

Description of the
State of Tennessee

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Original
A
SHORT DESCRIPTION

Smith, Daniel, 1748-1818. p. 6
OF THE

State of Tennafsee,

LATELY CALLED

The Territory of the United States,

SOUTH OF THE RIVER OHIO;

TO ACCOMPANY AND EXPLAIN A MAP OF
THAT COUNTRY.

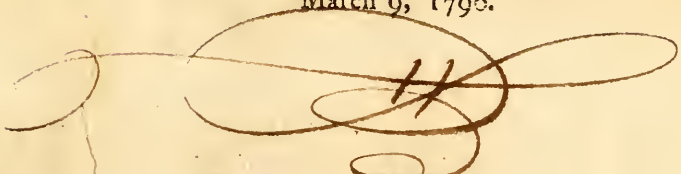
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A.

SHORT DESCRIPTION, &c.

.....

THE state of Tennessee, lately called* the Territory of the United States, south of the river Ohio, is that tract of country which was ceded to the United States by the state of North-Carolina, in the year 1789. It is situated between the parallels

* The Legislature of the Territory of the United States, south of the river Ohio, at their session in July 1795, made a law for numbering the inhabitants, in order to determine whether they were not entitled to all the privileges of a State, according to an ordinance of Congress, passed the 13th of July 1787, respecting states to be formed in the ceded Territory; which provides, that 'Whenever any of the said states shall have ' sixty thousand inhabitants therein, such state shall ' be admitted by its Delegates into the Congress of the ' United States, on an equal footing with the original ' states, in all respects whatever.' On taking the Census, it appeared that there were in the Territory 77,262 inhabitants, of whom 66,649 were free persons:—whereupon the Governor, in pursuance of the law, called a Convention, who lately met at Knoxville, formed a Constitution, &c.

of 35 degrees and 36 degrees 30 minutes, extending from the great Iron Mountain to the river Mississippi.

When we cast our eyes on the map of any country, especially the map of a new country, in which little else is seen than the situation of mountains, rivers, and plains, we are desirous to know what is the state of its soil and climate; what are the advantages its inhabitants may be expected to enjoy, or the difficulties under which they must labour. A general answer to these questions, as they respect the *Tennassee government*, is the object of this publication.

We discover, at first sight, that the state is cut into eastern and western divisions, by Cumberland mountain, a ridge near thirty miles broad; and it is probable, that the commercial connexions of people who live in the eastern division, may be different from those of the western inhabitants. The great island on Holston river, is not above 340 miles from Richmond in Virginia, along a good waggon road; whence we may conclude that the settlers on Holston will preserve a considerable intercourse with the Atlantic states: but people who live to the westward of Cumberland mountain, will send their produce to market by means of the Mississippi. This remarkable difference

in their situation will probably induce the inhabitants of those districts to employ themselves differently ; for the most proper or profitable productions in one settlement, may not be most profitable in the other.

The Holston settlement contains 62,338 inhabitants, though in the year 1775 it hardly contained 2000. The land in this settlement is generally fertile ; but the face of the country is much broken. Placed, as it is, between two large mountains, we may readily suppose that the farmer never suffers by the want of rain. The soil produces wheat, barley, Indian corn, hemp, and flax, in great perfection. Physicians have not hitherto found their way to that country, for the people have not been sick. They enjoy a temperate climate, ease, and abundance.

Iron ore abounds in that country. A capital furnace and forge have lately been erected on Holston, near the Virginia line. There is a bloomery below the mouth of Wataga, and another 25 miles above the mouth of French Broad. There are also fundry lead-mines in the settlement, one in particular on French Broad river, that produces seventy five per cent. in pure lead.

The greatest part of the State of Tennessee lies on the west side of Cumberland mountain ; and though that country has hardly

been settled ten years by civilized men, it naturally claims the greatest share of our attention, because it is extensive, and will probably become the residence of a numerous and powerful colony.

The mean distance between Cumberland mountain and the Mississippi is about 230 miles. This, at 103 miles broad, gives fifteen millions of acres; and it is generally agreed, that eleven or twelve millions of that land may be cultivated to advantage; such is the proportion of arable land. The natives, who formerly inhabited that country, must have been very numerous; we seldom go more than five or six miles along the banks of Cumberland river, without finding a large burying-place, the evident remains of a considerable town. As the Indians had their choice of land, and do not appear to have been equally numerous in other places, we may suppose they found this to be a soil on which they could live with the greatest ease.

