

basis. We need not marvel when we learn that in his later years, without any extensive book study, he became a good practical geologist. In this picture (Pl. CXXXIII, Fig. 1) he gives us a striking representation of the peculiar billowy hills which are so characteristic of the loess deposits of the Missouri Valley in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska. These are the hills of loess of 1832, with their smooth, grass-clad sides and their scanty groves in the ravines; such, too, they still seemed when last I saw them, fourteen years ago; but a change even then was coming over them; prairie fires were at an end and small shrubs were rising above the grass. These are perhaps good sized saplings to-day. So the forest will spread and soon the beautiful clear-cut outlines of these billowy slopes will no more have power to inspire the artist's hand.

In this, as in a hundred other cases, the pictures have, for us, a high historic value as fixing an irrevocable past. They show us landmarks of the West which have long ago disappeared, such as old trading posts of the Indian country; Fort Union, which stood forty years at the mouth of the Yellowstone, but the lines of whose foundation walls can scarcely be traced to-day.

Floyd's grave, the place of interment of the only man who died on Lewis and Clarke's famous expedition in 1804, is shown in Pl. CXXXIII, Fig. 2. Is there any trace of the once lonely mound now in the busy environs of Sioux City? Does the pole still stand, as Catlin shows it, over Blackbird's grave (Pl. CXXXIV, Fig. 1), the last instance of a sepulchral mound built in historic times, showing that our modern Indians were mound builders? The self-reared monument of Julien Dubnue, the first white man who worked the Upper Mississippi lead-mines, a century ago, stood perfect still in Catlin's day, a stone hut with door of lead and cross of cedar (Pl. CXXXIV, Fig. 2); but, thirty-five years ago, I have seen it level with the ground. Such are some of the many obliterated land-marks reared by human hands that Catlin's pencil has perpetuated.

But works of nature, the landmarks erected by the eternal elements; can these be obliterated? Have they any past which the artist can preserve for the coming generations? Let this picture decide. Here are the falls of St. Anthony (Pl. CXXXV, Fig. 1), as they roared to an untenanted solitude in the year 1835, when George Catlin visited and sketched them. Who would recognize any identity between that fair wild scene and the falls of St. Anthony of to-day (Pl. CXXXV, Fig. 2).

A very large proportion of the paintings in this collection is devoted to Indian games and hunting scenes (Pl. CXXXVI, Fig. 1), and these represent from a scientific point of view the most valuable part of the whole collection, with the exception of the four scenes of the great Mandan

*Since this was written I have learned that (the grave being endangered by the gradual falling away of the edge of the bluff) the people of Sioux City have recently removed the remains of Sergeant Floyd farther back from the river on the same hill.



FIG. 1. SCENE ON THE UPPER MISSOURI.

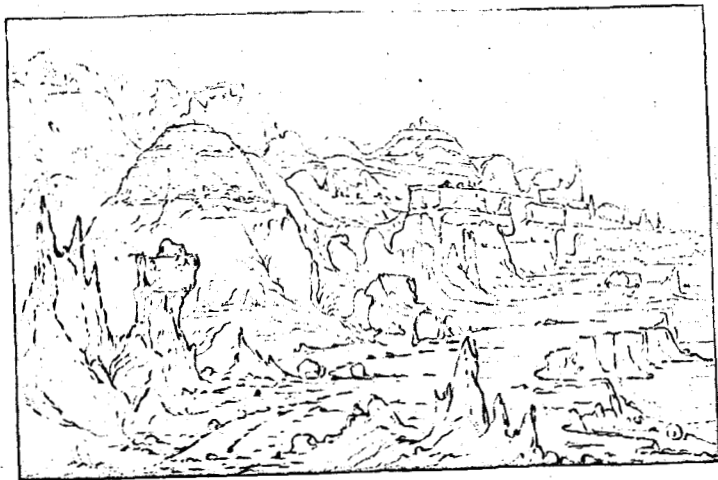


FIG. 2. BAD LANDS ON THE UPPER MISSOURI.