

their families—Mr. Mills, Paymaster's Clerk,—Mr. Castleman of Delaware—Mr. Murdoch of New York—Mr. McCann of Virginia—and our gentlemanly officers, Messrs. Baker, Perry, and Dixon. The excursionists were not numerous; there were, however, enough to constitute an agreeable and pleasant company. The ladies of our party were the first who have sailed up this beautiful river of the Prairies.

Casting loose from the landing at Parkville, we passed rapidly down to Kansas City; and, late the same evening, leaving the eddying waters of the 'Mad Missouri,' turning her prow towards the setting sun, heading gaily towards the Rocky mountains, the 'Excel' was steaming at a fine rate up the Kansas. It is more than 600 yards wide at the mouth. The water of this river is mixed with a sandy sediment, like the Missouri; but it is freer from snags, the banks are less liable to wash and fall in, and the current is not nearly so rapid. For the first hundred miles or so, its average width will reach 600 yards; from Pattawatomie to Big Blue, 400 yards; from Big Blue to Fort Riley, 200 yards. The Pawnee or Republican, and Smoky Hill forks, are scarcely 100 yards wide. The Smoky Hill is the narrowest and deepest. Below Uniontown (about one hundred and thirty miles, by water, from the Missouri River,) the Kansas is quite straight, but above that point, it is crooked. It will be a good navigable river for two or three months in each year—perhaps for three or four in wet seasons; penetrating westward, as it does, into the heart of the Continent, it therefore must become most important in a commercial point of view.

Some of our company joined us at Delaware. Above that place the land is heavily timbered on both sides of the river—with some wide, high bottoms on either bank, consisting of high, dry, rich alluvion. Every five or six miles in this region we passed fine bluffs on the river; and on our right, immediately below the mouth of 'Stranger,' there is a beautiful one, with open woods, and high, rolling prairie in the background. Just above the junction of that stream with the Kansas River, there is a great bend, like a horse-shoe, where a tract of excellent, high bottom land can be easily inclosed by a short fence across the neck. On the south side of the river, opposite that bend, there is a pretty town site, rising gradually back from the edge of the water—the plat covered with grass and scattering timber, forming a green lawn backed with high prairies. In this neighborhood the shore is rocky. We passed a bald bluff on the north, with a rich bottom on the south side, and a