Of the Rivers.

FROM the face of the map it appears, that this country is well intersected by rivers, and most of those rivers are navigable by large boats; some of them by ships.

TENNASSEE river is navigable by vessels of great burden to the Muscle Shoals; those shoals are only to be passed in small boats or batteaux; from the Muscle Shoals the river is navigable in boats of 40 or 50 tons burden, to the Virginia line.

CUMBERLAND river is navigable in large vessels to Nashville, and thence in boats to the mouth of Obas river.

DUCK river is navigable in boats about 90 miles. The waters of Harpath, Cany-fork, Stones, Roaring, and Red river, have uniformly a gentle current towards the mouth, whence they are all navigable in boats for a considerable distance. In a word, no spot can be marked in that country, that is more than 20 miles from a boatable stream, so great are its advantages of water-conveyance.

There are five navigable rivers in this territory which discharge themselves immediately into the Mississippi, viz. Wolf, Hatchee, Forked-deer, Obion, and Reel-foot.

WOLF river, seven miles from the mouth, is about 50 yards wide; Hatchee 80 yards; Forked-deer 60 yards; Obion 70 yards; and Reel-foot 30 yards. These rivers in general are deep, and flow with a gentle current, unincumbered with rocks or rapids, until they reach the barren or broken tract in which they rise. Each of those rivers is

bordered by a small strip of low ground, 60 or 80 yards wide, and this again is terminated by a gentle slope or secondary bank. In order to understand the use, perhaps the cause of this remarkable circumstance, an inner and an outer bank to each of those rivers, it should be remembered that the river Mississippi, during the month of May, rises perpendicularly near 25 feet, at which season the low ground on both sides of that river is covered with water, to the depth of 12 or 18 inches. This inundation, on the west side of the river, extends to a great distance; for the country seems to be lower in that direction; and some of the waters of that river find their way to the ocean by other channels. On the east side of the river the inundation hardly extends above five miles; at that distance the waters are restrained by a secondary bank, which runs parallel to the general course of the river. This outer bank is properly the beginning of high and dry land. It is obvious, that during those spring floods, the rivers, which run into the Mississippi, must suffer a considerable interruption. Their current is affected 10, 15, or 20 miles from the mouth, and they overflow their banks. On those occasions, the secondary bank of those small rivers becomes necessary; for it prevents the adjacent land

from being overflowed, except the narrow border above described. The industry of a small French colony at New Orleans has given a sufficient proof that the inundations of the Mississippi may be restrained by artificial banks, by which means arable land has been and may be secured, that is hardly equalled in value by any known lands, except in Egypt.

Of the Timber, Plants, Animals, &c.

THE land on the waters of Tennessee and Cumberland rivers is generally well timbered. In some places there are glades of rich land without timber; but these are not so frequent nor large. The general growth is poplar, hickory, black-walnut, buck-eye, or the horse-chestnut, sycamore, locust, and the sugar-maple. The under growth, in many places, is cane 15 or 20 feet high, so close together, as to exclude all other plants; where the cane does not abound, we find red-bud, wild-plumb, spice-wood, red and white mulberry, ginseng, Virginia and Seneca snake-root, angelica, sweet anise, ginger and wild-hops. The glades are covered with clover, wild-rye, buffalo-grass, and pea-vine. On the hills, at the heads of rivers,

we find stately red-cedars; many of these trees are four feet in diameter, and forty feet, clear of limbs. In those hills there is abundance of iron-ore, lead-ore, and coals. Copperas and alum fit for use have been gathered in caves near Nashville.

On the rivers that run into the Mississippi, the growth is nearly the same as on the waters of Cumberland river.

In speaking of a new country, that is extremely fertile and well covered with herbage, it can hardly be necessary to say that it abounds in wild game. The buffaloe, elk, deer, and bear, are numerous, nor is there any scarcity of wolves, panthers, wild-cats, foxes, beavers, and otters. They have pheasants, partridges or quails, and turkies in abundance through the year. During the winter, their waters are covered with the swan, wild-goose, brant, and duck. Cat-fish have been caught in those rivers, that weighed above 100 pounds, and perch that weighed above 20 pounds. Nature seems to measure her works on a different scale on the opposite sides of the Apalachian mountains.

