

An Illumination
Of
Duden's Report
On the
Western States of North America
From the American Side

By
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Portrayal
of the current Condition
of the Western States
of North America.

Containing:
Customs and Usages of the residents and settlers, as well as
their political and social lives, effects of climate, of the
ground and soil and of the state of health, the situation of arts
and crafts, of the agriculturist or farmer, of those in trade and
of scholars.

A Little Text
for the educated emigrant
in a complete illumination
of
Duden's Report
on a Journey to the Western States
of North America.

By
Gustav Körner
in the State of Illinois.

Frankfurt am Main
Karl Körner
1834

Körner Illumination (Rowan trans.) 3

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/ 3 / Of all the many things written about emigration from Europe and settlement in the states of North America that have appeared in Germany, none has had a greater, or more dramatic impact on the educated than “*Duden’s Report on a Journey to the Western States of North America.*” Whoever is interested in the significant matter of emigration sought instruction or confirmation of his views in this book. For many families it was everyday reading prior to carrying out their decision, and it became an unshakeable authority. Friends and promoters of emigration have ordered many thousands of copies of this report in order to make getting it easier for those less prosperous, and to provide them adequate information on the situation to be anticipated.

It is certain that this book has many qualities placing it ahead of most of the reports, accounts and diaries written with the same object, nearly all of which owe their creation either to speculation, or to bitterness once hopes have been disappointed. It is also certain that this book owes its reputation primarily to the fortunate moment it appeared. It is certain that the dominant desire for emigration has influenced its positive reception, and that at no time the soil could have been as receptive to the impressions it produced. Yet the / 4 / larger the influence that a particular narrative or report achieves, the greater the circle that receives the words or writings of any writer, all the larger is the duty to investigate the result with greater precision. The testing and evaluation of the propositions and views expressed must be proportionately stricter. What appears at first glance, to a thinking reader, to be the product of a mood either depressed or elevated as a

result of rare good fortune, or what is obviously only a crude enticement for the purpose of self-seeking prejudice, can easily be left to the stream of time, which will soon wash it away. But where one finds what is often mature judgments, results of long experience, and deep reasoning, then one has to take special care not to trust without condition. One must take special care not to accept the misleading expressions of fantasy and error as truth alongside those remarks that are correct.

This brief illumination does not arise from a desire to belittle, nor does it come from disappointed hopes or expectations. Still less does it express the view that emigration itself is undesirable, in principle or in its particular application. It would indeed be easy to terrify those wishing to emigrate with portrayals of discomforts and perils, and to proceed in a simply negative way without offering anything better. Duden himself admits that it would take little to darken his whole composition, that it would be simple to arrive at a conclusion precisely the opposite of his by pursuing the shadows. One only needs to take events out of context, draw general conclusions from individual observations, dip one's pen in ill humor, and the precise opposite of Duden's portrayal can appear.

No, I am agreed with Duden that emigration from Europe is necessary and, if done correctly, can also be advantageous, even if I hold there to be entirely different causes and stimuli for the drive to emigrate. / 5 / For my own purposes I only had to check Duden's statements about the places he recommends, evaluating his presentation of life and work, and precisely to investigate his conclusions on the advantages and happiness of the new settlers. I am not of a

decidedly different view from Duden, yet I cannot agree with many of his expressions, and I must hold his *Report* to be *an excessively bright and much too highly colored* portrayal of those places and the situation the immigrant will find. Even with my agreement with Duden on such significant points, one might think that I would not have found it necessary to make my views public. How could anyone who approves emigration on the whole and holds these particular regions as especially advantageous for new settlement, feel himself driven to appear belligerent about a few essential points? Yet I hold it to be my duty to darken Duden's image of the newly opened western states a bit, and to communicate my dissenting view. I know how much disappointment even in minor circumstances makes new immigrants depressed and discouraged, and I know what it is like to take up new arrangements with distaste and regret. So many die merely as victims of the unaccustomed climate, who cannot resist the attack of disease due to spiritual distress, true melancholy. I have heard the complaints of new immigrants; yes, often their deprecations and even curses. A short time is usually enough to get the disappointed back on their feet, and they find how a person can live tolerably here, even when their dreamed-of paradise has been lost. But why should it not be a duty to strip the situation of its *illusion*, why should it be a thankless task to spare one's fellow men their delusions and inconveniences?

Duden does not hesitate briefly to describe his methodical / 6 / preparations for his visit and to state his position in the country he was evaluating, so that he gives his reader a measure for his ability to judge the situation both intellectually and physically. I believe myself compelled to make a similar

accounting.

It had not been in any way my expectation to travel to America, let alone to visit the inner regions of the republic. It was more accident than choice that led me here. Yet the general geographic and political situation of the country was not strange to me, and through Duden's letters I was rather better acquainted with the western circumstances. Travel through all parts of Germany and France had already taught me to describe the variety of landscape and the physical and intellectual conditions.

I made my own journey through the United States in the company of a numerous and educated family, and I was witness of the new establishment, if not the new settlement, of this as well as many other friendly families. I observed things from a simple American hut, not from a hotel in some great city, in the middle of new undertakings and new activities. Although Illinois, the state lying east of Missouri, was my continual residence, I still had many reports of Missouri, and finally in the autumn of 1833 I made a journey myself to the banks of the Missouri, visiting the settlements of almost all the educated Germans there, and finally saw the region where Duden gathered most of the material for his reports. I was as little a farmer by profession as Duden, but I did not neglect to ask experts about agricultural conditions, and gathered the opinions of all the settlers about the places they occupied, their situation and finally their view of the portrayal the two of us made of it. Duden had a longer / 7 / time there, but I had the result of his residence in hand, and I had what I regard as something better, which is that I had the opportunity to observe a large family traveling and establishing itself. In

all of this I had the advantage of not being personally committed, in that I never expected to settle, and thus experienced no personal disappointment. On the contrary – since all I needed to be satisfied was a politically fortunate and reasonable state institution, and a government built on freedom and equality – my expectations were extensively exceeded.

Duden wrote his report primarily in letters, merely adding an appendix of treatments of particular circumstances composed in a strictly scholarly form. Hence it is difficult, if one does not wish to follow the historical order of his account, to attach observations to his narrative. Still, I will attempt to give my evaluation a certain order according to the main points in which there are differences of opinion.

Duden's *Report* has the peculiarity that one cannot make the accusation that he really never mentions the inconveniences and problems that the immigrant encounters *at all*. Whoever reads the book with close attention and care will find quiet indications everywhere. But the impression of the entire book allows one all too easily to overlook these poorer bits. Advantage and disadvantage lie in proper proportion in opposition on the scale, but this scale is not entirely proper, and the pointer is all too ready to turn to the positive side. This is not on purpose, and nothing is further from Duden than being misleading on purpose. Without knowing it, his love for his new soil, the place he has chosen, permits everything to be seen in a charmed light. He, the individual, already capable as a result of his scholarly preoccupation to isolate himself for a time productively and to live for himself alone, pressed by no necessity, / 8 / always in the position to obtain every

enjoyment, always able to have the harder and less pleasant work done by others, could not judge impartially, but must adhere to a view that did not equal reality. His good mood beautified everything around him, and where others could barely see a tolerable existence, he saw gardens and charming encounters. No one reading Duden's *Report* receives an entirely correct perception of the appearance and nature of the land one is to occupy, and to which he will commit his wishes and hopes. I wish to attempt to give a brief sketch of the external nature of the western states of America, based on my own views, but much more on the splendid geographical and statistical works of American authors.¹

There is an enormous stretch of land between the Alleghenies, also called the Appalachians, whose branches have various names in the several states on the east, and on the west the Rocky Mountains, a continuation of the Andes or Cordilleres of South America. On the north it is bordered by the English possessions, and on the south by the Gulf of Mexico. It is a great, broad plain, penetrated by the most significant mass of water in the entire earth. The Mississippi, the Missouri, the Red River, the Arkansas, the Ohio, the Tennessee, the Kentucky and Illinois, with their / 9 / innumerable tributaries, stream through this most fruitful of all landscapes. Numerous and significant lakes, from which rivers such as the powerful St. Lawrence have their departure, have gathered at the north of this plateau. The isolated Ozark Mountains in Arkansas territory,

¹ For the emigrant, and for anyone interested in America, who can read English, no work is of greater information or significance than Timothy Flint's *History and Geography of the Mississippi Valley*, Cincinnati, 1833. Another estimable little work written especially for American emigrants from the previous states of the Union, is by Peck, a preacher in Rock Spring, Illinois: *A Guide for Emigrants, containing Sketches of Illinois and Missouri and the adjacent parts*, Boston, 1831.

which are flattened to hills in the state of Missouri, present stone formations differing both from the two other main mountain chains and from other earth forms, appear to have arisen without connection to the surrounding surface that is known by the name of the Mississippi River region. The region has an extent of 1,300,000 English square miles or 833,000,000 acres. The elevations in this area are actually only formed through river valleys that are only cuts, only results of stream beds. Americans, who are keen on such distinctions in mountains, never call them hills or mountains but “bluffs,” a word only known west of the Alleghenies. This is an expression that we could only describe as elevated river banks. Even when these bluffs go miles back from the banks, they never appear as true mountain chains, but are only the limits of rivers. These bluffs are all limestone formations, just as all of this entire plain of which we speak has a limestone underpinning. We only find granite in the Alleghenies and the Rocky Mountains, and in the latter also volcanic formations, and only these two chains of mountains, that approach one another as they near the Gulf of Mexico, can be called “primitive rocks.”

This purely geographic narrative will reveal to the educated that endlessly fruitful, arable land is to be found here, but, on the whole, by no means a beautiful, or inspiring nature. To be sure, the ordinary emigrant, who has sought to avoid the hardest repression by his action, and who changes his situation in order not to see himself and his family expire in want, is indifferent to whether or not he encounters charming valleys, steep cliffs and mountains mounting to the heavens. / 10 / On the contrary, he will prefer flat plains and land undivided by

hills as the best for crops. In the end, the lack of any grandiose beauties of nature will not scare away any category of emigrant, because some significant cause has driven him from the borders of his Fatherland, from the place of his youth, of his dearest memories, from the company of his friends. – But I know that many of those for whom Duden is regarded most highly place a high stress on the expectation of magical beauties of nature, and that all of them expect new and beautiful impressions from the charming landscapes in a fresh, virgin earth.

