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THE TERM OF THE REPUBLICAN STAR

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THE MISSOURI.

The following interesting account of the Missouri, translated from the French, is drawn up by a gentleman in the western country, on whose intelligence and accuracy great reliance may be placed. The larger part of the facts is derived from actual observation. The view which they present of the products on that stream, will be gratifying to all our readers, and peculiarly interesting to the mercantile part of the community, by opening them a new source of trade that promises amply to reward their enterprize. *Nat Intel.*

The Missouri, with whose sources we are still unacquainted, is notwithstanding already ranked amongst the greatest rivers. It is an object of astonishment to the whole world. The uninformed man admires its rapidity, its lengthy course, the salubrity of its waters, and is thankful at its sight: while the reflecting mind admires the innumerable riches scattered on its banks, and foreseeing the future, beholds already this rival of the Nile flowing through countries as fertile, as populous, and as extensive as those of Egypt.

A traveller, however intelligent he may be, can give but a faint idea of the innumerable riches accumulated on its banks. This sketch will barely point out the most important; happily for our age, some intelligent travellers are engaged, under the auspices of an enlightened government, in tracing this river even to its sources. What gratitude will not the whole world owe to those men, who exposing themselves to the greatest fatigues, & even to the greatest dangers, to enlarge the circle of human knowledge, will (if we may be allowed the expression) give to the world a new country.

The Missouri joins the Mississippi five leagues above the town of St. Louis, about the 40th deg. of north lat. It is necessary to observe that after uniting with the Mississippi it flows through a space of 1200 miles before it empties itself into the Gulph of Mexico. As this part of its course is well known, I shall speak of the Missouri only. I ascended about 600 leagues without perceiving a diminution either in its width or rapidity—The principal rivers which empty into the Missouri, as you ascend, the Gasconade, the river of the Osages, the two Charatons, the Great river, the river Descanips, Nichinan, Bretoney, the Great and Little Nimaha, the river Plate, the river de Sioux, the L'Eau Qui Court, &c. &c. &c.

As far as twenty five leagues above its junction with the Mississippi are to be found different settlements of American families, viz. at Bonhome, and Femme Osage, &c. beyond this, its banks are inhabited only by savage nations—the great and little Osages, settled 120 leagues on the river of that name, the Canips, the Ottos, the Panis, the Loups or Panis Mahans, the Poukas, the Ricaras, the Mandanes, the Sioux—the last nation is not fixed on the banks of the Missouri, but habitually come there to hunt.

The banks of the Missouri are alternately woods and prairies; it is remarked that the higher you ascend this river, the more common are these prairies, and they seem to increase every year by the fires which are kindled every autumn by the savages or white hunters, either by chance or with the design of facilitating their hunting.

The waters of the Missouri are muddy, and contain throughout a sediment of very fine sand, which soon precipitates; but this circumstance which renders them disagreeable to the sight, takes nothing from their salubrity.

Experience has proved that the waters of the Missouri are more wholesome than those of the Ohio, and the upper Mississippi. The rivers and streams, which empty in the Missouri, below the river Plate, are clear and limpid, but above this river, they are as muddy as those of the Missouri itself. This is occasioned by beds of sands or hills of a very fine white earth from whence they take their rise.

The bed of the Missouri is obstructed with banks, sometimes of sand, and sometimes of gravel, which frequently change their place, and consequently render the navigation always uncertain. Its course is generally west by north west. To give a precise idea of the incalculable riches scattered on the banks of the Missouri would require unbounded knowledge.

The flats are covered with huge trees; the *Liard* or poplar. The sycamore, out of one piece of which are made canoes, wich carry almost 18,000 cwt. The maple which affords the inhabitants an agreeable and wholesome sugar.

The wild cherry tree, and the red and black *walnut*, so useful in joiner's work.

The red and white *elm*, necessary to cart wrights

The *Triacanthos*, which, when well trimmed, forms impenetrable hedges

The water willow, the white and red mulberry tree.

The linden tree, the horse chesnut of India, so much prized in the European gardens, &c. &c.

On the shores are found in abundance, the white and black oak, proper for every kind of ship-wright's, and carpenter's work.

The pine, so easily worked, and on the stony mountains, the durable cedar.