In the year 1780, a small colony, under the direction of James Robertson, crossed the mountain, and settled on Cumberland river, at the place now called Nashville.

In the year 1783, the state of North-Carolina laid off a tract of land to be reserved for the discharge of military bounties; this reservation included the infant colony, a small tract having been allotted to each of the settlers. A county was also laid off on those waters called Davidson, to commemorate a brave and popular officer who fell in the service of his country. The bounty lands were run off by surveyors appointed for that purpose; and in a few years a considerable number of the original grantees sold their titles to other persons, and the settlement has lately been increasing very fast. There were 14,924 people on that river when their census was taken in 1795.

Of the Soil.

THE farmers on Cumberland river, for the sake of describing their lands, distinguish them by first, second, and third quality.—Land of the first quality will bear Indian corn or hemp; but it will not bear wheat without great reduction. Land of the second quality does not bear wheat to advantage until it has been reduced by two or three crops of corn, hemp, tobacco or cotton. Land of the third quality bears every kind

of grain, that is usually sown on dry ground, in the Atlantic states. It is agreed by all who have visited the Cumberland settlement, that 100 bushels of Indian corn are frequently gathered from an acre of their best land. Sixty or seventy bushels from an acre is very common; but the farmer who expects to gather such a crop, must be careful, while the corn is soft, to guard it against bears and racoons. This, however, is a trouble that must cease when the country is well settled. Wheat, barley, oats, rye, buckwheat, Indian corn, pease, beans, potatoes of both sorts, flax, hemp, tobacco, indigo, rice and cotton, have already been planted in that settlement, and they all thrive in great perfection. The usual crop of cotton is 800 pounds to the acre; the staple is long and fine. It is alledged, however, that the lands on the small rivers that run into the Mississippi, have a decided preference to those on the Cumberland river, for the production of cotton and indigo. No experiments have been made on land near the Mississippi, within the ceded territory; but there is a small settlement further down the river, within the limits of the United States, on a similar soil, where the growth and quality of cotton is so remarkable, that its culture is more profitable than any other

crop. The soil on those rivers is deep and light, having a small mixture of sand with a black earth; hence, as the planters alledge, it proves favourable to the culture of all kinds of roots, as well as of indigo and cotton.

Of Roads and Distances.

FROM Knoxville, the present seat of government, to Philadelphia, is 650 miles.

From Knoxville to Long-Island, on Holston, is 100 miles.

From Abingdon,	43
Fort Chiffel,	64
English's Ferry, new riv.	24
Montgomery Town,	11
Big Lick,	33
Liberty Town,	28
New London,	15
Floods,	34
Powhatan Court-house,	65
Richmond,	32

From Knoxville to Richmond, 494

From Knoxville to Nashville, the distance is 183 miles, viz.

From Knoxville to South West

Point,	35
Big Lick garrison, on	
Cumberland,	80
Bledsoe Lick,	32
Nashville,	36
	<hr/>
	183
	<hr/>

On the last summer, a good waggon road was cut across Cumberland Mountain, and it was passed by thirty or forty waggons in the fall. The late friendly conduct of the Cherokee Indians, in consequence of a long Talk with governor Blount, and the amicable disposition of the Spanish government, has greatly altered the condition of settlers on Cumberland River, and made them perfectly happy. Several thousands crossed the Cumberland Mountain in September, October, and November last, in detached families, without a guard, and without danger. The Indians treated them with kindness, visited their camps at night, and supplied them plentifully with venison.

From Nashville, on Cumberland River, to Lexington, in Kentucky, is 190 miles.

From Nashville to New Orleans, the distance by land is about 450 miles—the country in general level; and a good road might be cut at a small expence.

Constitution.

THE people of the Territory of the United States, south of the river Ohio, assembled at Knoxville, by their Representatives in Convention, the 6th day of February, 1796, formed themselves into a State, which they named *The State of Tennesseé*. Their Constitution and form of government is not exactly the same with that of the parent state, nor does it differ in many interesting points.

The legislative authority is vested in a General Assembly, which consists of a Senate and House of Representatives.

They are to be chosen for two years.

