lighting the town of Fisher from this wire. This company has established two artesian wells in the City of Crookston, which supply an abundance of pure, wholesome water to the city. The general absence of any alkaline feature in the water is marked throughout the county, and it is possible to find pure artesian water of the finest kind in nearly all places where a well is drilled.

It is a well-known fact that the best soil of the Red River Valley is along the river banks, produced by the deposits of silt and clay during the thousand or more years of valley formation. Polk County borders on the Red River a distance of 48 miles, and including the two sides of the Red Lake River, which runs centrally through Polk County a distance of forty miles, has a total frontage of timber of one hundred and twenty-eight miles length, and an equivalent breadth or length of the richest kind of soil. If the statements of the geologists are reliable, Polk County must excel in quality of soil all other counties in the Red River Valley.

No more fitting recognition of the merits of Polk County, in its relations with the Red River Valley, could have been given than when James J. Hill offered four hundred and ninety-nine acres of land as site for the State Agricultural College centrally located at Crookston, and no more signal service was rendered the Valley than when Senator A. D. Stephens, then a member of the Legislature, through his active personal effort and influence, secured the passage of a bill through the Legislature, establishing a school of agriculture at Crookston. The interest in the school has been of gradual but continuous growth, until today the college, as a Valley institution, has become a dominant feature in practical husbandry and kindred branches, with an enrollment of over two hundred students.

The period of actual steamboating on the Red River extended from the time of the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad to Moorhead in December, 1871, to the time of the completion of the St. Paul & Pacific from Crookston to St. Vincent, making a continuous all-rail line from St. Paul to Winnipeg, in 1878. The largest number of boats plying the Red River of the North at one time was reported as twelve, according to the History of the Red River Valley, published in 1909. During these years, traffic was frequently suspended owing to low water. After the establishment of all-rail service, steamboating gradually disappeared, until the last boat went out of commission, and the sound of the steamboat whistle is heard no more. The commercial value of this river described in the above-mentioned history as one of the "two mighty rivers" (referring to the Mississippi and the Red River of the North), today is at zero. Its service to the world was short. It now is only a hazard. Every year of high flood-tide must bring disaster of greater or less degree. Red Lake River has a record for safety that can be trusted. Red Lake River still holds in reserve enough silent force, when added to that with which it has already been taxed, to amount in round numbers to ten thousand horsepower energy, thus demonstrating its capacity of service to Polk County.

In the matter of railroad transportation and traffic Polk County is again most fortunate. Two trunk lines, the Great Northern and the Northern Pacific, including branch lines radiating from Crookston, numbering eight lines of rail trackage in the city in all, furnish Crookston with an admirable service. A large number of traveling salesmen have made their homes in Crookston, finding it a most satisfactory point from which to reach the trade in their territory. The service given by this system reaches more advantageously to all sections of the county than the service found in any other county in the eastern half of the Valley.

Nature has endowed Polk County not only with agricultural and commercial possibilities, but also with attraction in her physical beauty. In driving through the country, one enjoys both the free sweep of the rolling prairies, and the frequent groves and many beauty-spots discovered in the woods along the picturesque river banks. Down in the southeastern part of the county is situated an attractive group of lakes. Most of them are a little remote from the com-