

chased, but only a small portion is under cultivation.

Passing on, 4 miles brings us to

Josselyn—a side-track station, named after the paymaster of the road, a much more important person to the employes than the station, as trains do not always stop here, but roll on five miles further to

Plum Creek—the county seat of Dawson county. It contains a population of about 500, has a fine, brick court-house, two churches, a school-house, several hotels, four stores, a bridge across the Platte, to the south, and a weekly newspaper—the *Pioneer*. The town was named after an old stage station and military camp, situated on the south side of the river, on Plum Creek, a small stream which heads in very rugged bluffs southwest of the old station, and empties its waters into the Platte—opposite Plum Creek station on the railroad.

This old station was the nearest point on the "old emigrant road" to the Republican River, the heart of the great Indian rendezvous, and their supposed secure stronghold, being but about 18 miles away. Around the old Plum Creek station many of the most fearful massacres which occurred during the earliest emigration were perpetrated by the Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe Indians. The bluffs here come very close to the river, affording the savages an excellent opportunity for surprising a train, and, being very abrupt and cut up with gulches and canyons, affording them hiding-places, from which they swooped down upon the luckless emigrant, often massacring the larger portion of the party.

Returning to the railroad, 7 8-10 miles brings us to

Coyote—an unimportant station.

Here the bottoms are very wide, having increased in width for many miles.

In early days, all along the river, for a distance of 50 miles, the islands and lowlands were covered with cottonwood timber, but since the completion of the railroad, the principal portion has been consumed for use by the settlers. Where, in 1860, were huge cottonwoods, now are wheat-fields, or young cottonwoods and willows. We are now in a section of country where large quantities of hay are put up annually for shipment,

Passing on 6 miles, we reach

Cozad—About one-fourth mile before reaching this station, on the right, we

cross the 100th meridian, marked by a sign, which reads, in large letters "100th Meridian."

This place was named by a gentleman from the East, who purchased 40,000 acres of land from the railroad company here, and laid out a town. It has not been a "huge success" as a speculation, so far, but by a thorough system of irrigation could be made very productive. There are a few good buildings at and near the station, and some herds of cattle and sheep range near by; in fact, this section of country is more adapted to stock-raising than it is for agricultural purposes.

The high bluffs to the south and west—our road here runs nearly north—looming up in the distance, are on the south side of the Platte River, 25 miles distant.

From Cozad, it is five miles to

Willow Island—population 100—named from an island in the Platte River, near by, the second in size in that river. For some distance before reaching this station, large herds of cattle and sheep can be seen, particularly on the opposite side of the river, where can also be seen some of the old adobe ranches of the days when the "overland stage" was the fastest method of crossing these plains.

We are now beyond the agricultural section, and are entering the great grazing region of the West.

For some years after the completion of the road the traveler could see, near this place, and in fact for many miles beyond North Platte, some of the old log houses of the early settlers, with their sides pierced with loop-holes and walled up with turf, the roofs being covered with the same material, which reminds one of the savage against whom these precautions were taken. In fact, from here up the river, the traveler will doubtless observe many of the rude forts along the roadside as well as at the stations. The deserted ranches to be met with along the "old emigrant road," on the south side of the river, are fortified in the same manner. The fort was generally built of logs, covered on top and walled on the side in the manner described. They are pierced with loop-holes on all sides, and afforded a safe protection against the Indians. They generally stood about fifty yards from the dwelling, from which an underground passage led to the fort. When attacked, the settlers would retreat to their fortification where they would fight it out; and until the Indians got "ed-