

was extraordinarily productive and was covered with valuable timber. "It may be said with truth that, for fertility of soil, no part of the world exceeds the borders of the Mississippi; the land yields an abundance of all the necessities of life, and almost spontaneously; very little labor being required in the cultivation of the earth. That part of Upper Louisiana, which borders on North Mexico, is one immense prairie; it produces nothing but grass; it is filled with buffalo, deer, and other kinds of game; the land is represented as too rich for the growth of forest trees." <sup>4</sup>

Jefferson's *Account* was corroborated by a letter written under date of August 15, 1803, by Dr. John Sibley and printed at Raleigh, North Carolina, soon after. Dr. Sibley was a Carolinian who had settled at Natchez in 1802 and obtained permission of the Spanish authorities to travel in Louisiana. "Travelling up the Mississippi some months ago, I took pains to ascertain the number of sugar plantations, and the average quantity of sugar made annually in each. I found 14 below New Orleans, and 64 above, in all 78; and they average annually about 75,000 pounds' weight of sugar, besides a proportionable quantity of rum and molasses." The alluvial lands for sixty miles above New Orleans and for sixty miles below that town, together with Terre Bœuf, the bayou St. John, the bayou La Faussee, and Tuckepa, were equally well adapted to the growing of cane, and might, he estimated, afford place for one thousand plantations. "The lands from the edge of the river back, gradually fall till they become too low