When we ascended the pleasant Hudson, and beheld the often charming banks of the Mohawk and the waterfalls of this river and of the Tennessee, most of my travel companions believed they were only seeing weak harbingers of the grand images awaiting their astounded gaze on the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Father of Waters, and finally the sparkling Missouri. Disappointed! The surroundings lost their interesting character with the last spurs of the Alleghenies, and an enormous monotony took the place of the charming landscape. In truth, in relationship to its extraordinary extension it is hard to imagine a more monotonous land than that in question. The forms of the earth, the minerals, are almost entirely the same from the Canadian lakes to the Gulf of Mexico, while the plant world, with all the variations that must exist in a land between the Tropic of Cancer almost to fifty degrees north, has a rare agreement. Even the people who originally occupied this soil, are notable for their extraordinary similarity. This wide stretch was once occupied by more than sixty tribes of Indians, and yet all of these branches varied little one from another. The Canadian is more like the Cherokee on the Gulf of Mexico in / 11 / morals and custom, in external

appearance and character, than the inhabitant of one Swiss canton is like the peasant of a neighboring canton.

To be sure, Duden does not speak a great deal about the natural beauties on this side of the Alleghenies, and for very palpable reasons; but still, what he does mention occasionally awakens entirely different images than exist in reality. He speaks of the wooded heights on the Ohio, which stand high and steep, and would be called mountains in Germany (8th letter). Further, he often speaks of heights that a German would certainly call mountains. To be sure, an American does not call these heights mountains, as he knows, as already mentioned, that the American is more precise in his description of the outside world. Yet I believe that many Germans in the course of narrative or light conversation would use the word “mountains,” but it borders on the laughable to exaggerate these heights, which *never* exceed the height of a few hundred feet, to a European. Every German who has seen more than the banks of the Düssel or the Spree knows full well what are real mountains and what not, even if he occasionally does not use the term “mountains” so precisely and occasionally honors even modest heights with this expression. The emigrant, when he reads such expressions, must believe that there is a truly Alpine nature here, and he must hold the opinion that his concepts of greatness no longer suffice in this land of marvels. I have traveled the banks of the Missouri to Jefferson City, but it has never occurred to me that I saw anything like massive “mountaintops” to which the hills along the river rose (13th letter). I only saw hills that often fell steeply at the riverside and revealed rocks that were not without interest. The Ohio is the only one of all the western rivers

that is the most attractive, but I would never prefer it to the clear course of the Rhine. Duden refers to the French name for the river, "*la belle rivière*" / 12 / and speaks with a sort of enthusiasm of the "imposing banks of the wild stream."

But it cannot be doubted that the French gave it this name to contrast it with the turbid and muddy Mississippi, from whose stream they first encountered the waters of the Ohio entering. The Ohio is certainly beautiful and splendid in comparison to the hellish Mississippi. At least its banks caused the Frenchmen, who perhaps came from the banks of the Rhône, the Loire or the Garonne, to speak of *belle rivière*. At the time they encountered the Ohio, its banks were so completely covered with forest that there could be no talk about a scene or a view.

The Osage has even finer water than the Ohio, but this river, thickly shrouded in forest, has hardly a clear space, permitting only a few seconds of view to attract the wanderer. Now, at several places where the Ohio has been cleared, and friendly settlements and pretty little towns reflect themselves in its waves, there are nice views here and there. The woods themselves that largely still cover the banks might attract the traveler with its endlessly luxurious vegetation, but even here there can be no talk of romantic situations, picturesque scenes or complete and grand landscapes. The Mississippi from the mouth of the Ohio to St. Louis, a stretch of about 200 English miles, has extremely few interesting bits. To be sure, anyone who holds that the situation of Cincinnati is "romantic" has also been satisfied with the banks of the Mississippi. The Missouri is what has the worst impact on the observer. Even if the banks were beautiful, even if the vegetation in the bottoms were more luxurious and richer,

the cliffs much greater and more imposing than they really are, still it would contrast all too much with the ugly river, dampening the impression uncomfortably. The color of the water runs to yellow and is always dirtily opaque. It is the Missouri that makes the / 13 / Mississippi so displeasing, for before its confluence the latter is clear and bright. Seldom is it possible to view the breadth of the stream unhindered. Innumerable islands and sandbars arise out of it. Often the river has abandoned its old bed, and the sandy surfaces left behind are only covered at high water. Clouds of light, dusty sand are raised, hindering the view and irritating the eyes. Parts of the riverbank are continually being torn away, so that a mass of rotting trees rises in threat from all parts of the water. As beautiful as it might usually be to live along large, navigable streams, as endlessly fruitful as the Missouri bottoms are, the German will little feel comfortable here or come to forget the rivers of his homeland.

Here one knows little of the clear, bright brooks, the murmuring waterfalls, the splashing springs that one conceives of them in Germany, and which Duden's descriptions permit one to presume. Few brooks resist the drying heat of the summer, and even considerable little rivers, to judge from their beds, have no water in the summer or autumn. Gravel or sandstone river bottoms are rare, and usually the water runs over clay. Almost all smaller bodies of water have a slithering pace, and they by no means enliven their surroundings like our mountain streams. The terms, "untouched earth, primitive forest, fresh nature," exercise a special magic on the stranger; well I know. But it only takes a brief residence to be disappointed about all these splendors. If primitive forest is

understood to mean woods where no human foot has yet trod, or in which no sort of mortal has yet sounded, then to be sure there is enough of that here; but if one understands by that giant masses of mammoth trees reaching to the sky that sprouted many generations ago, you are in error. It is precisely in thick woodlands that the old trees destroy the younger growth, so that it thickens into thickets. Large trees press hard / 14 / together, and where they overcome one another, they are still hindered in their expansion. Thousands of vines strangle the loveliest trees in their embrace. Once the tree has lived out its time, and it lives no longer than the same species among us, it dies, falls and buries the younger growth in falling. With the exception of the giant *Platane*, called the Sycamore here, which spread to an extraordinary breadth in the moist bottom land, I have never seen larger trees either on the Ohio or the Mississippi or the Missouri than in Germany, and I must say that here I have never seen such mighty and high woodland than in the eastern part of Holstein. The lovely Maple in the Tyrol and in the Salzburg Alps (*Acer pseudo platanus*) will not be much exceeded by the *Platane* here.

Even though I have sought here to moderate somewhat the impressions that Duden's painting of Western nature has made on most readers, still no one should believe for that reason that I am entirely unreceptive to these regions, or that I wish to advise the immigrant to these lands away because of a sparseness of the beauties of nature. I admit with pleasure that there is no lack of *charming* places, much like those in the northern parts of Germany, particularly in Mecklenburg and Holstein. Wherever there are clearings things are already more

beautiful, and many charming places await later generations. One simply has to travel to these places to get a lively sense of how it is man that makes nature beautiful and interesting, and how monotonous and boring even grand sights become when there is no human life and movement. Three blows of the ax, a few timbers bound together into a cabin, a cheerfully smoking chimney, will often suffice to give the loveliest touch to one of those numerous western valleys. When nothing of the sort can be seen, the gaze turns away from a severe uniformity. For this reason it is the prairies, / 15 / intermixed with woodland, or crowned with fencing, that offer the most beautiful view. The eye delights in a view into the distance that is sought in vain in the thick woodlands. In the spring, when everything sparkles with fresh green and the liveliest shimmer of flowers, or in the autumn, when the leaves take on color and glow with the prettiest red, the view of the prairie is really the finest. The usual translation of these highly fruitful plains with “steppes” easily awakens Fall’s images. They look more like meadows, as the French word expresses, and there should be no thought of an unproductive heath.

Everything Duden says of the fruitfulness of these Western regions is not exaggerated in the least. The greatest luxuriance is found in the river valleys or bottoms, and then in the prairies. But most of the land, even away from the rivers, is still productive enough, needing no artificial improvement of their fruitfulness. In the American Bottom, the strip east of the Mississippi stretching from the mouth of the Kaskaskia on the south to the mouth of the Illinois on the north, the settlers, most of them French, have been planting maize and Indian corn, a plant

that particularly exhausts the soil, for a hundred years, and it is still flourishing in the same quality and quantity.

As correct as the Americans are otherwise in their description of the nature of their land, it is easy for even the most careful to mislead on the matter of the comfort and beauty of the western states. On the one hand, you cannot begrudge the American a certain preference for his homeland, which provides him with an existence that is both spiritually and physically adequate; but he attaches entirely different concepts with his conception of "beautiful." The American knows nothing less than what we call *romanticism*. The direction of his spirit is entirely practical, his wishes are preferably aimed at realities capable of being reached. Fruitful land that can return a hundredfold is beautiful / 16 / land to which no one can attach further claims. If this land also lies near roads, canals or navigable rivers, so that it is capable of marketing, to him this has achieved the pinnacle of beauty and perfection. In response to the question as to the nature of western land that we often posed to Americans on our journey, we always received the response, "Oh, beautiful land, very beautiful land, the loveliest land in the United States." This monotonous description, that only half corresponds with the sense of the question, was one of the reasons so many of our company believe that they are entering into the promised land. I pleasantly advise everyone to visit the beauties of the eastern states, the bank of the Hudson, the waterfalls of the Mohawk and especially Niagara, or the prettiest parts of the Alleghenies, the banks of the Susquehanna and the Potomac. The further west one goes, the harder it will become to have similar enjoyment. If anywhere, it is here where he can

have his enjoyment and put off none of his joys for the uncertain future.

