

America. Fronting the levee or landing-place are several blocks of stone stores, which give an idea of the extensive business transacted here. On one occasion I saw this wharfing ground so completely crowded with merchandise of every possible variety, that travelers were compelled to walk from the steamboats to the hotels. This city is the home market for all the natural productions of a wilderness country extending in different directions for thousands of miles, and watered by several of the largest rivers in the world. Its growth, however, has been somewhat retarded by the peculiar character of its original inhabitants. The acknowledged wealth of many of its leading men can only be equalled by their illiberality and want of enterprise. But time is committing sad ravages among these ancient citizens, for they are, from age and infirmities, almost daily dropping into the place of graves. Under the benign influence of true American enterprise, this city is rapidly becoming distinguished for its New England character, in spite of the retarding cause alluded to above, and it possesses, to an uncommon degree, all the worthy qualities which should belong to an enlightened and eminently prosperous city.

There is one unique feature connected with the River Queen, which gives it, at times, a most romantic appearance. It is the point whence must start all distant expeditions to the North and West, and where the treasures of the wilderness are prepared for re-shipment to the more distant markets of our own and foreign countries. Here, during the spring and summer months may often be seen caravans about to depart for California, Santa Fe, the Rocky Mountains, and Oregon, while the sprightly step and sparkling eye will speak to you of the hopes and anticipations which animate the various adventurers. At one time, perhaps, may be seen a company of toil-worn trappers entering the city, after the absence of months, far away on the head waters of the Mississippi or Missouri rivers, where they have hunted the beaver, the buffalo, the otter, the bear, and the deer; and as they steal away to their several homes, from the door of the Fur Company, where they have just rendered their account, it does the heart good to ponder on the joys which will be brought into existence by the happy return.