

"3. That Minnesota and the country north-west of it is the best of these wheat districts, having the largest average yield, the most certain crops and the best and healthiest grains."

Mr. Taylor next proceeds to show the advantages of the British North-West as an agricultural country over the more southern territories of the United States, he says:

"Will the great interior of the continent contribute to our exportation of wheat and its flour? I refer to the territorial organizations of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Nevada. Let us take the most favored of all, Montana. Grand as are its resources, I am constrained to believe that only one-thirtieth of its surface is within reach of the unavoidable condition of irrigation, and that the mountains with their mineral wealth, and the uplands as grazing grounds for cattle and sheep, will be the chief theatre of industrial activity. After careful enquiry in 1868, as United States Commissioner of Mining Statistics, I committed myself to the following statement: 'The area of the territory (Montana) is 146,689,35-100 square miles, equal to 93,881,184 acres—nearly the same as California, three times the area of New York, two and a half that of New England, and yet no greater proportion is claimed by local authorities as susceptible of cultivation than one acre in thirty, or a total of 3,346,000 acres. Of course a far greater surface will afford sustenance to domestic animals. The limit to agriculture, as in Colorado and New Mexico, is the possibility of irrigation.' In a late report of the National Geological Commission, I observe that Major J. W. Powell estimates the amount of land in Utah (with 84,476 square miles) that can be redeemed by the utilization of streams, but without the construction of reservoirs, as about 1,250,000 acres. How far east the necessity of irrigation exists I am not competent to determine. It was formerly fixed at longitude 98 degrees by Prof. Henry, of the Smithsonian Institute, but 101 degrees, or three degrees further west, especially west of Manitoba, is probably more accurate. Upon the limited areas available for

agriculture the crops are very remarkable, but their volume, of course commanding the highest prices, will be absorbed by miners and herdsmen in addition to the demands of towns and cities. In this connection I should not omit to add that the localities of central Canada on the line 1,600 miles northwest from St. Paul—Battleford, Prince Albert, Fort McMurray, Fort Vermillion, including the better known Fort Edmonton, are all west of longitude 105 degrees, and are in direct range with Denver City, Great Salt Lake and even Virginia City, yet, at none or the more northern positions is there any necessity of irrigation. It is the crowning feature of the 'fertile belt' which broadens with reduced altitudes and constant air currents from the Pacific coast, that the immense trapezoid, whose apex is bounded on the Mackenzie, has a sufficient quantity of summer rains for all the purposes of agriculture as organized in the Atlantic and Mississippi States."

Mr. Taylor concludes his letter in the following manly strain—manly because he has been fighting the battle of truth, according to his convictions, in favor of our North West as a wheat growing country, and against the prejudice of his own people. This is what he says:

"I have no pride of opinion as to the accuracy of an impromptu estimate of proportions north or south of the of the boundary. I would cheerfully waive it, confessing to an arithmetical inaccuracy, if assured of a general acceptance of the opinion with which the article of the *Pioneer Press* concludes, namely, that 'in the Hudson Bay Territory, outside of the old provinces, 200,000,000 acres are wheat raising.' That admission is more than enough to justify a railroad policy, which will push, within ten years, the locomotive from Winnipeg fully 1,200 miles beyond its present bourne on Red River."

In thus taking up the gauntlet in our defence, Mr. Taylor deserves the thanks of the people of this country, but looking at the matter in a broader sense, we feel that in thus coming out boldly with the truth—a