A much more important point than the external appearance and composition of these new lands is its *climate* and its influence on residents, particularly on new immigrants. Duden dedicates an essay running several pages to this subject, which, despite the many thoughtful and correct things it contains, will benefit only very few of those desiring to immigrate. What is significant is less about testing the theory of the average temperature or the correctness or incorrectness of the Volney Scale of Storms than the simple information of what climate the new arrival will actually encounter here. I would go too far and fail the purpose of my narrative if I would say more than the utterly general facts about the greater Mississippi region. I will hence restrict myself / 17 / to the states that most interest both Americans and Europeans and which offer the best advantage to emigrants in general and German emigrants in particular according to the reports of all men. These are the states of Ohio (although the price of land here has risen very high), Indiana, Illinois and Missouri. No German will find it easy to be comfortable south of the Ohio River in the alien region of plantations, just as he will find much to attract him in the regions northwest of Lake Erie. To be sure, Germans have recently gone to Arkansas, in the region of Little Rock on the Arkansas River, and many Americans have directed their emigration trains to the territory of Michigan, with Lakes Michigan, Huron and Erie to the West, and Indiana and Ohio to the South. But these establishments are too new to be able to speak of success or to compare with the more settled areas. Even the most Northern stretch of Illinois could not be entirely acceptable for those who seek a

more moderate and sunny climate.

My residence in the United States is still of too brief a duration to be able to report the mere results of my own observations. Whoever would draw final conclusions from this red-hot summer (1833), where a truly tropical heat dried and deadened everything; from the early frosts and the surprising event that, at least on the Missouri where I was at the time, snow fell already on 20 October, would certainly be premature. This despite the fact that many older settlers I spoke with in Missouri found neither the heat of the summer that so oppressed new arrivals, nor the early, intense cold to be particularly unusual. To be sure, the American residents who lived in the precise locations to which the columns of emigrants, and those seeking to buy turned their steps, were smart enough to hold these inconvenient phenomena to be entirely unusual.

/ 18 / American statistics that I am using agree that the climate of the Mississippi Valley in the wider sense harmonizes more completely with its position at this or that parallel than any other part of the earth. It is surprising to observe the identical steps of development and dying out of the plant world as one passes from the north to the south on the Mississippi, either at the time of spring or autumn. They assert, and certainly correctly, that the similarity of external form, the lack of all mountains, is the reason for this phenomenon. This assertion does not suffice, however, to characterize the climate. It only serves to compare the one part of this great valley with another, which are all subjected to the same influences, and on which the same causes operate. Now the conclusion is that for that reason it is incorrect to compare the region directly so far as climate is

concerned with the lands of the Old World at the same parallels, or with the eastern states of America. In general it is always a mistake to compare various lands unless one takes account not only of geographical position but also the innumerable causes that have influence on the climate. The climate here will never be like the fortunate plains of Lombardy, or in the flat areas of Naples or Greece, since the complete lack of mountains gives the winds enormous freedom. The sources of the Mississippi and all the other waters than stream out of the northern lakes, do not fall from mountains, but only from very modest elevations that give them birth.² There is no protecting mountain chain to halt the course of the advancing north wind. In the same way, the hot air from the Gulf of Mexico passes up the Mississippi Valley without hindrance to the furthest north. This produces / 19 / the surprising phenomenon, seemingly in contradiction to the American authors cited above, that there is no less cold in New Orleans on the Gulf of Mexico than on the northern Rock River, only much briefer in appearance, and an almost as exhausting heat, if only of briefer duration on Lake Michigan than what can dominate Louisiana. This condition explains the rapidly varying temperature variation that Duden wants to play down for most of the year, depending on which wind has the upper hand. The uniform wind direction that Duden describes does not prevent this rapid variation, since he himself has to concede that there are many exceptions to this regular wind direction. In addition this regularity is seen generally, not just here, and has long been experienced on

² I recall seeing a German map by Weiland where the sources of these rivers are shown as massive chains of mountains, but of which those who have traveled these regions, such as Major Long, do not know.

open water, giving the sailor the most secure, simple prognosis for the weather.

It is this rapid shift from warmth to cold and back again that is the *general* complaint of every European in these lands, and even my brief time of residence sufficed to make me feel this variation in a lively manner. Travel and setting up new fields did make continual checking of the thermometer impossible. Still, I recall one observation that can serve to prove my assertion. On 29 July the thermometer stood at 31° Réaumur [101.75°F] at noon, and on 30 July, also at noon, it was only 21° [79.25°F], hence a difference of 10° [22.5°F] in one day. The cause of this was that the southeast wind had shifted to northeast. Throughout the entire hot summer, nights were exceptionally cool, averaging 12° [27°F] and more from the day temperature. All American authors are at one on this point, and they derive most instances of disease from this fact, perhaps more than necessary.

In all of this no reasonable person will deny that *on the whole* storms are more pleasant here, / 20 / summers warmer, winters gentler, than in Germany. In November, besides a few unfriendly rainy days and brief but uncomfortable chills, we had the most splendid summer days such as we *never* have, even in the mildest parts of the Rhine. The sky is more often clear and on the Missouri and the Illinois the air is purer and dryer than in the Atlantic states of North America as well as in many parts of Germany. But who would agree with such an emphatic outpouring that we find in Duden's thirtieth letter, where it says:

Whoever grants to the word "climate" its proper rank in the happy flourishing of people, will think the brightness of the sky to be no less important than temperature. The sky of the lands of the Mississippi has such an advantage over that of Central Europe and

particularly over the turbid skies of Germany, that it alone more than outweighs any disadvantage that is to be feared from the settlement in what is called a wilderness for the health of the German.

It is certain that the sky above the Pontine Marshes is clearer than over Franconia and the Rhineland, but who would prefer the former over the latter in respect to health? So many other conditions operate on the physical system of people in the new lands that it is certainly an exaggeration to trace it all to the influence of a clear sky. In his portrayal of winter it seems that the mild winter of 1824-1825 predominates with him. His narrative has no claim to a general characterization of this season. It corresponds as little to reality as what he says of the persistent tolerability of the summer months. A heat of 32° Réaumur (104° Fahrenheit), exceeding the warmth of blood by two degrees, which persisted throughout four weeks this summer, and also occurred during Duden's residency (30th letter), is / 21 / very oppressive to Germans, indeed almost intolerable. In such heat not only does all physical activity cease, but also all capacity to think. The dully boiled-down oriental could feel well in such conditions, but not the mobile and active resident of moderate Europe. It borders on the comical when Duden assures us that such heat is not so troubling as one believes (30th letter), and that the thick forests make even the greatest heat tolerable. The residents of bottom woodlands, and all those living in the forests who move and work without a breath of air, assure us that it is even harder to survive there than in the free clearings or on the prairie. In addition, neither the traveler, nor even less the new settler, can set about to move or work in the woods when the sun's rays are most intense. The individual private man who chooses his place to observe here or

there probably can do it; for the great majority, such sparing of their person is impossible. No less is the winter, even if on the whole milder than in Central Europe, often intermingled with extremely cold days.³ Here as well, continual cold does not begin before January. The Missouri and the Mississippi are often frozen solid for long periods, so that they can be traveled by loaded wagons. In 1818 the Mississippi was covered with ice for nine weeks.⁴ To be sure, such freezing is more often the effect of masses of ice coming from higher north than due to the temperature at St. Louis, / 22 / but this phenomenon is still uncomfortable in its influence, banning the thoughts of a mild, pleasant winter, even if its causes are different. It has special impact because people here have almost no protection against the penetrating cold and troubling storm. Even the mildest winter is a hard one to the German, used to the well-built houses and warm ovens. The best American home in the countryside provides inadequate protection and has only a chimney. Many years will pass before the new settler will be able to erect a home in the European style. Most will have to pass their lives with American cabins, or cabins built simply after the American style. Later generations will experience a milder temperature, since a person can also acclimatize. But for now the emigrant will not be thinking of the “raw season” (13th letter) that warns us in the West Indies or lands of similar climes, but rather he deals with an often severe, if not continuously gripping frost and provides

³ In January 1833, it was as cold for eight days as it has ever been in Germany. On the 2nd of January the thermometer fell to -17° , on the 3rd to -18° , on the 4th to -22° . On the open prairie it was as low as -27° and -28° !! No winter in Germany was felt like this one by new settlers. The snow remained for eight days.

⁴ Tim. Flint's work already noted, 2nd edition, p. 294, 1st part.

himself with ovens, bedding and winter clothes.

Even if the temperature, the climate in the narrower sense, is more pleasant, or health situation more tolerable, there are still many phenomena working on people here in the West that is usually covered with the general term of climate. These phenomena, entirely independent of actual storms, must be seen as the principal source of so many discomforts, so many illnesses. As often as Duden touches on these influences, the reader will still know what to believe or not to believe, at least the reader who does not pay the strictest attention to his narrative. In part this is because these references to these causes of illness are so scattered, partly because they are given with so many counter-arguments, that / 23 / no result emerges after pages of discussion over this point. In the course of this, all of his explanations appear to say that the causes of illness in question can be removed easily and with certainty. But this is in no way the case, and the influence of the intensely exhaling vegetative soil, the mist from stagnant water, the low-lying moist meadows, the still swamps, and the woods filled with rotting tree trunks, cannot be combated with preventative measures and efforts of individuals, particularly as the total population rises. These lands north of the Ohio and east and west of the Mississippi could become the healthiest and most profitable areas for Europeans, but *now* they are not. Before the woodlands of these states are cleared, the low prairies and swampy areas dried out, the lowlands by the rivers that are regularly flooded are protected by dams and eliminated, there can be no room for thinking of an undisturbed, fresh, happy flourishing that is possible with an otherwise mild but not enervating climate.

Here I have to refer back to the reports of Europeans who came here earlier and the information that native writers provide concerning the health situation, for if I wanted to draw general conclusions from experiences of this summer, the image would be very dark and terrifying. Even conceding that the extreme heat of this year was an exception, I will also call the numberless illnesses that prevail here irregularities in the course of nature. West of the Mississippi in particular, cholera rages; not just in large settlements, but also in the countryside. Along with this illness, as physicians in other lands have discovered, comes a large number of other illnesses. It is certain that every mild discomfort can take on a malign form like cholera, even / 24 / the same characteristics of that disease. Particularly these dominant illnesses, bilious fever even more than cholera, has special impact on new immigrants, who are especially exhausted and affected by the long journey, the oppressive heat and the unfamiliar way of life. The result is that the number of arrivals is more than decimated, and most of them have greater or less instances of illness. I will not describe the terrors we have had experienced in St. Louis, since Duden's *Report* the goal of German immigrants. The visitations in Paris, London and many places in Europe were dreadful, and no precautionary measures, no efforts of physicians could make any impact. How could a less dreary result be expected here, where the government took no protective measures, and where the art of medicine is still in its infancy?