The number of Representatives in no case shall exceed forty—The number of Senators shall be at least equal to one-third of the

number of Representatives, and never above twenty.

The Governor is to be chosen by the people—to serve two years—he is eligible for six years.

Every freeman aged twenty-one years, who has resided six months in the state, may vote for members of Assembly.

A maximum is fixed, beyond which the salaries of the Governor, Judges, Secretary, &c. or the compensation to members of Assembly, may not be allowed, for several years.

Of the Climate.

THE climate in this country is very temperate; and the experience of ten years assures us, that it is healthy. The piercing northerly winds that prevail, during the winter, in the Atlantic states, seldom molest the inhabitants on Cumberland river, for they have no great mountains to the north or the westward. The inhabitants of the Atlantic states are also subjected to sudden changes in the atmosphere, arising from their vicinity to the ocean; the air that comes from the

surface of the sea, especially from the warm Gulph-stream in winter, must be very different in its temperature from the air that comes across cold and high mountains; but the great distance between the Cumberland settlers and the ocean, considering that many great mountains are interposed, effectually secures them against the bad effects of those sudden changes. North-easterly storms never reach this country.

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OTHER circumstances present themselves, by which we may account for the remarkable healthiness of this settlement. Lime-stone is common on both sides of Cumberland mountain. The bottom of a river on the west side of the mountain, is frequently a continued stratum of this rock. It is generally known that small streams of water are apt to disappear in countries that abound in lime-stone; this is occasioned, doubtless, by the great fissures that are common in those rocks; from the same cause it probably arises, that we seldom find marshes or stagnant waters where there is much lime-stone. In this State we find no stagnant waters; and this is certainly one of the reasons why the inhabitants are not afflicted with those bilious

and intermitting fevers, which are so frequent, and often fatal, in the same latitude near the coast in Carolina. Whether it proceeds from the goodness of the water, the purity of the air, the temperature of the climate, or whatever else may have been the cause, the inhabitants of that country have certainly been remarkably healthy, ever since they settled on the waters of Cumberland river, whence it appears the climate is healthy and pleasant.

Men frequently change their habitations in quest of a better place; and the man, who can enjoy the greatest degree of health, ease, and plenty, is generally supposed to have the most desirable habitation. Keeping this remark in view, perhaps there are few places that present fairer prospects to the man who is looking for a settlement. Few places are more healthy; there is none more fertile; and there is hardly any other place, in which the farmer can support his family in such a degree of affluence. The soil is not only fertile, but easily cultivated. Six hogheads of tobacco for one man does not require more labour, than three hogheads in the Atlantic states; and a difference similar to this appears in every other crop. In the culture of corn, the difference is greater. This circumstance alone would secure abun-

dance to the industrious man ; but we must also recollect, that in cold climates, the farmer is shut up or prevented from working several months in the year, during which cold season he is consuming his stores, and his cattle are making greater destruction. When we consider the quantity of food that must be laid up for the necessary support of stock in cold climates, we may fairly calculate, that half of the farmer's time is spent in making provision for his cattle, or in sheltering himself from the weather. In the state of Tennessee cattle at present support themselves among the reeds, pea-vines, ryegrass, and clover ; but when the progress of cultivation shall have destroyed the wild range, it is obvious, that the fodder and straw obtained from the ordinary crops, will be more than sufficient to support the cattle.

Let us review this account. It is granted, that, in cold climates, more than half of the farmer's time is lost from labour by intemperate weather, or taken up in working for the support of his cattle ; this gives an odds of two to one in favour of the country that has been described. We are next to recollect, that one day's labour, in this country, produces more than twice as much grain, or other provisions, as it produces in

common land, and in a northern climate ; this gives another difference of two to one, which makes four to one throughout the year. But, considering that industry, in all countries, bears some proportion to the necessities of the inhabitants, we shall suppose, that the farmer, in this territory, during the year, raises only twice as much provision for his family, as he could raise on common land in a colder climate ; and the difference, as it respects himself, must be immense. In this country, he would live in great affluence, or become rich, by that measure of industry, which, in the other situation, would hardly be sufficient to the support of a miserable life.

