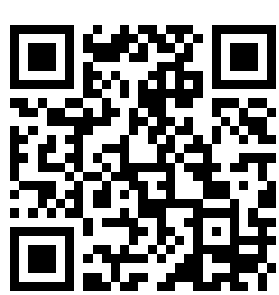
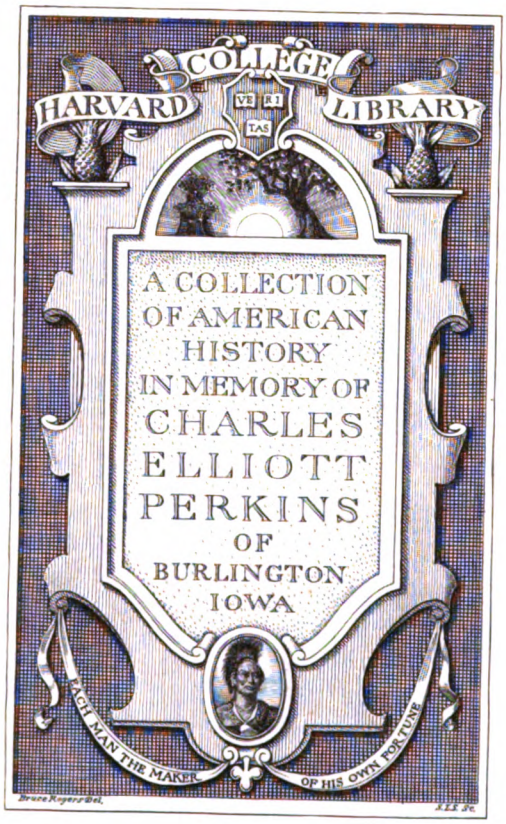


THE SEMI-CENTENNIAL HISTORY OF NEBRASKA



Nebraska State Capitol Building at Lincoln

SEMI-CENTENNIAL

HISTORY OF NEBRASKA

Historical Sketch

BY

A. E. SHELDON, A. M.
Director of Field Work.
Nebraska State Historical Society

Illustrations, State and County Statistics, Public Buildings and Biographical Sketches

BY

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FOREWORD

Touching the history of the world fifty years is but a short stroke of the pendulum, yet what marvelous achievements are wrought during that fleeting swing of time! The purpose of this volume is to review the development of a great commonwealth, Nebraska, at the close of her semi-centennial, and to recount the principal incidents preparatory to Statehood. For the successful execution of the purpose outlined it has been our good fortune,—and that of the reader as well,—to secure the services of Prof. A. E. Sheldon, A. M., whose elaborate investigations and extensive study of the history of Nebraska, have eminently qualified him for the task. Supplementary to this historical sketch, and realizing that the best aid to comprehension is comparison, we have sought to assist by a comparative showing, the reader's appreciation of the remarkable progress of a pioneer people. As such accomplishments are attained only through the activities of a sturdy race it is therefore assumed that a history conforming to the needs of the busy life is most essential. With this thought the main points in the state's history are presented, and comparative illustrations of her resources and industries shown. Many of the illustrations have been made for special use in this history and are published for the first time. To the heroic, progressive Nebraskan this work is sincerely dedicated.

FRANK L. LEMON.

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SEMI-CENTENNIAL

HISTORY OF NEBRASKA

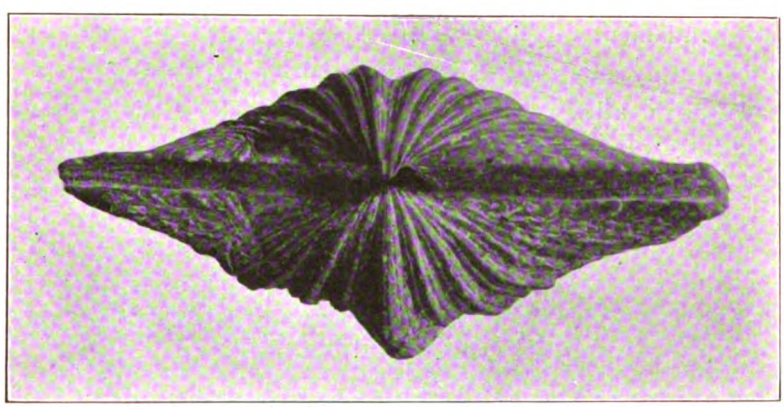
CHAPTER I

Where does the history of Nebraska begin? This first, fundamental query lies across the opening of my story as I have seen a cottonwood log lie athwart the doorway of a settler's cabin. Does it begin with the written record of the first white explorer? With the first vague accounts carried by Indians to distant white men's trading posts? Farther back among the unwritten Indian traditions told for ages about campfires, transmitted and transmuted in memory down the generations? Does it begin back of all tradition—with the bones in the burial mounds along the Missouri Valley, with the chipped flints and ashes of fires long ago buried deep beneath Nebraska soil? Or still beyond,—in quartzite boulders dropped by glacial ice on the hilltops, in the beds of subsoil clay and sand beneath, in the shales and sandstones below them, in the blocks of solid limestone deeper yet?

