

portion of this field is cultivated (chiefly by hired Indians) for the benefit of the agency, and the rest has been divided into small tracts, each to be cultivated by a separate family for its own benefit. Potatoes, turnips, and other vegetables have been introduced. The men apply themselves willingly to the labors of the field; and the number of working men is constantly increasing.

The Arickarees and Mandans have doubtlessly tilled the soil for many centuries. Their accounts of the origin of corn are mingled with their earliest myths and traditions. There are some reasons for believing that the Arickarees represent an older race of farmers than the Mandans; for their religious ceremonies connected with planting are the more numerous, and they honor the corn with a species of worship. In every Arickaree lodge, there is a large ear of corn, which has lasted for generations, sticking out of the mouth of a medicine-bag. At their feasts, they make offerings to the corn by rubbing a piece of meat on it, while they pray to it for plentiful harvests, and address it by the name of "mother". The Hidatsas claim to have had no knowledge of corn until they first ate it from the trenchers of the Mandans; and they have no important ceremonies connected with the harvesting, yet they cultivated it long before the advent of the white man.

In favorable years, they had good harvests, and were able to sell corn to other Indians and to their traders, besides keeping all they wanted for their own use. But they are not always thus fortunate, for the soil of their country, even that on the Missouri bottoms, is not very rich; the summer season is short, with early and late frosts; the climate is dry; long droughts often prevail, to guard against which they have no system of irrigation; and, lastly, the grasshoppers—the plague of the Missouri Valley farmer—have often devoured the crops that had escaped all other enemies, and left the Indian with little more than seed enough for the coming spring.

§ 10. INHABITANTS OF THE VILLAGE.—When Lewis and Clarke ascended the Missouri, in 1804, they found four tribes of agricultural Indians, numerous and prosperous, inhabiting the Upper Missouri Valley, west of the Dakota nation. They had