It would be impossible to detail all the species of trees, even those unknown in other countries, and of the use that can be made of them, of which we are still ignorant.

The plants are still more numerous; I will pass lightly over this article, for the want of sufficient botanical knowledge. The Indians are well acquainted with the virtues of many of them, they make use of them to heal their wounds and to poison their arrows, they also make use of different kinds of *sqwoyannes*, to dye different colours: they have one which is a certain and prompt cure for the venereal disease, in short they carefully conceal from us a plant, which renders them for a few moments insensible to the heat of the most ardent fire. I have seen them seize a red hot iron, or burning coal without suffering.

The lands on the borders of the Missouri are excellent, and when cultivated are capable of yielding abundantly all the productions of the temperate, and even some of the warm climates; wheat, maize, and every species of grain, Irish potatoes and excellent sweet potatoes; hemp seems here to be an indigenous plant: even cotton succeeds though not as well as in more southerly countries, its culture however yields a real advantage to the inhabitants settled on the banks of the Missouri, who find in a crop a field of about two acres sufficient for the want of their families.

The natural prairies are a great resource, being of themselves excellent pasturages, and facilitating the labours of the man who is just settled, and who can thus enjoy with little labor, from the first year a considerable crop. Clay fit for making bricks is very common: there is also Fafance clay, and every species of clay which in the opinion of intelligent persons is the real kanellin to which the porcelain of China owes the whole of its reputation.

There are found on the borders of the Missouri many springs of salt water of every kind, which will be more than sufficient for the consumption of the country, when it shall become inhabited.

Salt petre is found here in abundance in numberless caves, which are met with along the banks of the river.

The stones are generally calcareous and gates. There is found one also which I believe to be peculiar to the banks of the Missouri. It is of a blood red colour, and hardens in the air, and is susceptible of a most beautiful polish.—The Indians make use of it for their calumets; but from the extent of its layers it might be easily employed in more important works. They have also quarries of marble, of which we only know the colour: they are streaked with red. One quarry is well known and easily worked, namely, a species of plaster which we are assured is of the same nature as that of Paris, and of which the United States make a great use.

They also find volcanic stones, which demonstrates the ancient or present existence of unknown volcanoes.

The short stay we have generally made among the savage nations has prevented us from making those researches which would have supplied us with more extensive information respecting the various mines found on the borders of the Missouri; we know with certainty only of those of iron, lead, and coal; there is however, no doubt, but that there are some of tin, of copper, of silver, and even of gold, according to the account of the Indians, who have found some particles or dust of these metals either on the surface of the earth, or on the banks of small torrents.

The products which are drawn from the Missouri are obtained from Indians and hunters in exchange for merchandize. They may be classed according to the subjoined table.

					Dolls.	Cts.
Castor,	12281	lbs at	1	20	14737	20
Otters,	1267	skins	4	0	5068	0
Foxes, Pauha foxes, Tyger cats,	862	skins	0	50	401	0
Racoons,	4284	skins	0	25	1062	0
Bears, black, grey & yellow,	2541	skins	2	0	5082	0
Puce,	2541	skins	2	0	5082	0
Buffaloes,	1714	skins	3	0	5142	0
Dres'd cow hides,	189	skins	1	50	283	50
Shorn deerskins,	96926	lbs.	0	40	38770	40
Deerskins with hair,	6381	skins	0	50	3190	50
Tallow & fat,	8313	lbs.	0	20	1662	60
Bears oil,	2310	galls.	1	28	2572	0
Muskrats,	—		—		—	
Martens,	—		—		—	
		Dollars,			77971	20

The calculation in this table, drawn from the most correct accounts of the produce of the Missouri, during fifteen years, makes the average of a common year, 77,971 dollars.

On calculating, in the same proportion the amount of merchandize entering the Missouri and given in exchange for peltries, it is found that it amounts to 61,250 dollars, including expences, equal to one fourth of the value of the merchandize.

The result is, that this commerce gives annually a profit of 16,721 dollars, or about 27 per cent.

If the commerce of the Missouri, without encouragement, and badly regulated, gives annually so great a profit, may we not rest assured that it will be greatly augmented, should government directs its attention to it. It is also necessary to observe that the price of peltries fixed by this table is the current price in the Illinois; if it were regulated by the prices of London, deducting the expences of transportation, the profit according to our calculation, would be much more considerable.

