

THREE WEEKS IN DAKOTA.

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SO much for the flora, fauna, physical features, surface configuration and soil. Let us now, for a brief space, turn our attention to the atmosphere; and, first, with respect to its temperature. At the very outset I desire, explicitly, to state that the climate is decidedly cold. No one who knows anything of the northern Dakota climate would venture to contradict this assertion, as applied to that portion of the territory; whereas, of course, it is well enough known that the southern counties of the same territory possess a very mild climate. All with whom I have conversed upon this subject, frankly admit that mercury becomes extraordinarily contracted and condensed in north Dakota during the winter season. Yes, "quick-silver" descends, recedes, shrinks, shrivels up and assumes extremely modest proportions in the face of a "blizzard." Alcohol, be it remembered, has never been known to freeze in this climate. It is reported as refusing to solidify even under the severest blizzard. Still, the vessels into which it is poured have occasionally been benumbed and cracked. During the summer season the air being agreeably cool in the day-time, and quite cool about midnight, Dakota thus becomes one of the most pleasant and healthful summer resorts in the world.

With regard to its humidity, the atmosphere is much drier than that of Ontario, and necessarily so, because Ontario, besides being dotted over with innumerable lakes, is surrounded by immense bodies of water.

In general there is said to be a moderate amount of rain each year, but the summer of '83 has been unusually dry in some districts in the north and east, and, as the result, the crops in these districts are shorter than usual. Yet, notwithstanding the lengthened period of drought to which these localities were subjected, vegetation suffered to a very much less extent than would have been the case in Ontario had it been visited by a drought of like duration. An examination of the ground by Dr. John Montgomery and myself showed it to be quite moist at a distance of five or six inches below the surface, and that, too, at a time when there had been no rainfall for nearly two months. It was my good fortune to witness a thunderstorm on the 13th of July, in the Peimkina Mountain country. Although in no respect more violent than an ordinary storm of rain in Canada, it was a spectacle at once grand and impressive, rendered so by the clearness of the atmosphere and the extreme vividness of the lightning. Frequently I have seen clear, bright and beautiful skies in this Province as well as in the Eastern States; but never anywhere else have I seen skies so bright as some that smiled upon me while sojourning in Dakota. These were particularly noticeable in high and hilly tracts of country. There one, while toned and invigorated by the ozonic purity of the air, is positively startled by the intense brilliancy of the clear-cut clouds and the deep-blue ether. Although the climate is cold, it does not seem to be unendur-