People, however, are seldom contented with the mere necessities of life. There are certain luxuries, which the progress of society has taught us to consider as necessary. Sugar, coffee, and tea belong to this class ; as do sundry articles of foreign dress. What is the farmer to sell in the western part of the state, that he may be enabled to buy foreign articles ? He lives at a great distance from sea ; how is he to be provided with salt ?

It is very remarkable, that the farmer has more use for salt in the western country, than in the Atlantic states. His cattle, in

that country, will not thrive without salt ; and this is the only thing, at present, he has any occasion to give them. It has already been observed, that lime-stone abounds in the western country ; this stone is not found in the southern states, until we approach the first ridge of mountains. As we travel westward, we find lead-ore and salt-springs in abundance. Does this country abound in articles that are seldom found in the Atlantic states, because it is composed of the original mother earth ; whereas the land near the coast, in the middle and southern states, is adventitious? Be this as it may, the salt-springs that are found in every part of the western country, affords the utmost relief to the inhabitants, whose cattle, from the quality of their food, have more need of salt than those who are nearer the sea.—Hitherto the salt-works have not been judiciously managed, either at Kentucky or the Cumberland settlement: and yet salt, made from the water of salt-springs, may be purchased for one dollar the bushel. As the source can never fail, and the mode of preparing it is capable of great improvement, we may reasonably suppose, that the average price of salt made on Cumberland river, will be three fourths of a dollar the bushel.

The settlers have not had much experience of bringing loaded boats up the Mississippi ; but they calculate, from the trips they have made, that salt may be freighted from New-Orleans to Nashville, at rather less than three eighths of a dollar the bushel ; and it appears from similar experiments, that pork, flour, or other produce, may be easily taken from Nashville to New-Orleans at less than three eighths of a dollar the barrel. Those calculations regard the river Mississippi in its present state, with all its circular bendings, the banks covered with trees, and no part of the upper country settled ; but the river, at present, is more than double the necessary length. From the mouth of the river Ohio to New-Orleans, the present distance by water is supposed to be 1000 miles ; the direct distance is considerably short of 500 miles. In navigating that river we often find places like a horse-shoe, where we do not gain more than a mile by sailing or rowing five miles. Every one of those bends may be cut off at a small expense. Let a common ditch, three or four feet deep, be dug across those necks of land, the roots being cut away when the river is low, and the next flood, by the rapidity of the stream through the short passage, will change the ditch to a navigable channel. An experiment

of this kind has been made with success, at a place called Point Coupé. Two great benefits will arise from this process of giving the river a straight course; one half of the time and labour in ascending the river, will be saved by shortening the distance. This case supposes that vessels ascend the river by the help of oars, and poles, without sails, which is generally the case at present, because the river is so crooked, that no wind can be fair; but in case the chief bendings of the river should be cut off, as a southerly wind prevails there for the greater part of the year, every vessel would ascend by the use of sails, and the difficulties of that navigation would be reduced to a trifle. Considering what would be the utmost expense of transporting salt from New-Orleans to Nashville, and considering that Nashville is 2 or 300 miles by water farther from New-Orleans, than some other parts of the territory, and presuming that a great share of the present expense may be saved by practicable improvements in the navigation of the Mississippi, we may readily conclude, that the mere freight of the luxuries of life must be a small object to the inhabitants of that territory. As matters are now circumstanced, the navigation of the Mississippi being free,* the settlers on Cum-

* The Treaty lately negotiated with Spain by Mr.

berland river can take their produce to a shipping port, at less expense than it can be waggoned fifty miles in any country.

As the country that has been described, is capable of producing, in great perfection, every article that grows in the Atlantic states, there are no leading circumstances, by which we can possibly determine, what is like to be the general course of its trade, or the particular articles in which its most valuable exports will consist. Iron, lead, pot-ash, pork, bacon, butter, cheese, corn, wheat, barley, flax, hemp, rice, indigo, and cotton, have all been mentioned by different persons from that country, as articles of export. Each of those articles will doubtless be exported in a greater or less quantity, according to the demand; but it appears most probable, that the inhabitants will make their chief remittances in tobacco, hemp, rice, indigo, and cotton. The low grounds

Pinckney, contains such indisputable proofs of reciprocity and liberal sentiment, as cannot fail to beget and cherish confidence and affection in every citizen of the United States towards the Spanish nation. Such effects of a Treaty are more desirable, and perhaps more profitable to the conceding party, than those indignant sentiments that must wrangle in the breast of every freeman, who considers himself oppressed by unequal terms, that might seem to be dictated by envy, or the pride of strength.

on the Mississippi must produce great crops of rice, and it has already been observed, that the high grounds near that river are particularly favourable to the culture of indigo and cotton. The article last mentioned must be a constant source of wealth to the planter, because its value is considerable when compared with its weight, and it must be in constant demand in foreign markets. It is hardly necessary to observe, that in a country where timber of the best and most durable quality, and all other materials abound, necessary for shipping, the inhabitants will doubtless build ships for a distant market.