If the Missouri, abandoned to savages, and presenting but one branch of commerce yields such great advantages, in proportion to the capital employed in it, what might we not hope, if some merchants or companies, with large capital, and aided by a population extended along the borders of the river, should turn their attention to other branches of trade, when they might undertake (I dare say) with a certainty of success when we consider the riches buried in its banks, and of which I have endeavored in these notes to give an idea.

Although my intention has been only to speak of the Missouri, I consider it a duty at the same time to give an idea of the salt mines and the salines, which are found in the same latitude, on the branches of the river Arkansas. At about 300 miles from the village of the great Osages, in a westerly direction, after having passed several branches of the river Arkansas, we find a flat, surrounded by hills of an immense extent, and about 15 leagues in diameter, the soil is black sand, very fine, and so hard that the horses hardly leave a trace. During a warm and dry season, there exhales from this flat, vapours, which, after being condensed, fall on this black sand, and cover it with an incrustation of salt, very white and fine, and about half an inch thick; and rains destroy this phenomenon.

About 18 miles from this flat, there are found mines of genuine salt, near the surface of the earth; the Indians who are well acquainted with them, are obliged to use levers to break and raise it.

At a distance of about 15 leagues from the flat, of which we have just spoken, and in a southerly direction, is a second mine of genuine salt of the same nature as the other. These two mines differ only in colour; the first borders on a blue, the second approaches a red. In short, much further south and still on the branches of the Arkansas, is a saline, which may be considered as one of the most interesting phenomena in nature.

On the declivity of a small hill there are five holes, about a foot and a half in diameter and two in depth, always full of salt water, without ever overflowing. If a person were to draw any of this salt water, the hole would immediately fill itself: and about 10 feet lower, there flows from this same hill a large stream of pure and sweet water.

If this country were peopled the working of these genuine salt mines would be very easy, by means of the river Arkansas. This species of salt, is found by experience to be far preferable to any other for salting provisions.

Should these notes, imperfect and without order, but in every respect founded on truth, and observations made by myself, excite the curiosity of intelligence, capable of investigating the objects, which they have barely suggested: I do not doubt but that incalculable advantages would result to the United States, and especially to the district of Louisiana.

It is impossible to give an exact account of the peltries, which are brought down the Mississippi, as they are all immediately transported to Canada, without passing by any port of this district. We can obtain a true statement only from the settlements on the lakes. It is but a short time since the Red river has been explored, and it is yet but imperfectly known; however this year some great expeditions have been made which according to appearances, will raise the products to an immense sum.

After leaving the river des Meons, the fur trade from the upper Missouri is carried on entirely by British houses, and almost the whole of the fur which is obtained from other Indian traders, are also sent to Canada, where they command much higher prices than at New Orleans;—where, in fact, there is no demand for them. It is also necessary to observe that the further north we go, the greater the value of the peltries. It is but a few years since peltries have been exported from America by way of the Ohio; it is to be desired that the eastern part of America should encourage this exportation, by raising the prices of peltries to nearly those of Canada.

Legislature of Maryland.

SKETCH OF PROCEEDINGS.

HOUSE OF DELEGATES.

Tuesday, December 18.

The house met. Present as on yesterday, except Mr. Tillotson. The proceedings of yesterday were read. Mr Hebb and Mr. Stuart appeared in the house.

Petitions from Thomas Crain and Daniel Conner, of the city of Baltimore, Benjamin Arnold and John Hasham, of Baltimore county, and Horatio Johnson, of Anne Arundel county, praying acts of insolvency, were read and referred.

The clerk of the senate delivers the bill authorising Lawrence Brengle, collector of Frederick county, to complete his collection, the bill to lay out and open several roads in Queen-Ann's county, and the bill to lay out and open a road through Tuckahoe neck, in Caroline county, severally endorsed, "will pass;" which were ordered to be engrossed; and a letter from the register of the land office, enclosing an account of taxes received by him; which was read.

Mr. Thompson delivers a bill, entitled An act to lay out and open several roads in Queen-Ann's county,; which was read.

Mr. Cottman delivers a bill, entitled, An act authorising the selling and disposing of a small parcel of land belonging to Stepney parish, in Somerset county; which was read.

