

is nearly one hundred miles west of this place, and about one hundred and fifty miles west of Fort Riley. He represents it as a fine country. The streams are well fringed with ash, elm and black walnut. There is but little cottonwood. The ash are large and straight. One man is making preparations to put in a crop of fall wheat, and has expectation of a good yield. The soil being deep, no apprehension is felt of a lack of moisture. My own impression is, after a careful examination of the deep brown soil of those "plains," fairly within the buffalo grass region, that with deep ploughing it is admirably adapted to the cultivation of winter wheat. Spring wheat, I think, would not succeed. The prairie is hard to break up. The ground is remarkably solid, and is scarcely affected at all by frost; and what renders the first ploughing more difficult is a plant which grows abundantly, called the "Devil's shoe-string," the long, lateral roots of which are so tough that they can neither be cut nor broken with the plough. The only way is to run under the tuft and heave it all over. After that it causes no further trouble.

Since I saw that gentleman I have conversed with Mr. E. Honek, who has resided over a year on Spring Creek, a small stream nine miles west of Salina, on the "divide," between this and Fort Harker, and on this brown soil of which I have spoken. He, too, is making preparations to put in a crop of winter wheat, and is confident of success. He has been in this country for twelve years, and appears to be a man of good sense and close observation. He has not yet tried fruit-growing; but he told me of a peach orchard which he had seen some miles southeast of this, on an elevated part of the plains, which was very healthy and flourishing. Here, and in every part of Kansas east of this, all the fruit-trees I have seen are very luxuriant. At the Pottawatomie Mission, below Fort Riley, I saw as beautiful peach-trees as ever I saw anywhere, heavily laden with young fruit.

I have no wish to induce men to buy up these buffalo-grass regions for farming purposes until all their characteristics and conditions shall be more fully known. But from all I have seen and heard, I am persuaded that this remote portion of our national domain, comprehending hundreds of thousands of square miles, which we have heretofore heard of only as "the plains," and as "the buffalo region," will be found to be valuable land, well adapted to be the habitation of civilized people, and far more salubrious than any territory we have yet occupied. I believe that population will rapidly follow this railroad and its branches, and that Government lands, hitherto utterly valueless, will be eagerly occupied as homesteads, or bought up. I say population will *follow* this railroad. It cannot precede it; for even the