

## AN ANCIENT PAMPHLET.

As a matter of curiosity and interest to many of our readers, we give below a reproduction of part of the first Nebraska City book. This was a pamphlet published by Thomas Morton & Co. in 1858, for the purpose of booming the new town on the Missouri, just beginning to feel a future as a shipping point for the Great West:

## Sketches of Nebraska City.

A peculiar interest attaches itself to the West! That interest has not abated but rather increased since the first bold Pioneer struck out from the Old to form a New Troy, and kissed the crested waves of the Aegean and hailed the blue sky of Italy with that enthusiasm which now characterizes the Western Emigrant, journeying from the States on the Atlantic seaboard to the Territories of the Great West. And any information concerning this much desired and goodly land possesses at all times more than ordinary interest. We offer then no apology in presenting to the public a brief account of the settlement and improvements upon one specific point, when intelligence of all is so desirable; and if any apology were necessary for presenting this short sketch of NEBRASKA CITY we should avail ourselves of the very laudable, and to us, sufficient excuse—a desire to preserve a printed record of what Nebraska City is in the year 1858—as well as to let its claims and advantages be known.

## Its Location.

Nebraska City, comprising within its present corporate limits what was formerly Nebraska, Kearney, and South Nebraska Cities, is the County Seat of Otoe County, and situated about the center of its eastern border on the Missouri river—735 miles above St. Louis by water and 500 by land. Its distance from the Kansas line is 48 miles and 6 miles from the Missouri line. It is nearly on the same parallel with New York City and with the great bend to the North of the Platte river, at which point the various Emigrant and Government trains converge, from Kansas, Missouri, Iowa,—on the route up the Valley of the Platte to the different Government Forts on the frontier. From Nebraska City on the Missouri is the nearest and most direct route to Forts Kearney, Laramie, and Bridger. It covers the ground upon which old Fort Kearney was situated. Out and westward from the City leads the famous "Ridge road" to Utah and California, deeply trodden and still bearing marks of the thousand weary footsteps wending their way for the land

—"where the moor and the mountain  
Are sparkling with treasure no language hath told,  
Where the wave of the river and the spray of the fountain  
Are bright with the glitter of genuine gold."

Here Gen. Lane crossed with his troops to relieve the "martyrs of Kansas;" and here has again been located a Military Depot, showing that Government has always recognized it as an important point for its military operations. The City lies upon an elevated Plateau or Table Land, situate between North and South Table Creeks, both of which empty into the Missouri river. South Nebraska is situate farther back upon the same beautiful and elevated Plateau; Kearney is located upon the south side of South Table creek; still other towns are laid out upon the West and North, named respectively, Belmont, and Greggspport.

We may here remark for the benefit of those unacquainted with the regulations at Land Offices, and consequently are unable to account for so many towns being laid out so near each other, that Government requires every place claimed to be entered as a Town Site shall have a Municipal government, and allows of no one entry to consist of over three hundred and twenty acres.

## Original Proprietors of Nebraska City.

Nebraska City proper was laid out by Gen. H. P. Downs, S. F. Nuckolls, Esq., and Judge A. A. Bradford, in the summer of 1854. Previous to March, 1854, the land in this vicinity was claimed by the Otoe Indians, but by a treaty with Government they were subject to settlement in June of said year. In the same year Kearney was laid out by John Boulware and John McMechan. Judge C. F. Holly, J. B. Boulware, and others laid off South Nebraska City in 1855. These are all energetic men and good exemplars of western thrift and enterprise.

## Appearance of the City from the River.

From the River the place appears at good advantage. Presenting the form of an half Amphitheatre and gradually rising back to the level of the prairie, the scene though changing in some particulars, offers the same general outline and shows equally advantageous from different points. Back are the magnificent prairies, not wearying the eye by an endless unbroken monotony, but relieving the scene by gentle undulations and easy elevations covered in the "merrie month of May" with a thousand variegated flowers

"—which not nice art

In beds and curious knots, but Na-

ture boon

Poured forth profuse on hill, and dale, and plain."

Opposite are thousands of acres of rich and fertile bottom lands, heavily timbered; and still back of them the picturesque and gorgeous "bluffs" which indicate the termini of the western prairies of Iowa. As one steps from the wharf and reaches the summit of the Plateau and receives the health invigorating breezes from the prairies and inhales an atmosphere highly charged with electricity, he feels a new life within him, and adds renewed strength to his physical system. It quickens the pulse and sends the warm current of life dancing along its veins and arteries. This is a characteristic of Nebraska climate, owing, as we believe, to its highly electrical nature, and indicating, we might add, without doubt the existence of minerals to no inconsiderable extent. The health of Nebraska City is unsurpassed, we believe, by any place of its size in the Union. It is free from those "chills" and "fevers" so incident to the settlement of new countries and which proved the great terror to the early settlers of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and indeed of most of the Western States.

Dr. Bowen, who has practiced one season in Kansas and two in Nebraska, says: "To all three of the first questions, which a man contemplating removal into a new country, ought to ask, we can give an unhesitating favorable response. What is the health, water and soil? In regard to the two first, we claim decided superiority over most of the West; and in respect to the last, an equality." And the doctor adds: "Being in constant communication with Kansas Territory, I am unable to account for the severer grade and more inveterate character of sickness in that Territory; possessing such a similarity of soil, climate, and topographical features to Nebraska; only by attributing it to poorer water and the depressing emotions induced by the outrages committed there."

The testimony of other practicing physicians would, we presume, be similar as to the healthiness of the place. Indeed we know not where a healthier climate and more fertile soil than the Valley of the Platte possesses can be found.

## Stores, Business Houses, Etc.

There is at present in the place about twenty-five stores, divided into the departments of Dry Goods, Groceries, Hardware, Boots and Shoes, &c., &c. They are kept mostly by energetic young men possessing both the will and determination to carve out for themselves fortunes and gain