The health situation was and is otherwise not the best. I spoke with so many older settlers on this point, I saw so many illnesses that were entirely

independent of the dominating illnesses of this summer, that it hardly needs confirmation from American authors. It has long been an accepted truth held by natives that a “new country,” as they call it, is more or less unhealthy. It is certain that particularly the authors of America’s older states have exaggerated concerns about health in the new lands, and they have paid little attention to the fact that the regions of the Mississippi are freed of many illnesses, particularly illnesses of the breast, due to its southern location. But it is just as certain that the less one or another of these lands is cultivated, a host of fevers will strike its residents.

Duden, with his philanthropic intention, provides the best prescriptions for the emigrant. He advises them to avoid the bottoms and lowlands, as well as the vicinity of swamps and stagnant waters. He pressingly recommends / 25 / seeking the heights because of the freer air and especially the better water. That is all good and fine, but carrying it out is often impossible, and even when done is often inadequate. I reject the American preference for living in deep valleys and hold their assertion, that living on the heights is unhealthier, due to rising mists, to be laughable. But I can also not believe that a distance of a few miles from a river bottom is *adequate* against all evil influence, even when low hills divide one from the river. The exhalations of the fat soil and the thick woods persist. In addition, it is a distinct question to exclude oneself from the fattest and best land and to work the comparatively thinner soil of the hills rather than the endlessly fruitful flat lands. Few immigrants resist the temptation, and most settlements are found only on the bottoms of rivers, or in higher locations almost exclusively on the

banks of little *creeks*.⁵ The difference in production is so wide that, as long as the area is not narrowed, watered places are preferred. Duden's house, which the Germans normally called by the mocking title, "Duden's Castle in the Air" or "Duden's Grave," stands on a creek (Lacke Creek) that, when I saw it, was stagnant in most parts, or slithered on very slowly. The exhalations of this water, streaming from an unhealthy lake near Duden, can hardly have had a positive influence on its neighbors. It is really a surprising phenomenon for the wanderer to walk down to the bottoms from the heights. An endlessly-dense vegetation, differing from that on higher ground, surrounds the walker. Thousands of vines, providing a picturesque view, block his / 26 / steps, and a numberless mass of downed trees alters his path with every moment. But there is also a stunning, nerve-assaulting mist that rises to greet him, imparting the desire to flee the charms of this environment swiftly. This strong, numbing mist is particularly striking in the spring and the autumn. What particularly compels immigrants to the proximity of lowlands and thick woods (for most of the woodlands of Missouri in particular are located along the rivers) is the advantage of navigable rivers, providing access to markets and social communication. Hence there always remains a difficult dilemma that seeks a solution, whether to seek the best soil or the healthiest place to live. There are places that satisfy both needs, to be sure, but they are rare and getting rarer all the time, since they are of course to be preferred. The characteristics of the land here in terms of the fruitfulness and luxuriance of the soil that is trumpeted in Europe with so much pomp thus

⁵ "Creek" is the name for small rivers or large brooks.

remains rather illusory, to be compared with the charm of splendid garden that is barred to the curious by iron bars. Duden himself speaks sensing the poison of virtually unilluminated forest soil when he was once working *occasionally* in a garden in the hot season, and he was not entirely able to prevent trouble through dosing ahead of time on medicine, bitter salts, sulfuric acid, hydrochloric acid and naphtha (surely means enough!) (28th letter). Whoever *has* to work, and most immigrants are not in the position to have others work for them, will certainly have more serious consequences, and all the more they should apply all possible means or at least find the time to use them as Duden could. Just as little is everyone able to take the necessary care to take his water only with a shot of sulfuric acid for the first two years. In most cases water runs over clay or limestone and is / 27 / not very tolerable for health. Whoever has done heavy work in the heat knows how impossible it is to follow such prescriptions always and under all conditions. Such advice cannot be followed by a worker, who is not a person who simply observes. It reminds one of physicians and others in Germany who give well-meant advice on the approach of cholera that one should *never* make an error in diet, always avoid evening air, always fumigate one's room, always wear this or that plaster on the body: this is a rather sure way, they say, to avoid the cholera in its full intensity. Such a life is already half-way to death; in fact, this continual swaying in anxiety and doubt is worse than death for many. I am happy to concede that the unfamiliar and certainly harmful American way of life, the lack of a protected home in the first period, and finally a depressed mood, which Duden himself expresses, contributes a great deal to

illness, but despite everything else the principle remains that *except for a few favored spots, the new arrival must figure at least on enduring attacks of the prevailing illnesses*. In Missouri, where I have visited more than a hundred communities consisting in part of Germans, in part of Americans, I have not met a total of ten people who have not complained about their poor state of health. Most Germans, and this was as the winter was *unfolding*, where one could no longer think of the results of a general illness, were suffering from fevers that were on the whole not perilous, but like any illness were uncomfortable and depressing. Our closest neighborhood in Illinois, which was a considerable distance from the great bottom of the Mississippi, called American Bottom, lying on high prairie or woodland, suffered less / 28 / than the settlers in Missouri, who mostly lived in or close to bottoms, but even for us there was frequent fever. Truly, Duden touches on the matter rather *too lightly*, and he often follows undependable information. How else could he say that one cannot live in any town in Germany as healthily as in St. Louis (23rd letter). This is unlikely on the face of it that a city most closely connected by steamboat with New Orleans, notoriously the almost continual residence of illnesses of all sorts, but particularly of yellow fever, should be exceptionally healthful. The rapidity of steamboats, whose loading and unloading is restricted by no form of health measure, communicates illnesses to a high degree. At least several residents of St. Louis have assured me that the state of health has deteriorated greatly since the introduction of rapid contact with New Orleans by steamship. A glance at the death-lists, where short-term resident foreigners, the most frequent victims of

illness, are not even entered, could have taught Duden a thing or two. The work of *Peck* mentioned above has a passage that really contrasts with Duden's assertion too dramatically not to be mentioned. On page 238, he says:

I celebrated the wedding in St. Louis of a young lady known to me; she was a widow in eight days. At the burial of a young man that same year (1821), who left a widow, there were thirteen widows present, of which none was 24 years of age, all having lost their life partner in that same year.

Below this comes the information that there were not more than five thousand residents in St. Louis in that year, and that one person in thirty had died. One must be very careful when it comes to providing data on the state of health, since that can attract the most protests, even threats, if some are misled. Nothing is more likely to pitch an immigrant into sadness than physical misery. / 29 / Even putting aside the dreadful cases where the death of the head of the family often pitches his dependents into the darkest and most miserable situation, illness of one of the members of a family is enough alone to heap need and concern on the new arrival who had hoped to find here the land of joy and promise. In this land, where our wonted social life is more or less wanting, where there is no entertainment, where there is no charming Muse to be found, where only free movement in a grand nature in full command of health can bring any enjoyment, to lie there on a sickbed depresses the spirit two- and threefold. Hence it is a holy duty to call to the attention of the immigrant *earnestly* and not with obscure turns of speech, and to protect against decisions that are not grounded in solid and serious conviction, of moral or physical necessity. *Evils* for which one is prepared and ready will be more easily borne when they appear. If they do not

appear, so much greater the joy, and one will at least not scold whoever points them out. On the other hand, under all conditions, blame comes to those who paint things too prettily, since it is an old proverb that the sense and desire of a person is never to be entirely satisfied.

Just as important as the discussion of how the place the emigrant seeks, appears, and what its external composition and nature is, is the investigation of how one can move in this place, and what position one may expect with this or that means. This investigation must turn to two distinct fields and respond to two distinct questions; namely, what is to be hoped and expected for external, physical life, as well as for internal, spiritual being. Duden dealt with these questions in some of his own letters (29, 31), and finally in an attached essay, and he has taken several other occasions to give his views. These passages are certainly the most successful in the / 30 / entire book, and they serve to prove that he had made the external and internal relationships of republics a subject of careful study. In no way do I concede here that I agree with Duden's philosophical deductions, which he states particularly in his appendix, "On the Nature of the American Republics." As often as I will agree with the author in what follows, my political convictions are still heavens away from his. Yet the purpose of my narrative requires less an investigation of Duden's philosophy, which most readers can leave alone, than a study of the correctness of his factual information and his conclusions derived directly from the place and its inhabitants.

To deal at the outset with the external position of the immigrant, it is the conclusion of Duden's observations that it is easy in every regard, pleasant

beyond all comparison, to live in the western states particularly, if only a few assumptions are fulfilled. Even I would have to be a fool not to recognize the great advantages one has who pursues in agriculture (without a doubt the most secure basis for existence) here in comparison to Europe. Fruitful land hardly burdened with taxes, ease to obtain landed property and all citizen's rights everywhere, freedom of trade and every craft, a climate that is not unfavorable to those acclimatized, good roads and navigable rivers, affording travel and social communication, all of this has to have a positive influence on one's external situation. It is only that the enjoyment of this splendor is bound at least at the outset with so many deprivations and losses that the new arrival is usually of the opinion that the disadvantages greatly overpower the advantages, and that the position won is in no way worth the sacrifice made. Nothing can protect against this depressing view than a conscientious enumeration of the / 31 / problems and deprivations to be encountered, along with a straight-forward portrayal of the life that even the well-off arrival may expect in the first years. Here as well, Duden has by no means failed to indicate this or that hindrance; he has mentioned several times that some wealth, if by no means of massive size, is a precondition for rapid success; that determination, energy and persistence are necessary requirements; and that finally an isolated settlement could be a bad idea. But all of these isolated, scattered warnings are all too easily wiped away by the impression that so many enthusiastic outpourings produce at other points. All doubts, even the most justified, vanish when a man who, on the whole, demonstrating a certain stiff earnestness, showing the signs of learned dryness, makes statements like:

One will not and cannot believe in Europe how easy and pleasant it is to live in these lands. It seems too strange, too fabulous. The belief in such places on earth has already long been banished to the world of fairy-tales.

