

I have thought it worth while to be thus particular in speaking of this extraordinary flood, because of its bearing upon the Union Pacific Railway, and to correct any exaggerated reports which, perchance, may be set afloat.

P. S.—Already five construction trains are at work on those parts of the road found to be too low, and in a few days all will be better than ever, and the regular trade resumed.

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LETTER VIII.—*Trees in Kansas.*

LAWRENCE, June 21, 1867.

TREES IN KANSAS.

IN the greater part of this State, except along the margins of the watercourses, there is very little timber; but along the streams it grows with great luxuriance. The main part is cottonwood, a variety of poplar, and perhaps one of the poorest varieties. The tree often grows to a large size, and is much used for the manufacture of rough lumber, such as joists, rafters, scantling, fencing-boards, and often it is used for partitions, and even siding and floors in the rougher and cheaper kinds of houses. It is almost impossible to plane it. In fact, nothing but the axe and saw can work it up. The trunks of the trees are generally cut into saw-logs, and the branches into cord-wood. It is rarely split, for the woody fibre is interlaced almost as much as gum, and is nearly as tough as the fibre of hemp. It is not often that a piece long enough for a common saw-log can be obtained without more or less crooks in it. There are many saw-mills, all of which use the circular saw exclusively. Sometimes two saws are used, so that when large logs are operated upon, the upper one cuts what the lower one cannot reach. Cottonwood is wholly unfit for posts, railroad ties, or any use which brings it in contact with the soil, as it quickly rots in such situations; but if kept dry, it is for many purposes a strong, useful wood. Cottonwood boards make pretty good fences, but their tendency to warp often causes them to break the nails.

The cottonwood is of very rapid growth. It is often planted for purposes of shade and ornament. The denseness and deep shining green of its foliage make it one of the most beautiful trees, when standing out in open places, I ever saw. Early in June it ripens its seed, which are quite small, and each seed is winged with a small tuft of downy fibre like cotton, which bears it for miles on the wind. Hence the name of *cottonwood*.

Next to the cottonwood, the black walnut is the important timber