By tracing the short lines which mark the Indian boundary, we discover, that all the lands on Duck river and Elk river, as well as on the several rivers which run into the Mississippi, continue to be claimed by the Indians; and those lands are among the best in that country. It may be observed, at the same time, that all those lands are claimed by the Chickasaws, a small tribe of friendly Indians. We may be assured, that the government of the United States will not permit those lands to be settled, without the consent of the Indians; but we must discover that the natural progress of things, in a short time, will render a considerable part of that country, especially the lands on the Missis-

sippi, useless to the Indians, and necessary to the Whites. Numerous boatmen, passing up and down the river, will have frequent occasion to go on shore; they will need refreshments. Many who go down on rafts or boats, will return by land; they will destroy the game. In a word, every man who lives on the western waters must be interested in having settlements on the Mississippi. There can be little difficulty in making a bargain for a country that is of great use to the Whites, and little use to the Indians. The true interest of the United States would point out a price for those lands, that would enable the Chickasaws to live in a degree of ease and affluence, which otherwise they can never expect. Suppose the Indians should cede all the lands to the northward of Wolf river; in that case, the amount of the North-Carolina grants being deducted, the United States will have at least six millions of acres of good land for sale. Lands of such a quality, and so near the sea, will hardly be sold, even by the public, for less than one dollar the acre, while individuals are selling worse lands, in worse situations, for twice that price. Six millions of acres, at one dollar, would bring 6,000,000 dollars, by which a debt to that amount must be extinguished, and 360,000 dollars per annum saved to the national Treasury. Suppose the 20th part

of the money thus saved, or 18000 dollars, was paid annually to the Chickasaws, one half in corn or other provisions at a stipulated price; and the other half in clothing; is it not obvious, that their condition would be greatly mended, and equally clear, that the state of our finances would be much improved by such a regulation? It is true, that Indian lands have commonly been obtained on terms much less profitable to the Indians, and more expensive to the Whites; but it may be presumed, that experience will teach us to forsake the old plan, since it is neither recommended by the dictates of humanity nor the rules of œconomy

Such is the territory south of the Ohio. The eastern division, as we have observed, is composed of small mountains and vallies, which are extended in the direction of the rivers. There is no plain, or tract of arable land, of any considerable width, in that settlement; but the vallies are generally fertile. In the great western division, there is not a single eminence or ridge, that claims the name of a mountain. This country, nevertheless, is sufficiently diversified by rising ground, and bears no resemblance to the continued plain, which is found near the coast, in the middle and southern states. The rich lands near Cumberland river are considerably broken by knobs or short hills; but those hills have lime-

stone for their basis, and are fertile and fit for cultivation to the very top. Streams that run in opposite directions are uniformly divided by rising ground, and some of the ridges are considerably elevated; but they are generally covered with good soil, and are seldom too steep for the plough. There are two remarkable ridges or broken tracks, in that country, of considerable dimensions, which are not included in the above description; for they are stony or barren in many places. The first of those ridges divides the waters of Cumberland river from those of the Tennesse; it is broad as it approaches the foot of Cumberland mountain, or rather, diversified in that part by alternate hills and plains; but the plains, being chiefly without timber, are called barrens. The second remarkable tract of broken or barren land, begins near the mouth of Tennesse, dividing the waters of that river from those of the Mississippi, and extending southerly towards the Chickasaw towns. The small rivers that run into the Mississippi, have their heads in this ridge. It is, in some parts, above twenty miles broad, rising at the very margin of the Tennesse. It is covered with long grass, having little or no timber, except a small growth on the water-courses, which are numerous.