The Germans in America laugh now at such eccentric passages, but there was a time when they recalled these and similar excesses with bitterness, when they and others complained of ever having believed such glittering fabrications.

Even the true-to-life assertions of examples of how Americans have reached external prosperity will not provide the foreign immigrant a correct measure for his own future. The American has exceptionally few needs – which is less the result of a deep philosophy than the result of a low grade of spiritual formation – so that he comes more rapidly than an immigrated European to a certain prosperity, and can achieve a comparatively fortunate position. What we call coziness or comfort / 32 / is utterly unknown to the residents of these western climes. The marvelous inclination of Americans for new and distant foundations, despite the fact that their character is otherwise alien to anything adventurous, overcomes every inclination to a solid, comfortable and plush situation. The American recognizes no dependence on any constructed home, to any fondly-recalled place. It is not at all unusual for a family that has achieved a pleasant and comfortable life in a nice and roomy house, clearing the surrounding woods and planting fruit trees, will leave it after twenty years and without any necessity, and does not hesitate to seek new land to homestead, cut off from all outside contact for years, living in a miserable cabin, bearing the deprivations as they did in their first home. The European, particularly the German, depends on his first home, and he loves a certain, comfortable, continuous existence. He will feel the new

deprivations ten times more than the American settler. To him it is simply impossible to live the way the American lives. A place in which the American is perfectly happy will drive the European immigrant into deep depression. It is misleading to conclude from the ease with which the American lives that the foreigner can live as easily. According to that scale, the torpid Indian would be the happiest of all, since he has no wants other than the most elementary support of life, and so he also knows no stress to fulfill his desires.

The American does not *have* it so easy, he *makes* it easy on himself, and in fact in situations in which the European would not be able to succeed at all. The American, who only awaits the instant when he can sell his settlement for some profit, seeks to spare himself work with a prodigality toward his soil and his fruits that / 33 / the immigrant is never in the position to do, since the European's intention is to create a lasting home that will provide his children with a pleasant future residence. Duden never has any good examples for this celebrated easiness in sight. So I have heard, to provide one example, it assured that the American shows more effort in planting corn than Duden suggests, since he plows in the seed not once, but two or three times. The method Duden describes is only pursued by the more superficial class, that has to plow to keep from starving, but live mostly on hunting and move a few hundred miles further when the wild game starts to disappear. Duden has seen native settlements, and an American community is more extensively treated in his 14th letter. The European can draw no conclusions from there, and he will have to deal with many more problems and hindrances.

So Duden's narrative leads one easily to conclude that clearing the forest is a matter of little difficulty. Many capable Europeans have already come here, but all of them have declared it impossible to accomplish this. Even if one leaves the thicker stumps standing (it is not easy to leave one under two feet in diameter), still Duden is in error if he believes it is a minor matter to clear away the shrubs along with the roots. In the meantime it is less the difficulty of the work than the danger of illness that hinders the breaking of "untouched, virgin soil." Making the rails for the fences is an undertaking all Europeans shy away from, since they are seldom able to get natives or black workers soon enough. Whoever wants to clear an acre of woods for six dollars, as Duden thinks, / 34 / would do better to buy a finished settlement on which the acre could be had for no more than six to eight dollars, combining to be sure plowed and unplowed land. He will obtain along with the land an American-style cabin and the necessary farm structures.

Duden's figures always assume that the settler will establish himself on Congress land. To be sure, its price is insignificant, currently not more than \$1.25 (a dollar = 2 Guilders 30 Kreuzer) per acre; also, according to a law of Congress it is purchased from the state in units of 40 acres – but only after the affirmation under oath that one is immediately going to put the land under the plow, this to hinder speculators from buying small, good parcels away from those less well endowed. But still the purchase of Congress land has its own special problems for the European. Entirely apart from the discomfort and disadvantage of having to build a cabin first of all, to clear the land and plow it, to go at least two years

without a harvest, and finally to have to live close to the extremely unhealthy newly-broken earth, the stranger lacks the knowledge of the signs of good soil, in which Americans cannot be misled. Many small signs, particularly the plants that spring from the earth, provide him with certain indications that the new arrival will not catch. Whoever does not exercise great caution is in peril of buying very unhealthy as well as comparatively poor land, just as the Americans accuse Germans of being very unfortunate in their choice of land. Since Duden's departure there have been many changes concerning Congress land that must lead to different attitudes and decisions. One seeks particularly the valleys of rivers, the bottoms, particularly of the larger, navigable rivers, and in the / 35 / prairie areas one seeks those stretches that border on woodlands. But I have been assured, both in Missouri and in Illinois, that there is no unoccupied state property in these desired places, particularly in the Missouri Bottom as far as Boon [sic] and Howard counties. Partly these are already the property of entrepreneurial planters, partly there are also enormous stretches in the hands of speculators or occupied by squatters who have not yet acquired ownership. Chasing away such settlers on available Congress land is forbidden both by philanthropy and common practice. Yet most of them are perfectly capable of purchasing the land if required, and according to the law they have first call on buying it. It can hardly be believed the extent to which clever calculation has left the bad parts untouched. Whoever still has an unrestricted choice chooses either to have a bit of woodland touching on a large prairie that he can use for a long time, since due to the lack of nearby woods prairie property is not sought after. Or he chooses a

small prairie surrounded by woods, since the woodland is also seldom sought by itself. One can say with some certainty that *good Congress land* is still rare in the states of the Union save those that are inadvisable for immigrants due to their location or due to their Indian population, but in most cases only in areas that are already settled. Yet it is precisely the settled lands that have the greatest attraction for the European immigrant, who has had to leave behind so much that is precious. The adventurous Frenchman who wanders about among the Indian tribes as a semi-barbarian, always seeking new and still-fruitful land, or the American seeking deer and turkeys, those people love being cultural pioneers on the outermost edge; but most Europeans, particularly the German, will feel unhappy on the most fruitful soil if he has to renounce most of the comforts of life and all social company for a long time, perhaps for ever. /36/ The farther from large towns, rivers or canals, the smaller is the market for the farmer, and there is all the less reward for hard work and deprivations for him and his immediate successors. None of the many families leaving Europe thought of anything but buying state land. I can assure them that I have met *no one* from the more educated classes who have bought Congress land at the outset or exclusively. They have preferred modest settlements that were already established to the unlimited and fruitful regions that are only to be found cheaply in books.

I know full well that there have been well-meaning suggestions to deal with this isolation and the discomforts arising from it: one is supposed to join together in closed associations, go to some place, purchase great stretches of land, establish schools, towns, universities, etc., and in a little time a new, lovely, social

league will surround the immigrants; a new, youthful homeland will arise, and the culture and customs of the earlier homeland will live on ennobled and purified. Even Duden refers to such a plan, and he tells us of the ordinances and principles that he feels would lead and dominate such a society (“On the Nature of North American Republics,” p. 324, notes on this letter). As he says himself, “This is to show mockers that we are not speaking of impossible plans.” One normally judges the strength of undertakings by their success, and if I permit myself this, Duden’s plan can be seen at least as rather hard to carry out, if not utterly impossible. If you are sitting within your own four walls you can imagine it to be utterly impossible that all of this cannot be made to be in such and such a way, and you cannot see the objection that it cannot be carried out. After the appearance of Duden’s *Report*, Germans found nothing so pressing / 37 / as to found emigration societies according to his plan. There was no lack of good and, apparently, just principles, – and the goals appeared just as incapable of being carried out. Not one of these societies has survived in America! Normally, the participants, although they had corresponded often for years with the heralds of the Promised Land, were surprised by a mass of new situations and unexpected phenomena, so that they no longer knew what they were to keep or not. Under the new light of liberty and equality, with the complete cessation of ranking and duties of service, earlier obligations appeared unjust and were torn up. Most found the measures taken to be achievable in general, but now inadequate to the present circumstance. They doubted the capacity or honesty of their contractors, shippers, or directors, and in most cases they dissolved their associations as soon

as possible, in the midst of dispute and ill-will, the source of ever-newer discomforts and disputes they thought they had left behind them. The interests that had moved the emigrants to their decision were too varied, the members of the societies too varied in terms of education and character, to expect that they would persist in a solid association for the common good. Only religious fanatics, or those who took on the cloak of religion for their intentions, have succeeded until now in gathering a horde of passive faithful about themselves and chained them together through faith rather than through just and reasonable principles. It is well known here that a few bold men in Germany are playing with the idea of passing *en masse* to a specific place in the United States to found a new state in which German ways of life and a law corresponding to those ways could be established and persist. I have before me two pamphlets that have been issued by / 38 / this association of honorable men to move sympathizers to form a new German state, a youthful Germany, in the territory of Arkansas.⁶ I will say nothing about this plan to found a new Germany. An examination of that sort would stretch the purpose of my report too much. I am as little inclined to pursue my views on the practicability or impracticability of this plan, all the less because the men who have come to the head of it have the means in hand to obtain the most precise, secure information on the western states, particularly on the area in question. I will further presume that all following mass colonization attempts will make almost no difference for the deprivations and discomforts for the members

⁶ *Call to German Emigrants to a Large-Scale Settlement in the States of North America* (Giessen, 1833). *Second Call Concerning a Mass Emigration* (Giessen, 1833).

of such associations of various sizes for at least the first years. Even being gathered together in large numbers has no impact on the external form of the land, of the climate and its influences. Even under the presumption that no individual attempts are being made at establishment, it is still advisable to become acquainted with all threatening evils openly and without restraint, to wipe away the deceptive mist of paintings that are all too magical. What I have observed from settlement societies that have been undertaken to date does not reduce the fact that it is very pleasant to settle near friends and countrymen, and that as friendly as Americans can be as neighbors, immediate enjoyment of the advantages in the new homeland comes from living with those who share the same / 39 / memories, the same pains and the same joys that alone make for a more elevated, heartfelt life.