Scene on Dismal River

This history shall begin with the oldest Nebraska records. These records lie beneath our feet. However obscure the characters or inadequate our ability to read, there it is, a great book of stone and clay and dirt whose story will be read with increasing interest through the years as our power to translate it grows.

At the start one great difficulty is met; the leaves will not turn. They lie piled one upon the other in nearly horizontal sheets, some of them deeply buried from sight. There are three principal ways of getting at them to read their contents. The first is to go to the mountains beyond where the leaves are bent up in great folds, crumpled and exposed. The second is to find where the streams of water have cut down through them in Nebraska exposing the edges. The third is to dig into them. All three methods have been employed and the results compared. From them it is possible now to write much of the history of Nebraska long before there were any human beings here or even any dry land for them to stand on.

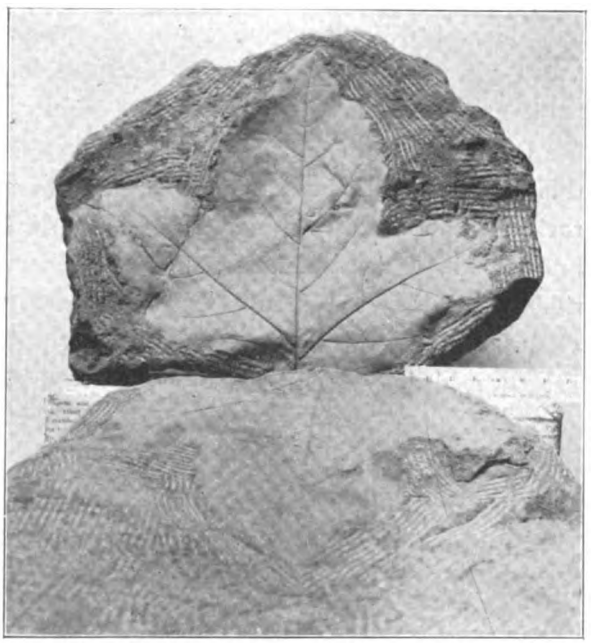


A Nebraska Brachiopod. Coal Measure Sea Shell.

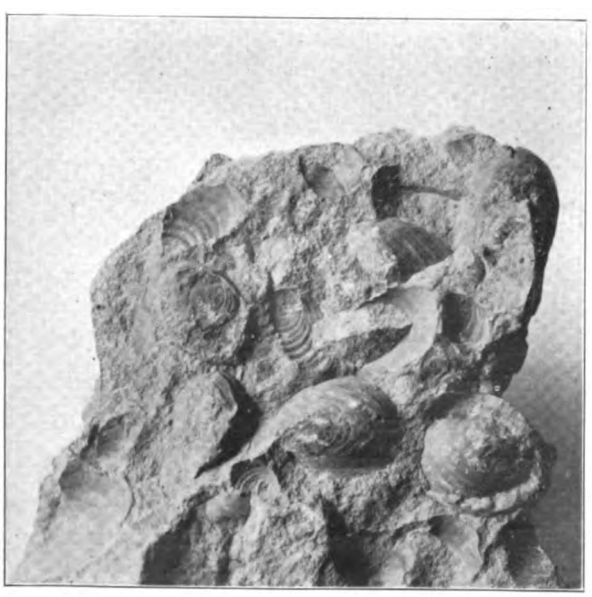
Anywhere from 10,000,000 to 20,000,000 years ago Nebraska was the bottom of an inland sea that swept up from the Gulf of Mexico and covered the Mississippi valley. We know it was the bottom of such a sea because sea animals, shell-fish and corals and crinoids, hundreds of kinds of them, lived and died, and dying left the imprint of their bodies in the soft, slimy sea bottom. Today that sea bottom is part of the limestone rocks of eastern Nebraska and all along the Nemaha, the Weeping Water, the Platte, the Blue, the Missouri and other streams which have cut valleys in the limestone hills the quarryman works in the cemetery of the past, blasting and carving out the skeletons of former inhabitants to serve the purposes of present ones. This was the great coal-forming or Carboniferous Age when the deep beds of coal in Iowa, Kansas and Missouri were being created. Nebraska was too far out on the edge of coal-making conditions to produce any deep beds, but the story of her part in that period of millions of years is written deeply in her rocks. A layer of black, soft shale filled with vegetable remains tells the story of a period of swamp; another layer of marly limestone intermingled with fossils tells the story of a shallow sea swarming with animal life; a thick stratum of solid stone with few fossils tells the tale of a deep sea. Through millions of years these alternations of depression and elevation, of swamp and shoal and sea, went on writing roughly their record in the rocks. These limestone rocks themselves with their interlying layers of shales and softer material are from six hundred to one thousand two hundred feet in thickness. They are the oldest Nebraska history. Thus far only the