The territory west of Cumberland mountain has been stated at fifteen millions of acres; but this calculation leaves eight millions for the Holston settlement, which is certainly too much. The amount that may remain for sale on that side of the mountain, has, in round numbers, been stated at six millions; but the quantity, in all probability, will be considerably greater, without including the great tract of vacant land south of the French Broad, nor the considerable tracts of arable land that are found in Cumberland mountain, nor those in the Cumberland barrens, so called, where the land, though without timber, is frequently very good; the Indians formerly, in burning the long grass, must have destroyed the trees.

It is probable, that all the lands to the northward of the great bend of the Tennessee, may hereafter be joined to those ceded by North-Carolina, so as to form one state; such a state would have a natural boundary. And when we consider that the Creeks and Chactaws live to the southward, who are numerous nations, together with the Chickasaws, we shall be apt to mark the latitude of the south bend, for a long series of years, as our southern boundary for the purpose of settlement.

The reader has been informed, that the soil, climate, and productions of the country

on the western waters, are different from those in the Atlantic states; and it has been intimated, that the whole face of nature in that country bears a different appearance. Observations concerning things that are new or uncommon, should be made and received with caution; but the reader cannot fail to realize the narrative, if he takes the trouble of recollecting two or three remarkable facts, to which reference has already been had.

In the Atlantic states, the strata of limestone are broken, and inclined considerably to the horizon, being, at a medium, nearly parallel to the axis of the earth. In the western country, the strata are constantly found parallel to the horizon.

In the Atlantic states, salt springs are seldom or never found. In the western country they abound in every part.

In the Atlantic states, pit-coal is very scarce, and is obtained with difficulty. In the western country, it is common, and frequently appears within a few feet of the surface.

One of those countries must have suffered prodigious convulsions; the other may be supposed to retain more of its original form. Is it at all surprising, that a country, so different in its structure, its appearance, and essential qualities, should produce more plentiful crops, or that it should engage a considerable degree of public attention?

[From the Philadelphia Gazette of Oct. 17, 1795.]

A short Description of the South Western Territory,

In a Letter from a resident there, dated July, 1795.

THE Territory of the United States, south of the river Ohio, is that tract of country situate between 35 and 36 1-2 degrees north latitude, being bounded on the north by Kentucky, on the south by Georgia, on the east by North Carolina, and on the west by the river Mississippi: it was originally part of North Carolina, but was ceded to the United States in the year 1789; the Cumberland country and settlements are included in its limits, altogether forming an extent of country of not less than 500 miles in length; its width about 105 miles.

The natural advantages which this temperate climate possesses, exceed those of any other part of the United States, or perhaps of the world. A circumstance peculiar to this country is, that the soil will yield all the productions common to both the northern and southern climates; here it is customary to see in the same field, or fields contiguous to each other, wheat, Indian corn, rye, barley, rice, tobacco, hemp, indigo, cotton, and every kind of vegetable, growing to the greatest

perfection. Persons who have seen this country, and who have been accustomed to the cultivation of vines, say, that there is no doubt but that it will be extremely productive of wine, whenever it becomes sufficiently populated to make it proper to attend to that object; and it is probable that the time is not far distant, when population will have made such advances as to enable the people to attend to the raising those articles which will be most proper for exportation; it is generally well known with what rapidity the state of Kentucky has been peopled since it became an independent government. This territory has also taken steps to become a separate state, and will, in the course of a few months, be admitted into the union as a state, there being no doubt, from the prodigious emigration which has lately taken place, that under the constitution they will be entitled to become a separate state whenever they choose. The bounds of this letter do not admit of a detail of the many instances of the rapid population of this country: suffice it to say, that Knoxville, the present seat of the territorial government, not more than three years since was a wood, in which a block-house, necessary to repel Indian invasions, was erected; since which time, a town has grown up here, consisting of from 2 to 300 houses, inhabited by a great number of respectable families; and although