It is possible that Duden's *Report* has perhaps awakened in many the expectation that, besides providing a carefree and comfortable situation, this is also the place for rapidly accumulating great riches. If one or the other has seized this thought, I ask him quickly to free himself of these fancies. Particularly the farmer, however more easily he can achieve a happier and more independent position than in his earlier homeland, he is still not going to gather treasures with mere agriculture, given with the high wages for labor, the low prices for his products and the high prices for all the things he must purchase. Fine, speculation can bring one higher than in the Old World, but only a few heads are capable of such calculation, and failed attempts are as harmful here as anywhere else. Whoever depends on agriculture, which is the situation for most settlers, has to

figure on investment throughout the first years, all the more so since the facilities of even the best American farm will not be good enough. It is artisans who appear to me to make the most profit, beyond comparison with what other professions make. There is an excessive supply of physicians in the eastern states, and even in the “Far West” there is no shortage. St. Louis, a town of eight to ten thousand inhabitants, recently had about eighty of them.

This newly opened region, penetrated by the best waterways in the world, offers an enormous theater for merchants; but the foreign trader will be in a bad position because of ignorance of the local products, their sources and markets, the undependability of American traders, and lastly the great difference in the manner of local *trading companies*, a fact that obviously escaped the learned Duden. The / 40 / jurist will not only have to learn the language and law of the land perfectly, but he will also have to penetrate deeply into the customs and spirit of the people if he is to deal with the articulate and practical lawyers, and if he wishes to speak to the hearts and convictions of jurors, who vote even in civil matters. It is surprising that Duden, who was himself a learned jurist, asserts that rhetorical torrents are alien to American lawyers (29th letter). This conclusion, which is drawn deductively from the general character of Americans, is utterly without confirmation in experience. It is surprising to every foreign jurist how little mention is made of existing law, its interpretation or application, and that instead, what is normally called common human understanding and moral, rather than legal, principles are applied. Here in the West, where the scholarly disciplines are still in their infancy, the true scholar is not at home, and the disciplines are dealt

with not for themselves but only to the extent that they are useful to practical life. Here, where only physical forces are of worth and profit, he will play a role worthy only of pity and be a bore to himself and to others.

A few of Duden's small enhancements of the easy, rich life of the planter may be briefly touched on. House pets can almost never survive the winter without help, and have as its penalty the worsening of their state or death. Providing food to them does not serve merely to attach them to one place, as Duden thinks, but in order to prevent them from starving. In the same way deer are not eaten and the remnant left, as he thinks, since what the hunter does not consume goes to the neighbors, who are very grateful. There are some American planters who commit themselves so passionately to hunting that they act as / 41 / Duden describes, but such Indian-style loungers cannot be made to represent the majority. Also, I have been assured in Illinois and Missouri that turkeys rarely reach the weight of fifteen pounds, and that those under twelve or ten pounds are gladly accepted. I provide these unimportant points only to show how often the "Reporter" paints a misleading picture. I now refer to two matters that are reviewed by Duden in his usual way, but to which I wish to point: the plague of mosquitoes and the lack of any help for work in field and household.

To be sure the mosquitoes here are, as Duden says, nothing but German *Schnacken*, *Culex pissiens*, but this *Culex pissiens* is found on the banks of rivers, near canals, swamps and wet meadows in such horrendous masses in the new lands that no protective means can be conceived. Those most hardened against these insects, the previous occupants of the lowlands of the Rhine, have found this

plague almost intolerable. Only someone provided with mosquito netting, a curtain of gauze, cannot expect a sleepless night. These mosquitoes are a continuous plague in the summer, even in the autumn, and decrease only with the clearing of the huge woodlands and the drying out of the many pools of stagnant water, but they never vanish in the bottoms of the rivers. They are certainly not a rare phenomenon, as Duden thinks, whose appearance requires much thought to explain. St. Louis is not free from these tormentors, as it says in the 23rd letter; rather, it is their favorite haunt and chief mustering field.

The lack of servants, however, is one of the most significant inconveniences to beset the immigrant. Success has demonstrated, and demonstrates again every day, how little service contracts made in Europe are / 42 / kept here. Whoever brings helpers along who are not tied by personal affection or bound to the family can depend on being abandoned within the first few months. The lack of help is too palpable in the western regions for strong workers not to be offered conditions that the emigrant, who can hardly have left the homeland without substantial financial costs, cannot meet. Here, as in Germany, it is necessary for the farmer to put his own hand in rather than limit himself to merely supervising. But the tasks here are so many, and the American settler must do so much that could be obtained in Europe for a low price, that in most cases he has to be his own artisan, so that even if the field work is less trouble than generally believed, he has trouble taking care of it alone. If the family is large and its strong members few, the situation of immigrants can be extremely difficult, particularly for women. I have met families that would have

returned to their old homeland immediately, if they could, entirely because they could find no help. Now there is always one way out, which is to buy a slave, but that requires considerable capital, since it is not easy to find a slave for less than \$500. And then this way out is one that a man of justice and honor would never take. We can only feel sorry for the residents of provinces where slavery exists by law, who have not yet overcome the prejudice implanted by their parents and ancestors, which works against their own interests. New arrivals, however, who obey this principle, and who have acquired a horror of this gross and repellent type of slavery, which the power of prejudice and centuries of accommodation does not excuse, must / 43 / be reviled, twice and thrice over, if they arrive convincing themselves that political conviction has brought them to set foot on the republican soil of America. It should be said to the credit of the Germans living in Missouri, that none of them have bought slaves, but they would have done better to have avoided this slave state altogether, since that of which they still have a horror will not seem horrible to their children and grandchildren, and the power of custom and their environment will dull them and make them into masters of unfortunate servants.

But this “escape through dishonor” is only available in the lands south of the Ohio and in Missouri, while in the other states the principle of egoism and inhumanity is not worshipped. The states of *Ohio, Indiana and Illinois*, which have advantages over Missouri in so many respects, must thus remain closed to settlement. Besides the advantage of a much greater culture and the comforts deriving from that, of a far more intense and active life, largely a result of the

abolition of slavery, the states named are also preferable in respect to agriculture.

In Missouri it is principally only the bottoms of the Missouri River that are occupied where, as Duden himself must confess, health is extremely imperiled. The remaining areas are partly hilly, partly extensive prairies that do not belong to the most fruitful areas. It is Duden's greatest error when he says that lands west of the Mississippi are primarily woodland (30th letter). It is only the river valleys, which are almost invisible in comparison with the total surface of the state, that are covered with a thick forest. A few miles from the rivers the woods cease and the prairie begins, which is still mixed with woods at the beginning but soon extending to an enormous plain that extends over a thousand miles to the foot of the Rocky Mountains. To be sure, most of the current cultivators of the state of Missouri / 44 / still live in thick woods, since they have settled next to the rivers and the accompanying heights, but a reporter such as Duden should have looked a bit further into the land. *West of the Mississippi it is not the forest that predominates (30th letter) but, on the contrary, the prairies.* Whoever relies only on Duden's *Report* will marvel when he reads the following in one of the best American writers on geography and statistics:

The greatest hindrance in Missouri for the style in which agriculture is practiced now is the lack of good materials for fencing. If woods are not present, there will soon be a complete lack of good materials for fencing. If the settlers of this country understand their true advantage, they will start from the beginning to plant hedges ... the planting of white Alleghany fir and chestnut should be the object of immediate attention. The sparseness of wood for fuel and building demands attention to this sort of improvement for those who have any thought at all for the coming generations.⁷

⁷ Flint's work as cited, vol. 1, 2nd ed., pp. 290, 291.

If Duden went to the Illinois, the Sangamon or the Kaskaskia in the state of Illinois, he would find woods enough in a country he believes to be a broad savanna. To be sure, there are still limitless prairies here, but they are incomparable and known to be more fruitful than those of Missouri, just as *Illinois* in general is the most fruitful land in the United States. It is no more inclined to illness than all of the new western lands, and its reputation for unhealthiness is largely due to the fact that the first immigrants (the French) did not settle in the interior but rather in the famous stretch in the Mississippi River valley, *American Bottom*, which / 45 / demands a man's most noble possession, his health, in exchange for its endless gifts of fruitfulness.

There is only one remaining object of my review, which is on what level intellectual and political education stands in the North American republic, particularly in the new Western states, and what demands the more educated immigrant can ever make for the satisfaction of intellectual enjoyments. Whoever must regard America simply as a refuge and place of rescue from hunger and hard physical pressure, then such considerations will not be without interest, but without any weight in his plans and decisions. But whoever seeks there a place for both intellectual and physical movement will certainly pose this question and give the responses rapt attention, to whomever it is who responds.

A characterization of the current moral and scholarly situation of a people whose course of development is not controlled by any ecclesiastical or secular lordship, which is growing continually through new immigrations from all parts of Europe, which is little limited by pressing concerns for food, which is

becoming ever more suited for intellectual development – any characterization of such a people will be of only tentative truth and dependability. A thorough evaluation of the moral and scholarly position of the states of North America would be of as little profit as the thankless efforts of topography and statistics in North America, where cities or their beginnings rise up out of the woods virtually every day, where no year passes without new waterways and railways to open trade to different and new links, so that solid and vital states appear where there were once regions roamed by Indian tribes, equalling the older states in population, wealth and political power. / 46 / Recognizing this should excuse the true purpose of these few pages in which I attempt to sketch an image of the intellectual and political situation of the republicans.

As numerous as the institutions for education and intellectual training are in the states of North America, as well as in the western lands, as many colleges, seminaries and universities for higher education in every state as exist and are newly founded every day, one may draw no conclusion concerning the situation of scholarship. There are too many universities, so that outstanding teachers are scattered, and their establishment is all too much an aping of the medieval cloister foundations of Old England, that one cannot expect a free, broad education from them. Despite their fine names, the preparation schools and middle schools are more for the profit of the individual entrepreneur than for a solid general education of the people. It is only in some of the older states – and in young Ohio, which develops with surprising power and rapidity – that there is an ordered and government-run general school system, modeled after that of Massachusetts.

