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## PREFACE.

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THE history of two territories whose first governors have as yet never seen their dominions,—in which, indeed, there is not yet a single town,—may seem to be easily written.

When, however, my attention was directed to the study of the various researches which have been made in the regions now known as Kansas and Nebraska, I knew that I had a wide range before me.

I have followed up, as carefully as I could, the memoirs of the early French travellers who first opened to the civilized world the valley of the Missouri. Of more use, in the view in which that valley is now regarded, are the more recent travels of our own countrymen, a body of official reports which deserve very high praise for the skill and gallantry displayed in exploration, and the care with which their history has been written. I have made such use as I could of the travels of Lewis and Clarke, Capt. Pike, Col. Long, Mr. Breckenridge, Maj. Bonneville, Col. Fremont, Col. Emory, Lieut. Abert, Mr. Parkman, Maj. Cross, Capt.

Stansbury, Capt. Gunnison, Gov. Stevens, Lieut. Williamson, and others.

I have used some recent letters published in newspapers, and have been favored with personal narratives of agents of the Emigrant Aid Company.

The interest which is now sending into these territories a large and well-trained population has been roused by the interest felt in their political condition. I have, therefore, given such a sketch of their political history as the size of the volume admitted. I have drawn my materials for a history of the great Missouri debate from the copious contemporary files in the library of the Antiquarian Society. The memoranda of other political passages in the history of a region, of which the civilized government has not yet begun, are from official documents. So few people have read "the Nebraska Act," of which so many have talked, that I have thought it desirable to publish an accurate copy of it, as the constitution of the new states.

Since the formation of the Emigrant Aid Companies, I have been deeply interested in their success. The trustees of the Boston company offered me, very kindly, any assistance in their power; but they are in no sense responsible for my opinions, as expressed here. I should never have undertaken this work, however, but from a wish to assist in the great enterprise of settling Kansas at once,—an enterprise which appears to me to open a nobler field for effort than any public undertaking which has called upon our energies for many years. To contribute as I could to the immediate settlement of Kansas, I have given such hints to emigrants, and special information for their wants, as my materials afforded me.

The map is accurate as far as may be with our present knowledge of the country. It is compiled from more than twenty of the recent surveys made by government.

In my sketch of the Indian tribes I have followed the invaluable treatise of Mr. Gallatin, the spirited sketches of Mr. Catlin, and Mr. Parkman's interesting journal of his sojourn with the Ogillalah, besides the notices in the travellers I have named.

It will not be long, I suppose, before historical societies and antiquarian institutes in Kansas and Nebraska will be collecting materials far more abundant for their history and geography. I shall watch such collections with great interest, as well as with the pride of being the first collector in the field. Working with the disadvantages of a first collector, I have simply tried to make this book accurate as far as it goes.

In that view I have held to the spelling Kansas, of most of the travellers and of the Indian department, in preference to Kansas, the more fashionable spelling of a few weeks past. There is no doubt that the *z* best expresses the sound, that it has been almost universally used till lately, and that it is still used by those most familiar with the tribe and the river which have, time immemorial, borne this name. Kansas, too, will soon be a state. Its name then will, at best, too much resemble the name of Arkansas, which was, in fact, derived from it. To keep them by one letter more apart is to gain something.

WORCESTER, MASS., Aug. 21, 1854.