

I shall attempt to describe, with as much accuracy and detail as possible, the geographical and physical features of the country, the comparative amount of prairie and timber to be found within its borders, the nature of the soil, and its capacity for the production of the different kinds of grain; the lengths and directions of the rivers, and the facilities presented by them for navigation, or for supplying a water-power; the kinds of timber to be found on their banks; the channels of communication at present in existence, and those which should be constructed at the earliest practicable period, and the character not only of the present inhabitants, but of the numerous emigrants who are daily arriving in the Territory.

I shall also recommend such appropriations of money and lands for improving the navigation of the rivers, and for the construction of roads, as I deem necessary to the immediate prosperity of the country, and, in consequence, such as should engage the early attention of Congress.

The geology and botany of the entire country I have examined have been well described in the reports of Colonel Long and Mr. Nicollet, and in the geological reports of Dr. Owen, acting under the instructions of the Commissioner of the General Land Office. I shall, therefore, refer to their reports those desirous of detailed accounts of the geology and botany of the country, contenting myself with giving such general information upon the subject as may be useful to those emigrating to Minnesota.

The plans which I have pursued in the construction of accurate maps have been as follows, viz:

I have determined by astronomical observations the latitudes and longitudes of all the important points along the routes pursued. I have taken the directions by the compass between the points thus determined, and by the aid of an odometer, which, attached to the wheel of a wagon, gives the number of its revolutions, ascertained the lengths of the compass courses.

By plotting the compass courses with the variation of the compass, which was frequently determined between the points thus astronomically fixed, I have been enabled to make a map of that portion of the Territory over which I have passed with considerable accuracy.

I have also employed the Indians and half-breeds, encountered at different points along the route, in making out rude maps of the country they have themselves passed over, and, by a comparison of these sketches, I have been enabled to form very correct ideas of large tracts of country on each side of the routes pursued to and from our northern frontier at Pembina.

While ascending the Red river of the North, my encampments were determined each night by observations for latitude and longitude, and the river meandered its entire length by the compass. I sounded the river at all the crossings we made, and ascended the principal tributaries some distance above their mouths to ascertain whether they preserved a uniform depth of water. The results embodied in the map are, therefore, to a great degree reliable.

I do not flatter myself that I shall acquire for a report of this character all that public interest and attention which are attracted by sprightly narrative or the recital of wild adventure; but I hope to accomplish the more useful object of placing in the hands of the hardy pioneers, in the settlement of a mighty State, all the information which I possess as to its