The reason most school institutions are still private enterprises, achieving little, is less due to a lack of interest in a good education than to republican scruples that one should give the government as little as possible to govern. But even more than the lack of institutions for schooling, it is the idea seizing the American, and even more the immigrant, to win a good income and a comfortable life as soon as possible. Scholarship is almost always subordinated to earning a living, and it is only pursued to the extent that it serves it. Since existence / 47 / is assured in these lands with moderate effort and sparse knowledge, it is all the easier to seek higher knowledge only superficially. To be sure, the American, more than any other, avoids pedantry and learned pretense; but, on the other side, he escapes the pure joy that science offers its devotees on deep penetration. This does not require much proof. I am certainly not the first to notice this lack of a truly scientific education, as well as the manifold enjoyments of close association with educated and spirited men. And who does not know how little we have the Americans to thank in the realm of knowledge? Other than researches and discoveries that they have perhaps made in the area of physics, technology and nautical matters, all sciences that directly serve practical life, their scientific efforts are not yet of great importance. Only gross ignorance, or irresponsible partisanship, about intellectual life in the republics, which includes at least a science ennobled and purified through scholarship, can approve statements such as we find in Duden's 29th letter:

It is laughable self-praise when the Germans assert that there is more intellectual life among themselves than in North America. The Americans can forgive the Germans for this conviction, but I am obligated to call the matter by its proper name. Only in

Germany can one express such thoughts without being mocked. ... If such were worthy of a correction, one need only refer to the old Asiatic and Egyptian colonies on the Mediterranean, and especially to the splendid flourishing of the Greeks in Italy. ... But whoever says that material life occupies effort too much, he should get to know better the country of which he speaks, and he should not confuse / 48 / the situation of the first colonials with the situation of the current settlers in the middle of a region crossed with postal roads in all directions.

Such curtly tossed negative sentences should not frighten me to assert the opposite, but still less the threatening reference to Asiatic, Egyptian and Greek colonies. As little as all people cannot raise themselves to pure, ideal *art* without having passed through the school of the intellectual disciplines, and even as it succeeded for the fortunate Greeks, so little do all people have the same capacity to scientific development and intellectual education. In addition, it is well known that colonization among the ancient peoples operated in an entirely different way from later times. For them, emigration and settlement in other lands was a result of political decision, and was undertaken with an entirely different care and consideration than today. These colonies were emigrations of a specific nation, not gatherings of all the peoples of Europe. Such columns brought with them art and science in the full bloom they had in the homeland, and they guarded and cared for them with all the more concern the more they were cut off from their dear motherland. With the elevated slavery system that the ancients had, there could be no thought that “material life” would be able to claim the best strengths, and in the new plantings they could develop unhindered the greatness and education to which Duden refers. Other than the fact that one may not see even the residents of the five eastern states called New England as the successors of a

people of the Britons, since the most ardent love of the fatherland was sharply tested in the outbreak of the War of Independence, and that one cannot speak of any of them in terms of an earlier history and literature, the earliest immigrants and the most recent belonged to an oppressed class, the most backward in Europe in terms of education. They belonged to a / 49 / class that sustained under that pressure the most lively and heated feeling for independence and freedom. Most of them departed their fatherland at a time when higher education was a privilege of the rich and mighty, and where the arts and sciences simply served the aristocracy and hierarchy. It is no wonder that a deep hatred took root among the oppressed against things that are in their own right valuable and honorable. And this deep-rooted hatred of all that glittered of the spirit or fineness of education was brought across the ocean by newer immigrants, barely escaped from the dungeon or death on the gallows, and it was a heritage passed to their children and grandchildren. It was a long time before they came to true insight and understanding, but no one can deny that the sharp and offensively-strict religious and political views of the earlier residents have limited the progress of the arts and sciences, and the careful observer will see it today in the sour and rigorist nature of so many sects, such as the Methodists so widely spread in the West, an element opposed to intellectual development.

Even if my judgment on the situation of intellectual development applies to all, it applies particularly to the southern and western states. The first of these owe the low state of their education primarily to the slave system, but perhaps also to a hot climate that restricts the ability to think. It would be tempting to seek

the reason for the low intellectual position simply in the fact that the new settler, and this makes up the entire population now, is claimed too completely by *material life*. The settler, and more importantly his children, even if his wealth is significant, must devote themselves almost entirely to work in the field and house. / 50 / Whoever comes to know the country better, as Duden desires, will see how little time the farmer has for intellectual development of himself and his children, with the ignorance of even the most reasonable and intelligent settlers in intellectual concerns the best proof. A German's assertion of the opposite position is even more laughable than an American's (who can have much less capacity to develop himself intellectually than other people). He knows full well how much the West stands behind the eastern states in education. If it did not exceed the limits of this *Illumination*, I would pass to the reader the proceedings of the most recent annual meeting of a literary society in Cincinnati,⁸ as well as a penetrating, worthy address of this society to all friends of education, dealing with the lack of adequate intellectual education and the means to deal with it.⁹ The very beginning of this address can be given as a proof of my assertion:

Education among us stands on a very low level. We would be committing facetious and low flattery to say anything else. The experience of all of us is a witness to this situation. Every other art, or every other craft, has achieved greater perfection, is more favored and promoted, than the art of public education.

When Duden, on the contrary, speaks of a *higher enlightenment* of the mass of the people in *intellectual* terms and enumerates at the end the seven free

⁸ Western Literary Institute and College of Professional Teachers.

⁹ This address is to be found printed in the local newspaper, *St. Clair Gazette*, no. 2, appearing in Belleville, St. Clair County, Illinois.

arts of the American settler, one may only smile and / 51 / pity the total confusion of concepts. The American is able 1) to distinguish the vegetable fertilizer from the indigenous types of soil, 2) distinguish and apply the various sorts of wood, 3) build houses and stalls and burn lime, 4) clear the land and plant tobacco, cotton, etc., 5) manage raising cattle and the shearing of sheep, 6) make shoes, potash, soap and sugar, and finally, 7) hunt and tan wild animal hides. This does not supply all the certain training of the spirit and readiness to act required for every person, particularly every republican, unless he wishes to be just a beast of burden, a dependent and pliable tool of any intelligent and ambitious person. With all my love for the straight-forward and decent residents of the Western states, I cannot say anything other than that in the general, necessary school knowledge they stand far behind the educated people of Europe, and that they are far behind Europeans of the same occupation, whether residents of cities, merchants or businessmen, both in foreign languages and higher knowledge.

What should I say about the situation in which *art* finds itself in the United States? When strict, often dark religious views opposed the progress of the sciences, this religious zeal was all the more intense against the development and expansion of the arts. They gave music and painting such a poor reception that it was inclined to decay and disappear once they had crossed the separating sea, since both arts had been in the service of the dominant and hated church from which they were parting at the time of the earliest and most numerous immigration. Centuries have moderated and eliminated this often-blind hatred, but the shy Muses and Graces have not yet turned their favor to America.

Nothing is less developed among the residents of this great stretch of land than its imagination, a capacity that / 52 / is a precondition for all artistic creations. Even Cooper, one of their best authors, is only outstanding when he is describing, not when he is inventing. What has appeared in the way of artistic products up to now is not the result and creation of a peculiar sense of beauty lying in the people, but an alien adoption that has no relation to its surroundings, has no ties to it, and as a result makes and excites little impression. Riches and the love of display have produced many a work of art in the earlier states, but a true love, let alone passion, for art has yet to appear. To speak justly, Americans are semi-barbarians so far as art is concerned, in their taste not much better than the Indian natives who push metal things through their noses. An artistic sense will only arise with them as the result of a higher intellectual education, but it will never find support or promotion in the whole population. Whoever departs Europe, then, takes leave of all museums, galleries, Gothic churches and Greek temples, from all the mausoleums, gardens and theatres that might have provided him with so much enjoyment, and he must rest assured with the thought that for all of this he will receive only some consolation from the green of thick woodlands and the flowers of the wide prairies.

As little as Americans have developed and used their imagination, their understanding is all the more sharp. No people is as considerate, none weighs rights and duties more precisely against one another, than they. Little led by shifts in mood, rather immune to external impressions, they decide matters entirely according to their *knowledge of human nature*. In the presence of this,

their sharp judgment, inherited from their forebears, reinforced and ripened by the new situation in an alien land, through continuous struggle with deprivations of all sorts, through continual attacks against a great, wild nature, the Middle Ages vanish, with all the institutions from which most of the states of Europe suffer, / 53 / all worldly and spiritual supremacy sinks into the dust. Courtly love and feudalism, knighthood and cloister life – none of these splendors of the *Ancien Régime* had any reception here, and hence they were less entertained or sustained. No robe of elevation or holiness protects against cold-blooded investigation, no High Mass, no incense can cover the nakedness of madness against healthy reason. The English Revolution of 1688 that never ripened to its full extent in its motherland, achieved its most perfect pinnacle in the colonies derived particularly from Britain, perfecting itself in the Declaration of Independence and the complete overthrow of monarchy. Led by words and writings of men such as Samuel Adams, Jefferson, Franklin and the Englishman Thomas Paine, this practical, reasonable sense created institutions that are the envy of all educated peoples of the earth, and which can offer adequate compensation for all the sacrifices and losses of all immigrants from afar. I am not about to portray the political and inner civil relations, the Federal Constitution, the various state constitutions or the nature of their courts. These have long been the object of the necessary compilations, and since the appearance of Duden's publication I believe no changes have been made in state institutions of interest to immigrants.¹⁰

Duden also dedicated a few pages to the political parties found in the

¹⁰ More recent than Duden's *Report* is the act of Congress permitting the sale of state property in parcels of 40 acres.