largest events in their story have been puzzled out. For centuries to come scholars will be deciphering the details of those long ages which speak to us only through their tombs. For the Nebraskan of today,—school child or grown up—there is no more inspiring, instructive lesson than a day among the limestone ledges, noting the differences in different strata, finding the curious forms there entombed, and trying to frame some conception of how distant the time, and how vast the changes since they were the living inhabitants of Nebraska.

The carboniferous limestone book is the oldest document in Nebraska history. Next oldest of Nebraska documents is a curious one in four volumes called the "Cretaceous Period." These four volumes have striking differences of color, of texture, of arrangement, of fossil remains, but all four relate chapters in the story of a second great sea, covering what is now the great plains, and stretching from Texas to British America. The lowest of the four volumes is the Dakota red sandstone formation, named from Dakota City in this state, where it was first studied. It is from 200 to 300 feet thick and appears on the surface in numerous places in the eastern part of the state. The most interesting story it has to tell is the story of the woods of long ago which grew around the borders of the vast inland sea. The leaves of the maple, the willow, the oak, the magnolia and of many others are as perfectly preserved in the hard rock as though it were yesterday instead of millions of years ago that they fell. Next above the red sandstone lies the Benton book, named from Fort Benton in Dakota, where it appears in its full thickness—about two hundred feet. The most prominent feature in the history it has to relate is that of ancient oyster beds. Little oysters and big oysters, sheet upon sheet, and layer above lay-



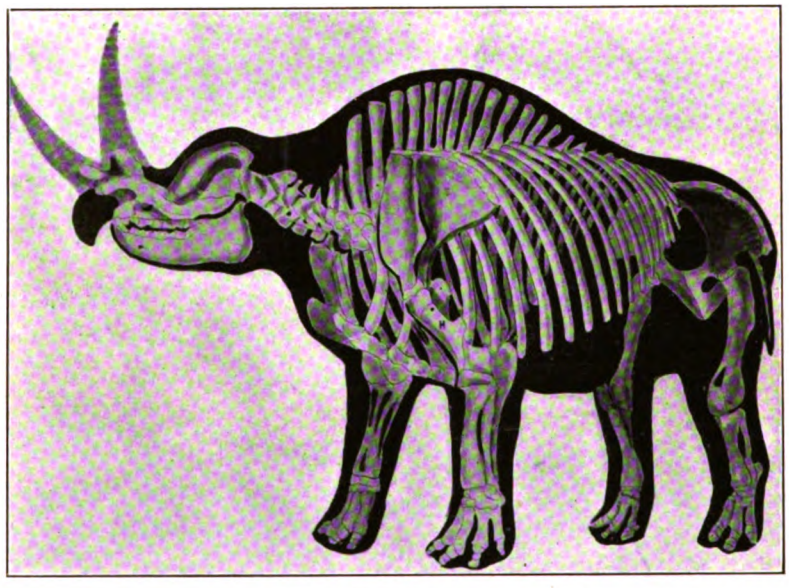
Nebraska Red Sandstone Leaf



Part of Ancient Oyster Bed

er, packed so closely that one cannot drive a shingle nail without piercing a dead oyster. What a feast for some of the present day inhabitants of Nebraska if they might have raked the bottom of the shallow oyster bed bays of this period. Next above these Benton oyster rocks lies about three hundred feet of Niobrara chalk rocks, named from the Niobrara river where they are exposed in perpendicular cliffs. In these the oyster beds disappear and are succeeded by the skeletons of very small sea animals. The last volume in this series is called the Pierre shale, from Pierre, South Dakota. This is the bulkiest book of all, varying from three hundred feet along the Blue river to three thousand or four thousand in the high plains of western Nebraska. Its leaves tell of the time when vast quantities of mineral mud were washed into the inland sea, packing its bottom with soda which reappears today in the alkali lakes of the sand hills. During this time monstrous coiled sea shells called ammonites lived and died and another variety of sea shell whose long glistening skeletons found today, are called "petrified snakes."

The record of the next chapter in Nebraska's history is found only in the Bad Lands of the northwestern corner of the state. There the soft mud, five hundred to a thousand feet thick, which formed the bottom of an interior lake, has been cut into gullies and canyons by the winds and waters. Here today is found the most remarkable menagerie in the world--dead.



