

George Francis Train called Columbus the geographical center of the United States, and advocated the removal of the National Capitol to this place. We have very little doubt, should George ever be elected President, he will carry out the idea, when we shall behold the Capital of the Union located on these broad plains—but we shall not buy corner lots on the strength of the removal.

In July and August, 1867, Columbus was a busy place, and the end of the track. Over 10,000,000 lbs. of Government corn and other freight was re-shipped from here to Fort Laramie, and the military camps in the Powder River country. This was the first shipment of freight over the Union Pacific railroad.

Numerous railroads to the north and south are projected from Columbus, and its future prospects are bright.

Soon after leaving Columbus we cross Loup Fork on a fine bridge, constructed in the most substantial manner. This stream rises 75 miles northeast of North Platte City, and runs through a fine farming country until it unites with the Platte. Plenty of fish of various kinds are found in the stream, and its almost innumerable tributaries. These little streams water a section of country unsurpassed in fertility and agricultural resources. Game in abundance is found in the valley of the Loupe, consisting of deer, antelope, turkeys and prairie chickens, while the streams abound in ducks and geese.

From Columbus it is 7 6-10 miles to

Jackson—surrounded by well-cultivated fields.

Passing along, and just before reaching the next station, we cross a small stream called Silver Creek. From Jackson it is 10 1-10 miles to the next station—

Silver Creek—This section of country has improved very rapidly during the last few years, and we notice many substantial evidences of thrift in every direction—many new buildings.

To the northeast of this station is situated the Pawnee Indian Reservation, but not visible from the cars. It covers a tract of country 15x30 miles in area, most of which is the best of land. About 2,000 acres are under cultivation. The tribe number about 2,000, are provided with an "Agency" and all the usual accompanying "civilization!"

Again we speed westward, 7 3-10 miles to

Clark's—a small station named in honor of the General Superintendent of the road.

The surrounding country is remarkably rich in the chief wealth of a nation—agriculture—and has made rapid progress. Of late years, several new stores, a church, school-house, and many dwellings have been added, indicating permanent prosperity.

From Clark's it is 11 2-10 miles to

Lone Tree—the county seat of Merrick county. It contains a population of about 600, and is surrounded by thrifty farmers. The "old emigrant road" from Omaha to Colorado crosses the river opposite this point, at the old "Shinn's Ferry." A bridge is now contemplated, and will be found of great commercial advantage to the town.

The more recent settlers of Lone Tree, call the place "Central City," in anticipation of the early completion of the Nebraska Central railroad to this place. Cottonwood trees have been planted by many of the settlers about their homes, which present a cheerful and homelike appearance.

Passengers should notice the railroad track—for 40 miles it is constructed as *straight as it is possible to build a road*. When the sun is low in the horizon, at certain seasons of the year, the view is very fine.

Rolling along 10 4-10 miles, and we arrive at

Chapman's—a small place, comprising a few buildings, near the station, but the country around about is a broad prairie, and nearly all improved and settled by thrifty farmers.

From Chapman, we continue west 5 5-10 miles to

Lockwood—a small side-track station. Six miles further and we are at our supper station,

Grand Island—the county seat of Hall county, which contains a population of about 1,500. It is provided with the usual county buildings, several banks, churches of various denominations, good schools, several hotels, many stores, some very pretty private residences, and two weekly newspapers, the *Independent* and the *Times*; also one of the largest steam flouring mills in the State.

Grand Island is a regular eating station, where trains going west stop 30 minutes for supper, and those for the East have the