states of North America / 54 / (29th letter), and since my evaluation assumes an acquaintance with his *Report*, I will only make a few remarks on what Duden has neglected, or that are against my own point of view. Other than the great, but by no means severe division into *federalists*, those who have voted for the situation up until now, and *democrats*, who for every newly-minted truth demand a place among the representation in the state legislature and institutions, the residents of the states divide themselves mainly into Jacksonians and anti-Jacksonians. This division, which could once have been regarded as temporary, vanishing perhaps with the political or physical death of the General since it seemed based on the varying views of the personality of the current president, has most recently taken on a more serious and permanent character. In the Southern states, particularly in Kentucky, there has always been the most anxious distrust of the governing power. As difficult as the establishment and limitation of powers in a confederated republic as found in the United States in fact is, the more common are cases of collision and apparent violations of rights. Now Jackson represents the system in its fullness, the unity of the republic, while a number of residents of the South demand more autonomy at the cost of unity, and they wish to vindicate the right to nullify laws and resolutions of Congress when they violate the wellbeing of individual states, for which reason this party has received the name of Nullifiers. Whoever stands now with Jackson usually declares himself for the principle of solid unity, while the anti-Jacksonians, as / 55 / it appears, prefer the Nullifiers. But these groups are not entirely congruent with one another, and Jackson has an endless number of opponents who abhor the Nullifiers, whose

number is still small. Particularly the President has created a mass of enemies, especially in the trading cities, through his newest *arbitrary* act against the privileged Bank of the United States, which is not in any way the state bank, by withdrawing public deposits without the legally-required approval of the Secretary of the Treasury. Disputes concerning Freemasonry are too limited in their connection with the population as a whole to call the attackers and defenders a political party. Much more significant and more fateful is the division into defenders and opponents of *slavery*. Although Duden – perhaps to prepare the way for his later deductions – declares in the first part of his 20th letter that the difference between states where slavery is allowed and those whose laws forbid it is not yet sharp, a very brief residence in the United States is enough to find the opposite. This question is treated in private conversation, but particularly in public papers, with true bitterness. One should not believe that great philosophical conflicts over the principle itself are being fought out. No, the advocates of slavery can only represent their interests and refer to the disaster that would arise from slavery's end. A so-called moral examination or evaluation of the institution, with a resolution *in favor* of the matter, well, such a strange product could only be the produced by a German scholar. It is hard to speak of Duden's "moral examination" in the second half of the 20th letter without passion. On the whole, his heavy-handed, dark deduction reduces itself to a historical justification of the institution / 56 / such as many a court publicist or over-learned historian has produced before him. Greeks and Romans, Franks and Lombards are convoked from their graves and lend their weapons to egoism and

restrictiveness. It is as if we are bound by prehistory, as if we could never exceed the boundaries within which people have been restrained centuries before, as if we could not become better with a word! Cannot divinity grace us with a new truth? Can mankind not grow richer by one idea? If the ancients and our barbaric ancestors could not tear themselves away, should we use that to excuse our own inhumanity with such historic crimes? But I do not wish to defend the cause of freedom in a schoolhouse manner: it would be dreadful if it still had to be the mere *protégé* of juristic and philosophical essays. I do not wish to attack Duden's solid *prolegomena* and his solid conclusions, his first, second and thirds, his narrowing and expansion of questions, his shifts of disputes and his results pumped out through twenty middle terms; I have all too much awe before a German philosophical exposition. I would rather be called a slow, incapable head and confess that something somewhat repels my spirit that damns slavery like an immediate expression of reason, and I hold the matter to be settled with that.

Whatever Duden's philosophy might say to that, I repeat that no parties in the United States stand so starkly against one another than those for freedom and slavery. One can hardly believe with what loathing the slave states are spoken of in the free states. Even societies working together, such as several Bible societies, have dropped all previous links with their earlier members in the slave / 57 / states, and they have expressed the opinion that anyone following such an inhuman principle cannot in truth pursue otherwise great and noble goals. It is to be hoped that now that England has suspended slavery in its West Indian plantations, that finally the Southern states of North America will wipe away this

stain, which through them sullies the entire United States. But the South still persists with slavery in disputes in Congress over the tariff and over the treaties passed with the Indians in Georgia and most recently in Alabama, a division of the country into two or three parts could be made, which would naturally only take place as the result of a major civil war. But even in this unfortunate case the states of America will never provide the show of a suppression of civil freedom. The healthy reason called to life runs through all classes of the American people in such a way that even a transformation of the entire state association can never be thought to involve subordination to a despot or the surrender of rights, which are assured to the citizens in their charters. From the residents of the rich, booming trade cities of the Atlantic Ocean to the poor settlers at the uttermost limits of the Missouri passes a spirit of independence and freedom that will never be suppressed. Even in Europe, people have recognized the benefits and blessings brought to a people by a free constitution, but only one who has lived here in the republic can truly perceive the comprehensive and penetrating results of freedom. As a result of this free constitution, which rejects every inherited rank, every claim of birth, every American, even the poorest, is marked with a feeling of human worth and autonomy that takes the place, at least in part, left in the mass of the people by the lack of a better intellectual education. /58/ The simple resident of the countryside, who has never moved in cities or in what is called greater society, moves with a certain dignity and ease that cannot be found in a domineered European peasant, and is as a rule only the product of a special education. As a result of this free constitution, a thousand prejudices have fallen

in America, which the most enlightened head in Europe would often not wish to lose. All distinctions of class, advantages of this or that craft, conveniences and formula of courtesy, all are buried here. It is to these free institutions that the residents of the United States owe their complete freedom of religious expression and freedom of thought, which the reasonable man in Europe concedes to his fellow man, but not without expecting some praise in return. The concept of toleration is unknown here, no one thinks that a restriction in this respect is even possible. While religious toleration is a virtue with us, here it is an actuality, and every failure of it would be called a punishable vice. In keeping with these free institutions, here it is inconceivable that restrictions of the press, secret courts and courts not entrusted to the people could even exist. No one concerns himself with proofs of the necessity and reasonableness of freedom of the press and jury courts. Whoever would assert the opposite would not be rejected but pitied as crazy. In keeping with these free institutions, the officials here are simply servants of the people,¹¹ and they can only / 59 / expect a certain distinction during their time in office. Any conviction that they know better what is good for the people or not, of permanence in office, is unknown, and claims of the sort are dealt with on the spot with force.

/ 60 / This free constitution has made America into a blooming and

¹¹ In proof of this I cite the answer of the governor of *Illinois* to an assembly that was held in Cook County to move the governor to gather representatives in response to a petition to build a railroad. This / 59 / answer, printed in all the papers in Illinois and neighboring states, is not unusual, and the president of Congress and high state officials speak in no other tone. I want to insert this otherwise insignificant text to serve as a contrast to the style of our own courts and cabinets. [Text comes after the text of Körner's pamphlet]

powerful country – blessed, it must be said, by its natural position, who can deny it? – into a land in which the common sense of the citizens has done extraordinarily much for material improvement. This free constitution has provided the finest proof that the citizen, when left to himself, knows and pursues his own advantages best himself, and that a person is best suited to make himself happy without outside intervention.

Prosperity and the blooming of the land, fruits of a reasonable state constitution, have given the American a peace and friendliness such as we seldom find in the life of Europeans, / 61 / torn and stunted by passions. This prosperity also forestalls so many false movements, so many vices, and it assures happiness and peace at home, the foundation of all civil flourishing. This prosperity and the ease of making the best possible existence through talent and hard work, has conjured away miserable crawling, the fear of what is to come, the small souls standing in the parlor, the inclination to bow, to flatter, and often leading on to every vice.

So, as Duden correctly remarks, the mass of the people in the states appear *morally* on a higher level than the population of Europe. It is freer of prejudice and less inclined to the temptation of vice. But only a raving idealist would say that one finds only pure heroes of virtue here, only selfless republicans. Such dreams will never be fulfilled on earth. It is possible humanity will achieve a rather perfected state, but even then not every individual will be wiser or more virtuous than every individual in the past.

I am conscious that I have judged according to my innermost conviction in

this short narrative. Whoever gives it some thought will find that I have not tried to scare away immigration itself. I have only warned of and prepared for threatening deprivations, of trouble that can be overcome. It is only that person who perhaps desires a fortunate *external* situation, a considerably happier one than his earlier not-disadvantageous position, and who is not subject to uncomfortable feelings about the civil life in the Fatherland, that is the only sort of person who might change his mind. Most, however, who leave Europe, and particularly Germany, I well know, will not be driven by a lust for profit and comfort. By leaving their dear homeland they follow the drive that every better man feels, to be able to move and develop freely in spirit and body. A decision arising from deep conviction will not be shaken by the expectation / 62 / of sacrifice and deprivation that has to be balanced against the better position achieved at the end. The purpose and intent of these lines has been that these sacrifices and deprivations, if prepared for, can then be borne more lightly.

Text cited in note 11 above [remarks by Körner]: / 59 continued /

Belleville, Illinois, 6 November 1833

To Colonel Owen, President, and Dr. Kimberly, Secretary, of a numerous and respectable assembly of the citizens of Cook County – to the committee elected by this assembly, and to the citizens of the aforementioned county.

Gentlemen: Some time ago I had the honor to receive a copy of the introduction and resolutions of the aforementioned assembly, that request that I, as governor of the state, call the General Assembly and recommend it to begin as soon as possible a railroad that would connect Lake Michigan with the navigable waters of the Illinois.

I have delayed responding to you until now, not from a lack of respect for you, but in order to give the people of the state time and opportunity to confer on this matter.

I am pleased to understand that you are so zealously interested in the completion of the largest improved facility in the entire West. There is no facility that would be so advantageous for the entire Mississippi Valley than this binding of the Lakes with the navigable waters of the Mississippi at this precise point, and which would cost so little at the same time. With this in mind, I have submitted this project to the last two General Assemblies of the state. Despite this, I must necessarily believe that it is not advisable at *this* time to call the General Assembly together for this or any other object now lying before the people.

The printed condition of our treasury [which the governor / 60 / also publicly refers to from the report of the financial officers] and the excessive taxes [which are disappearingly small compared to *all* parts of Europe] the people are paying, cause me to believe that it is no wise policy to call an extraordinary General Assembly at this time. I have requested the proper officials to provide the actual situation of our incomes and debts, which should show you, I believe, the great unsuitability of taking on any new debts, and the people who pay taxes can testify that they are high enough. I will still remark that it has been two months since the matter was presented to the people, and I have received no other petition to call for a session. For that reason the conclusion is correct that it is not the will of the majority of the people that an extraordinary session of the legislature take place.

But all officials are servants of the people, and they must obey the will of the majority. I would deal according to this principle if I was convinced that the majority of the people held it good to call a General Assembly; I would approve it joyfully and do so immediately. I am, with respect, your obedient servant

John Reynold[s].