid increase of population in northern Wisconsin, and it is only a question of a short time when the rural population of northern Wisconsin will be greater, upon any given area, than in southern Wisconsin, or neighboring states.

To determine the desirability of any section of country for any particular industries, its avenues to markets is always of great importance.

Northern Wisconsin is not only well provided with water communication with the rest of the world through Lakes Superior and Michigan, but the great railroad systems of the country have taken in the importance of the territory and have built their several lines pretty nearly in all directions through it; so that the Chicago & North-Western railroad, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha, the Wisconsin Central railroad, the Green Bay & Western, the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic, the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie, and other roads all have their various lines of railroads running throughout the length and breadth of this section of country, thus making easy communication between it and the great centers of population to the east, to the south and to the west of it.

The Market Facilities.

From Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Ashland and Sault Ste. Marie,

most any part of northern Wisconsin can be traversed in a day in a comfortable palace car, and all the productions of this territory are easily and cheaply landed in the best markets of the country.

In the valleys of the large rivers and on the lines of these various railroads, cities have been built, water powers have been improved, factories have been established and employment is given to thousands of people.

The farming industry is also largely on the increase. The farms are generally small, running from 80 to 160 acres, but such as have been established are in good condition, with good buildings, and show a high degree of prosperity.

Had there been any doubt of the desirability of northern Wisconsin for general farming, this doubt was most effectually dispelled when some of the northern counties exhibited their agricultural productions at the state fairs during the last few years. Marathon county for three years in succession won first prize upon the merit of its various forage plants, grain and fruit, when put in comparison with the exhibits presented by such agricultural counties as Waukesha, Kenosha, Walworth and Jefferson.

While Marathon county had no exhibit at the state fair last year, its neighboring counties of Lincoln, Taylor, Price, Ashland and Douglas did have, and the first prize, based upon the merit of their agricultural exhibits, went again to the northern part of the state.

The question has often been asked—can they raise fruit in the northern part of the state? Of course they can; but you might say does that affect the dairy possibilities of the country? In a way, yes. A country that produces good fruit

is more attractive to people than one that does not.

Quantity and Quality of Fruit.

All the small fruits, as strawberries, raspberries, currants and the like, grow wild and do ever so much better in the cultivated state. Native plums are also found in considerable quantity. While pineapples, bananas and oranges do not grow there any better than in southern Wisconsin, apples are very successfully grown.

In its exhibit at the state fair Marathon county showed in 1901 forty-three varieties of standard apples, the quality of which was pronounced to be excellent and was awarded first prize on the same.

The apple is a northern fruit. The tree does best upon a deep clay soil with a northern exposure. The northern slope of the Penokee range is large enough to grow apples and will undoubtedly grow them, as the section gets cleared up and the industry well on its feet, to supply apples for Wisconsin and every adjoining state.

While the sandy sections of northern Wisconsin are not particularly desirable for dairy farming, the territory is sufficiently valuable, however, for the root crops, especially for potato culture; to make it attractive for permanent and successful settlement. No better potatoes go into the southern markets than come from northern Wisconsin.

In this discussion we have, however, particularly to do with the clay loam and clay sections which make the ideal pasture lands for

the dairy cow. Upon these lands the clovers, blue grass, red top and other grasses grow luxuriantly and produce regular heavy yields. On account of the abundance of rain and the snows of winter, with the great depth of soil, and the connection with soil water, these forage plants root deeply, suffer little during the winter and start to grow with an extraordinary vigor in the spring, and grow continuously through summer, and are therefore not so much affected by slight frost in early fall as are the grasses which have started to grow afresh after a summer's rest.

Variety of Crops Produced.

Oats, peas, barley, wheat, rye and corn all do well. The oat, pea and barley crops are entitled to special mention. These crops do not ripen so quickly, but seem to grow to full maturity, so that the yield is heavy. From fifty to sixty bushels per acre is the ordinary average crop of oats, while eighty to 110 bushels have frequently been harvested, oats weighing about forty-four pounds to the struck bushel measure.

Barley is successfully grown, but it is not very much used for feeding purposes. It is sought after too sharply by the brewers, and by the farmers who produce it is held sacred as it were for the production of beer; but considering how readily a good crop of barley is produced, the farmers will in time forget sentiment and use the barley in connection with oats and peas for the purpose of feeding cows and pigs.

Peas are a very good crop in northern Wisconsin. The vine grows luxuriantly and matures a heavy crop of the grain, which is without the bug which commonly affects the pea crop in

southern Wisconsin. The value of it in balancing a cow ration, and especially for pork production, is hardly appreciated.

Dairymen will concede that with an abundance of oats, barley, peas, clover and red top hay a fairly well balanced and good feeding ration can be made for the dairy cow, especially if this is supplemented by corn and corn silage.

While the dent corn on the purely clay and clay loam soils have not ripened as successfully as on the warmer sandy and sandy loam soils, flint corn matures well and either variety matures sufficiently for first class silage. As the country has become older and more cleared up in larger areas the corn has done very much better.

Some say that blue grass is indigenous to the soil. Be that as it may. In the other sections you find it everywhere, in the pastures and along the road sides, the genuine so-called Kentucky blue grass, or *poa pratensis*.

For grazing, where it does so well, nothing better has yet been found. A blue grass pasture with a mixture of white and alsike clover, some red top and orchard grass, cannot be excelled for the growth of young animals and for milk and butter fat production.

Blue joint is a native grass of this region and makes the finest quality of hay. It is not found in large areas, but is found in considerable quantities in the valleys of the small streams and on the so-called alder bottoms, but the main reliance for pasture and for the hay and grain crop must be put upon the higher land, which in its primeval state is covered with timber.

