

"I find myself now, for the first time, upon the highlands in the centre of the continent of North America, equi-distant from the waters of Hudson's Bay and the Gulf of Mexico—from the Atlantic Ocean to the ocean in which the sun sets. Here upon the spot where spring up almost side by side, so that they may kiss each other, the two great rivers, the one of which, pursuing its strange, capricious, majestic, vivacious career through lake, cascade, and river rapid, and lake after lake, and river after river, cataract and bay, and lake and rapids, finally, after a course of 2,000 miles, brings your commerce half way to Europe; the other, after passing through highlands and prairie, a distance of 2,000 miles, taking tributary after tributary from the east to the west, bringing together waters from the western declivity of the Alleghanies, and from those which trickle down the eastern sides of the Rocky Mountains, finds its way into the Gulf of Mexico.

"Here is the place—the central place—where the agriculture of the richest region of North America must pour out its tributes to the whole world. On the east, all along the shore of Lake Superior, and west, stretching in one broad plain, in a belt quite across the continent, is a country where State after State is yet to arise, and where the productions for the support of human society in other old crowded States must be brought forth.

"This is, then, a commanding field; but it is as commanding in regard to the destinies of this country, and of this continent, as it is in regard to their commercial future; for power is not permanently to reside on the eastern slope of the Alleghany Mountains, nor in the seaports. Seaports have always been overrun and controlled by the people of the interior, and the power that shall communicate and express the will of men on this continent is to be located in the Mississippi Valley, and at the sources of the Mississippi and St. Lawrence.

"In our day, studying perhaps what might have seemed to others trifling or visionary, I had cast about for the future and ultimate central seat of the power of the North American people. I had looked at Quebec, New Orleans, at Washington and San Francisco, and Cincinnati and St. Louis, and it had been the result of my conjecture that the seat of power for North America would yet be found in the valley of Mexico, and the glories of the Aztec capital would be surrendered, in its becoming ultimately and at last the capital of the United States of America. But I have corrected that view; I now believe that the *ultimate last seat of government on this great continent will be found somewhere within a circle or radius not very far from the spot on which I stand, at the head of navigation on the Mississippi River.*"

Testimony of such a character, from a statesman of such eminence, cannot be lightly passed over; and he says truly that Minnesota sits queen at the head of the Mississippi. Minnesota, with her immense interior plains, and her magnificent watercourses which permeate them in their length and breadth, afford the utmost possible capacity of interior communication. By the Mississippi, Minnesota can draw from the extreme south, cotton, sugar, and rice; from the Middle States, corn, tobacco, and fruits; from the Northern regions, furs of every variety; by the Mississippi, she can