

wood, with willow, cherry, and other scrubby trees. Buffalo, antelope, and elk were frequent during the day, and, in their abundance, sometimes reminded him slightly of the Sacramento valley. The next day, they continued their journey up the valley, the country presenting much the same appearance, except that the grass was more scanty on the ridges, over which was spread a scrubby growth of wild sage; but still, the bottoms of the creeks were broad, and afforded good pasture ground. Their course brought them, in the afternoon of the second day, to the main Platte river, here a handsome stream, with a uniform breadth of 70 yards, except where widened by frequent islands. It was apparently deep, with a moderate current, and wooded with groves of large willow. The valley narrowed, as they ascended, and soon degenerated into a gorge, through which the river passed as through a gate. They pursued the narrow passage, and found it soon opening into a beautiful circular valley of 30 miles diameter, walled in on every side with snowy mountains, but rich with water and grass, and fringed with pine on the mountain sides below the line of snow. The Indian name, he says, for this paradise to grazing flocks, signifies "Cow lodge," and the enclosure, the grass, the water, and the herds of buffalo roaming over it, naturally suggested the idea of a park. Its elevation above the sea, is 7,720 feet. The Nebraska, or Platte, as it is more commonly called, collects its first waters and takes its first form in this elevated cove, and from the gorges of the surrounding mountains, and some lakes within their bosoms. The third and fourth day,