The lumbermen and the farmers have worked together in clearing off such lands, and

as the condition now is the land is cheaply cleared of its wealth of timber inasmuch as every variety of timber is valuable in a commercial sense; the logs for lumber, either for house building or for furniture and other mechanic arts; the hemlock bark for the tanneries; the trees for pulpwood, the smaller sticks for railroad ties, the maple and birch for cordwood, the small and inferior basswood trees for barrel stock, the black ash for hoops; so that with the present facilities for transportation and the demand for the timber product, all in all the labor in the clearing up of the land is well and fully compensated for by the prices obtained for these various products.

Creameries and Cheese Factories.

As this clearing up process goes on the thrifty husbandman works the land up into desirable farms. The stock business and dairying is already well upon its feet. Of the 2,700 creameries and cheese factories represented upon the dairy map of Wisconsin of 1901, nearly 800 of them are located in the northern half.

The erection of creameries and cheese factories has been going on within the past two years with double the rapidity ever before witnessed in that territory. As this process continues the people will still more and more go into the dairy business, and it is only a question of time, and a short time at that, when northern Wisconsin will be one of the greatest and most successful dairy sections in the United States.

Land of the very best quality for general farming, and which cannot be excelled for dairy farming, can still be had for a very small price and that is why farmers, largely of the so-called

renters, of southern Wisconsin and adjoining states are migrating there in such great numbers. Not that great settlements are picking up and going there in a body, but one family from here and another from there, and thus the aggregate whole amounts to many. There are people enough there already, so that by the natural increase one generation more will completely settle the country.

With reference to the cow it can be said that the people settled there are just as much in the fog as to what they ought to have for best results as they are elsewhere in the state.

The Kind of Cattle to Raise.

As you drive through the country you will see all kinds of breeding. Sometimes in one bunch you will [see Jersey, Holstein, Ayrshire and Guernsey breeding, and always some of no breeding at all—just common cows in which you can detect no particular known breed. The idea is gaining strength, however, that for dairy purposes you want the special dairy cow.

The conditions are such that best results will be attained by raising pigs in connection with the dairy herd rather than to raise cattle other than cows for sale. It will always be profitable to raise good heifers because for good cows there will always be a demand; and the feed stuffs for pork making when supplemented with skim milk are so abundantly and easily raised that much more money will be made out of the sale of pork than if steers were attempted to be raised in connection with the dairy. Hence if a herd is started with cows showing dairy breeding it is easy to produce a good paying milking herd by the use of a pure bred dairy sire.

People learn more quickly by example than by precept. If an object lesson is brought before their eyes they can study that much more correctly than if they tried to get the information through volumes of print.

There is perhaps no better example than could be cited in this line than is found in the herd and workings of H. D. Griswold of West Salem, La Crosse county, this state. This dairyman, upon a farm of fifty acres supplemented by twenty-five acres of rented pasture, has in the period of a little better than ten years, produced from common stock, by the use of pure-bred Guernsey sires, a herd of cows, numbering upwards of twenty, that have averaged him over 400 pounds of butter during last year.

Surely with such a herd of cows, together with the pig industry to be carried on with it on account of the skim milk, very much greater results can be obtained than from a common herd, or a half and half dairy and beef herd, whose average would not be one-half of the amount.

In carrying on a dairy business there is much work implied, and must be mainly the work of the family owning the land. It is a home business that families can carry on within themselves most profitably, and with reasonable care and diligence will support a family much more comfortably and provide a surer surplus than will most any other undertaking.

Having stated the conditions as we find them in northern Wisconsin upon which to predicate its dairy possibilities—that means what it will do in the dairy line in the future—we may be permitted now to figure out the number and size of our dairy farms, and plant thereon the

kind, gentle and accommodating cow which is to eat the grains, grasses and clovers and extract therefrom that element of human food so necessary for the growth and comfortable existence of man.

Out of the whole domain of northern Wisconsin take 3,000,000 acres for example; divide the same into farms of an average size of 120 acres. This will give us 25,000 farms. Set apart forty acres for a wood lot. This will amply supply the needs of the farm in the shape of fire wood, building material, etc., and give a little park for the family and shade for the herd, and at the same time maple sugar for the children. This will also leave to the country that romantic and park-like appearance, which does so much to make it a desirable and attractive place for a home. Cultivate and pasture eighty acres of the farm. Upon this there will be no difficulty in maintaining twenty cows in milk the year 'round and to raise the desirable young stock for the maintenance and improvement of the herd. There will also be ample room for the raising of fifty to sixty pigs to be annually turned off.

Twenty cows on 25,000 farms will give us 500,000 cows, and it seems to me the great majority of the farmers in northern Wisconsin, after the example of Mr. Griswold, will grade up to a perfect dairy herd from the common cows of the country by the use of pure bred dairy sires. In doing this they should not mix breeds. Keep the breeds separate, as it were, fences "horse high and bull tight." The pure bred bull has dairy heredity; the half blood does not and is therefore a scrub. The pure bred

the same breed should always be used,

Let them work on these lines, with good judgment and care, and success will be theirs,

Here then we have the country with sparkling water, a delightful and bracing climate, a deep and productive soil carrying the humus shed annually by the forests for a thousand years.

To Reach These Lands

TAKE



Chicago & North-Western Railway

With its 8,000 Miles of Thoroughly Equipped
Road, Reaching all Principal Points in

Northern Illinois, Iowa

North and South Dakota

Minnesota and Wisconsin

Running 20th Century Trains to all Principal
Points in the Great Northwest

W. B. KNISKERN, Gen. Pass. Agent
CHICAGO