

medicines there are trodden under foot by them. The Sioux are many, and we cannot go to the mountain of the Red Pipe. We have seen all nations smoking together at that place,—but, my brother, it is not so now.”

One of the old chiefs of the Sacs, on seeing some specimens of the stone which I had brought with me from that place, observed as follows:—

“MY FRIEND:

“When I was young, I used to go with our young men to the mountain of the Red Pipe, and dig out pieces for our pipes. We do not go now; and our red pipes, as you see, are few. The Sioux have again spilt the blood of red men on that place, and the Great Spirit is offended. The white traders have told the Sioux to draw their bows upon us when we go there; and they have offered us many of the pipes for sale, but we do not want to smoke them, for we know that the Great Spirit is offended. My mark is on the rocks in many places, but I shall never see them again. They lie where the Great Spirit sees them, for his eye is over that place, and he sees every thing that is done there.”

Ke-o-kuck, chief of the Sacs and Foxes, when I asked him whether he had ever been there, replied:—

“No, I have never seen it; it is in our enemies’ country—I wish it was in ours—I would sell it to the whites for a great many boxes of money.”

Such are a few of the traditions relating to this curious place, and many others might be given which I have procured, though they amount nearly to the same thing.

The position of the pipe stone quarry is in a direction nearly west from the Falls of St. Anthony, at a distance of two hundred and twenty or thirty miles, on the summit of the dividing ridge between the St. Peters and the Missouri rivers, being about equi-distant from either.—This dividing ridge is denominated by the French the “Coteau du Prairie,” and the “Pipe Stone” is situated near its southern extremity, and consequently not exactly on its highest elevation, as its general course is north and south, and its southern extremity terminates in a gradual slope. Our approach to it was from the east, and the ascent, for the distance of thirty or forty miles, over a continued succession of slopes and terraces, rising one above another in singular regularity, that seemed almost to lift us into the clouds. The singular character of this majestic anomaly in nature is (from appearance, and from information we received,) continued on the west side on its descent toward the Missouri. There is not a tree or bush to be seen from the highest summit of the ridge, though the eye may range east and west almost to a boundless extent, over a sur-

face covered with a short grass, that is green at one’s feet, and about him, but changing to a blue in the distance, like nothing but the blue and vastness of the ocean.

The effect that will be wrought upon the minds of future travellers, who will wend their way over these gigantic pastures of green, (provided their imaginations are like my own,) will be grand and thrilling in the extreme. As for myself, my feelings may have been over wrought, for they seemed to swell and enlarge at every swell and terrace that we mounted up, and when at the very summit, (where the meanest horse will neigh and gaze with admiration,) I must say that I felt as light as the air that was about me, and almost able to fly with a pair of wings no larger than those on Mercury’s heels or Cupid’s back.

The whole surface of this immense tract of country is hard and smooth, almost without stone or gravel, and coated with a green turf of grass of three or four inches only in height.—Over this the wheels of a carriage would run as easily, for hundreds of miles, as they could on a macadamized road, and its graceful gradations would in all parts admit of a horse to gallop, with ease to himself and his rider.

The full extent and true character of these vast prairies are but imperfectly understood by the world yet, who will agree with me that they are a subject truly sublime for contemplation, when I assure them that a coach and six horses might be driven at full gallop and with perfect ease (with the exception of rivers and ravines) over unceasing fields of green, from the Falls of St. Anthony to Lord Selkirk’s establishment, from that to the mouth of Yellow Stone—thence to the Platte—to the Red River and the Arkansas—from thence to Santa Fee, and through Texas to the Gulf of Mexico; a distance of more than 5000 miles, and that too all the way in United States territory.

But to return to the pipe stone quarry. The scenery alone of this place is a subject for admiration, as will be seen by the views which I shall bring home. A graphic description of its features and colours, and of the forms and ceremonies observed by the Indians preparatory to taking away the stone for their pipes, shall be the theme for a future epistle; and so for another, my theory of the geology and mineralogy of this region of country, which may differ materially from the theories that have heretofore been advanced to the world.

“Woman’s limits” I shall also describe, and her training on this hallowed ground; her marks are set; she can toe them, but no farther. Woman is allowed to see, but not to touch with her foot, the sacred ground of the red pipe.

I mentioned in my former letter that we had been arrested and made prisoners by the Sioux,