The amendments to the supplement of the act to establish and regulate a market at Bridge-town, &c. were read the second time, agreed to, and the bill ordered to be engrossed.

Mr. Alexander delivers a bill, entitled, An act authorising a lottery to raise a sum of money to purchase a fire engine for the town of Elkton, in Cæcil county; and for other purposes; which was read

Mr. Hyland delivers a bill, entitled, An act to alter the time of the meeting of the general assembly of this state, and for other purposes; which was read.

Mr Potter delivers a bill, entitled, An act to encourage the destruction of crows in Caroline county; which was read.

Mr. R. Neale delivers a bill, entitled An act for the relief of Joseph Booth, of Saint-Mary's county; which was read.

Mr. Montgomery delivers a bill, entitled, An act for the relief of Robert Morgan, of Harford county; which was read.

Mr. Clarke delivers a bill, entitled, A supplement to an act, entitled, An act for the regulation of officers fees; which was read.

A petition from Samuel Briscoe, a petition from the commissioners of the town of Elkton, in Cæcil county, a petition from Thomas Nicholls, of Simon, of Montgomery county, a petition from Solomon Holland, of Montgomery county, and a petition from Robert Lemmon, were read and referred.

The house resumed the consideration of the bill to incorporate companies to make several turnpike roads through Baltimore county, and after several amendments were proposed, and the bill being read throughout, the question was put, That the said bill do pass? Resolved in the affirmative, yeas 41, nays 23.

Leave given to bring in a further supplement to the act to regulate the inspection of tobacco.

The house proceeded to the second reading of the report on the communication from the executive of the 28th of November, and after amendments made thereto, the same was concurred with, and the resolution therein contained assented to.

The house adjourns till to-morrow morning.

Wednesday, December 19.

The house met. Present as on yesterday. The proceedings of yesterday were read. Mr. Goldsborough and Mr. Berry appeared in the house.

The supplement to the act respecting the acknowledgment of deeds, was committed for amendment.

The bill to authorise a lottery to raise a sum of money for the purpose of erecting a market house in the town of William's Port, in Washington county, was read the second time and passed.

A petition from Richard S. Thomas, of the city of Baltimore, and a petition from Daniel Bowly and David M'Mechen, were preferred and read.

Mr Dorsey delivers a bill, entitled, An act to lay out and open a road in Anne-Arundel county; which was read.

Mr. Lowry delivers a bill, entitled, a further additional supplement to an act, entitled, An act to erect a town in Queen-Ann's county, and a bill, entitled, An act to lay out and open a public road from Queen's town, in Queen-Anne's county, to Queen's-town creek, near said town; which was read.

Leave given to bring in a bill respecting certain lots of land westward of Fort Cumberland.

Mr. Thomas delivers a bill, entitled, an act authorising the levy courts of Kent and Queen-Ann's county to levy a sum of money for building a bridge over Chester river, at the head of Chester; which was read.

The bill for the relief of James Sim[illegible] was read the second and passed.

The report in the memorial of Elizabeth Johnson, was read the second time, and the question put, That the house concur therewith? Determined in the negative.

The report on the petition of Isaac Williams was read the second time and concurred with.

The report of the committee on the report of the trustees of the academy at Easton was read the second time, amended, and the question put, That the house concur therewith? Determined in the negative, yeas 26, nays 31.

The bill for the destruction of crow in Caroline county was committed for amendment.

On motion, the question was put, That leave be given to bring in a bill to withdraw certain funds from the cities of Baltimore, Annapolis, and the town of Easton, and from Saint John's and Washington colleges, and placing the same in the treasury, subject to the appropriation of the legislature? The yeas and nays being required, appeared as follow:

AFFIRMATIVE.

Messieurs Thomas, B. Mackall, Stansbury, Lemmon, Brown, Harryman, Sheredine, Alexander, Veazey, Miller, Lyles, Berry, Covington, Blake, Lowrey, Thompson, Sturges, Prideaux, Williams, Handy, Clarke, Waters, Cockey, Bond, Ayres, Montgomery, Fotwood, Holbook, Rich, Bowles, Ringgold, Clagett, Swearingen, Linthicum, Selby, Darne, B. Tomlinson, Bayard.—38.