it is not more than two years since the Indians appeared at least 1000 strong before this town, such has since been the progress of population, that many wealthy and respectable families have now set down with the greatest safety from 30 to 40 miles nearer the Indian boundary; and it is already contemplated to remove the seat of government to a more central situation of the territory, 30 miles from Knoxville, on the banks of the Tennessee. To a person who observes the migration to this country, it appears as if North and South Carolina, and Georgia, were emptying themselves into it. It is not unfrequent to see from 2 to 300 people in a body coming from those southern climates, oppressed with diseases, to revive and enjoy health in this salubrious air. From the northern states the emigration here has been little or none: the greater facility of removing families down the Ohio to Kentucky, is one reason of it; and the intercourse of the inhabitants of it with the northern people being very small, and of course no opportunity of their becoming acquainted with its merits, is another—but then there is no doubt that the South Western Territory possesses many advantages over Kentucky, or the territory northwest of the Ohio. One advantage is the abundant supplies of water from the best springs, that are to be found dispersed all over the face of

this country ; many of them large enough, at their very sources, to turn a mill constructed for the purposes of grinding or other manufactures—the circumstance of this being as well watered a country as any in the world, added to the general temperature of the air, are supposed to be the causes of the inhabitants enjoying a greater degree of health, than in any other part of America.

So great are the natural advantages of water in this country, that it is asserted with truth, there is not a spot in it twenty miles distant from a boatable navigation, from whence the farmer, planter, or manufacturer, may with cheapness, safety and ease, convey his different articles for foreign markets, down the great river Tennessee, or Cumberland, into the Ohio and Mississippi, and thence to New-Orleans.—The face of this country may be said to be generally irregular : except on the river bottoms, we find no land entirely level ; but since lands have become valuable, and the most hilly parts, as well as the river bottoms, are peopling, the hills and worst looking lands produce not less than 30 to 40 bushels of Indian corn to the acre ; and although the bottoms will produce more than double as much Indian corn, the uplands are found best adapted to the growth of small grain ; what time may be by reducing those lands, and thereby rendering them more

fit for raising of wheat, rye, &c. is yet to be experienced ; but little or no alteration has been discovered in the soil by a few years cultivation.—This country cannot but be considered as offering a welcome to the emigrant ; on his arrival in it, even in the most inclement season of the year, he can easily, with his own hands, let him be ever so bad an artificer, erect a building entirely sufficient to repel all the evils which are here felt from the weather : his cattle are supported from the spontaneous growth of the fields and woods, which afford an excellent range, even in the coldest season.

So great is the fertility of the soil, that the inhabitants with little labour raise thrice as much grain as supplies their families, and the balance is hospitably given up to the emigrant, or those who from accident have been deprived of sustenance ; here there is not the same necessity to secure yourself in your house from the invasion of the winds, for they are harmless, and do not possess the injurious qualities of those experienced in the Atlantic states ; here are no sudden changes from heat to cold, effected by the different directions of the winds, but the inhabitants are equally secured from the cold chilling blasts of the north west and north east winds, as from the warm relaxing breezes of the south ; the state of the air is only materially affected by the gra-

dual approach or departure of the sun; in short, the hand of nature has placed its first blessings on this land, and proclaimed that whoever be the inhabitants they must be happy and independent; there is not a necessary, and but few luxuries of life, which cannot here be attained with ease. Salt, sugar, iron, lead, saltpetre, copperas, &c. abound every where. In this climate the system of nature seems to be in its highest vigour, and there is no necessary production of the earth, sea, or air, proper for the comfort of man, that is not found here.

The modes of getting titles to lands have been various here—At the time North Carolina ceded to Congress this territory, they reserved the right of still laying on its lands all warrants then issued, which warrants are now all appropriated; and as there is a great deal more land in this territory than they could cover, it is probable they have been laid on the best, particularly as there is scarcely any annoyance met with by the white people from the Indians; and the country has therefore been freely explored. For the lands on which the warrants have been laid, North Carolina has issued patents agreeable to the cession-act. Another mode lately adopted, of obtaining a prior claim to lands in this country, is by a survey and location, which, there is no doubt, will give a priority of entry in the United States' Land Office, when opened; which, I am told, will be the case, at the next session of Congress—and, if the form of the bill I have seen should be adopted, it will give a person in Philadelphia the same opportunity of confirming and completing a title to the lands under these surveys, that the people resident in this country have. Another mode which has been supposed to secure a right to land is, that people have set down on the lands which they like best, that were not before appropriated, and expect to be allowed a right of pre-emption; but this is supposed to be the worst kind of claim, as they have never paid any consideration for them; and for the surveys and locations the Surveyor General's and other fees have been paid.







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