

have grown abundantly and have matured. Melons, pumpkins, and squashes have not matured. Tomatoes did not turn red: American corn (early) reached roasting ears. Onions, with wheat and oats, matured at Fort Berthold, D.T., 150 miles below, on the Missouri River. I am told by those who have been here a long time that this may be taken as a standard for what may be expected the most favourable seasons on the immediate bottoms of the streams. The native corn matures in about ten weeks from planting. It puts out its ears from six to eight inches from the ground, and has a soft white grain without any flinty portion, and weighs about two-thirds as much as other corn.

My own quarters are situated on the second bench of the banks of the Missouri at about fifty feet above that stream, and 600 yards away from it. And to raise a flower garden ten feet by forty, the past two years has required a daily sprinkling of three barrels of water, for which we were repaid by about three weeks of flowers.

The site of this post is supposed to be exceptionally fruitful, but I have before me a letter from Mr. Joseph Anderson of St. Paul, Minn., who was hay contractor at this post in 1872. His letter states that in order to find places to cut the hay required by his contract that season, some 900 tons, he was compelled to search over a space of country on the north side of the river 25 miles in extent in each direction from the post, or some 400 square miles, and that there was none thick enough to be cut for as great a distance beyond.

Respecting the agricultural value of this country, after *leaving the excellent wheat growing valley of the Red River of the North*, following westward 1,000 miles to the Sierras, excepting the very limited bottoms of the small streams as well as those of the Missouri and Yellowstone, from a few yards in breadth to an occasional water-washed valley of one or two miles, and the narrow valleys of the streams of Montana already settled, and a small area of timbered country in North-West Idaho (probably one-fifteenth of the whole), this country will not produce the fruits and cereals of the east for want of moisture, and can in no way be artificially irrigated, and will not in our day and generation, *sell for one penny an acre*, except through fraud or ignorance; and most of the land here excepted will have to be irrigated artificially. I write this knowing full well it will meet with contradiction, but the contradiction will be a falsehood. The country between the one hundredth meridian and the Sierras—the Rio Grande to the British possessions—will never develop into populous States because of its want of moisture. Its counterpart is found in the plains of Northern Asia and in Western Europe. We look in vain for those expected agricultural settlements along the Kansas and Union Pacific Railroads, between these two lines, and 20 years hence the search will be quite as fruitless. We have in Nevada and New Mexico fair samples of what these populations will be.

My statement is made from the practical experience and observation of 18 years of military service as an officer of the army, much of which has been upon the frontier; and having passed the remainder of my life a farmer. For confirmation of what I have here said, I respectfully refer the reader to Gen. G. K. Warren, of the Engineer Corps of the army, who made a scientific exploration of this country extending through several years, and has given us our only accurate map of it; or to Prof. Hayden, for the past several years engaged upon a similar work. The testimony of Gov. Stephens, Gen. Fremont, and Lieut. Mullans, is that of enthusiastic travellers and discoverers, whose descriptions are not fully borne out by more prolonged and intimate knowledge of the country.

Herr Hass, the agent of the Berlin and Vienna banks, sent out to examine the country, could easily say the country is good, so long as he advised his people to invest no money in it; and it is doubtful if that remark was based upon a sufficiently authoritative investigation of the country to merit the credence given it. Certainly it is incorrect. And especially valueless is the testimony of men of distinction of our own country who are not practical agriculturists, but have taken journeys in the fruitful months of the year to the Red River of the North, to the rich valleys of Montana, or to the enchanting scenery of Puget Sound, except upon those particular points.

I am prepared to substantiate all I have here said, so far as such matters are susceptible of proof, but from their nature many things herein referred to, must, to many people, wait the action of the great solvent—Time.