

It is claimed this route is 33 miles shorter to Chicago than via Omaha, but we do not know of any through travel ever going by this line, and judge the local travel to be its sole support.

The Fremont & Elkhorn Valley railroad to the northward is completed to Wisner, about 50 miles, and trains are running regularly. This road runs through a very rich and well cultivated country, where wheat yields as high as 30 bushels to the acre.

Fremont is connected with the south side of the Platte by a wagon bridge that cost over \$50,000.

THE PLATTE RIVER—We are now going up the Platte, and for many miles we shall pass closely along the north bank; at other times, the course of the river can only be traced by the timber growing on its banks. Broad plains are the principal features, skirted in places with low abrupt hills, which here, in this level country, rise to the dignity of "bluffs."

It would never do to omit a description of this famous stream, up the banks of which so many emigrants toiled in the "Whoa, haw" times, from 1850 to the time when the railroad superseded the "prairie schooner." How many blows from the ox-whip have fallen on the sides of the patient oxen as they toiled along, hauling the ponderous wagons of the freighters, or the lighter vehicles of the emigrant! How often the sharp ring of the "popper" aroused the timid hare or graceful antelope, and frightened them away from their meal of waving grass! How many tremendous, jaw-breaking oaths fell from the lips of the "bull-whackers" during that period, we will not even guess at; but pious divines tell us that there is a Statistician who has kept a record of all such expletives; to that authority we refer our readers who are fond of figures. Once in a while, too, the traveler will catch a glimpse of a lone grave, marked by a rude head-board, on these plains; and with the

time and skill to decipher the old and time-stained hieroglyphics with which it is decorated, will learn that it marks the last resting-place of some emigrant or freighter, who, overcome by sickness, laid down here and gave up the fainting spirit to the care of Him who gave it; or, perchance, will learn that the tenant of this rentless house fell while defending his wife and children from the savage Indians, who attacked the train in the gray dawn or darker night. There is a sad, brief history connected with each told to the passer-by, mayhap in rude lines, possibly by the broken arrow or bow, rudely drawn on the mouldering head-board. However rude or rough the early emigrants may have been, it can never be charged to them that they ever neglected a comrade. The sick were tenderly nursed, the dead decently buried, and their graves marked by men who had shared with them the perils of the trip. Those were *days*, and these plains the *place* that tried men's mettle; and here the Western frontiersman shone superior to all



HIGH SCHOOL, OMAHA.