A Nebraska Titanotherium from the Bad Lands of Northwest Nebraska

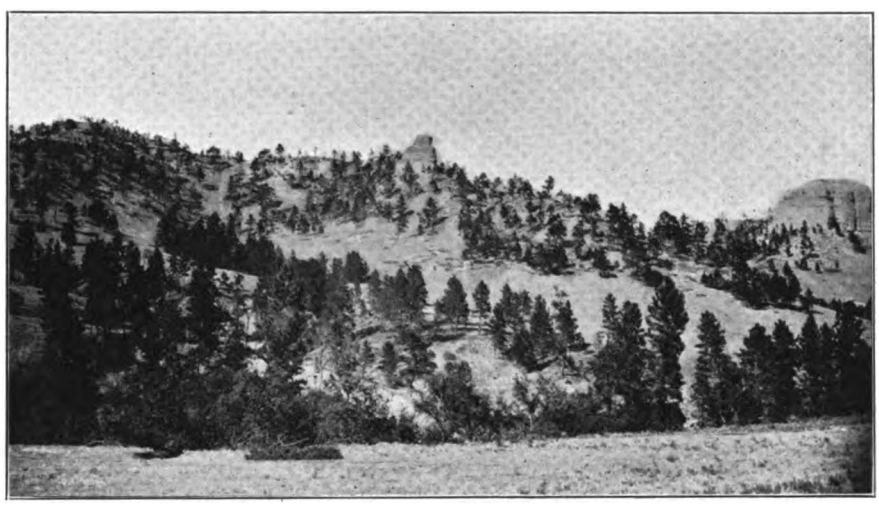
The skulls and teeth of sabre-toothed tigers, the huge hip bones and tusks of rhinoceroses, the leg bones of three toed horses are all found in this ancient cemetery. Hither come scientific expeditions from all parts of the world, to bear away to their museums the bones of the early inhabitants of northwestern Nebraska.

Higher up, above the Bad Lands muds are the sands and butte clays which form the top and the picturesque scenery of western Nebraska. In some places this formation takes

the shape of lofty pinnacles and spires crowned with pine forests; in other places, the wash from these sands has created the great sand hills. Layers of volcanic dust fused by intense heat into glassy fragments and now resting between other layers of sand or clay tell unmistakably of a time long ages ago when volcanoes were near enough neighbors to Nebraska to leave their mark upon her landscape.

After all the ages, whose history is written in rock and sand and shale, came the more recent one, whose record is found in the black alluvial soil which covers the surface of the greater part of Nebraska and makes it one of the richest gardens that ever the hand of man was set to cultivate. In these upper sheets are found from time to time the bones and teeth of the mastodon and the mammoth which once roamed the prairie. Across the eastern third of the state are scattered the records of the great ice age in the shape of huge boulders, dropped by melting icebergs on the tops of hills, long grooves cut in the exposed surface of limestone ledges and banks of rounded pebbles and gravel.

This hasty glance at the long and mighty prelude to human history in Nebraska would perhaps find no place in so brief a sketch as I purpose writing. But more and more, true history becomes—not the mere stringing of events like beads upon a thread, but a philosophy as well; a suggestion of underlying causes and sequences, which shall stimulate the intellect to a wider study, a more passionate search for the roots of things which shall enable one to act better his own part in the space allotted him. It has seemed to me that in the whole course of Nebraska history, nothing is more suggestive or inspiring—nothing more quickly kindles the imagination with its unsolved problems than a glance at the record of these ages preparatory to human existence in this state.

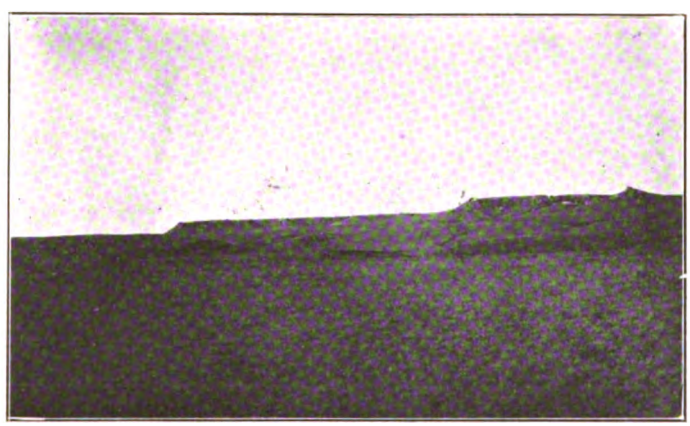


Scene in Sioux County

PREHISTORIC NEBRASKA

CHAPTER II

Until a very few years ago no evidence had been gathered of the existence of prehistoric man in Nebraska. To the east the mound builders had left their mark in the forests of Ohio and along the Mississippi. Their skeletons and their handiwork in stone and clay



and copper told of human communities thousands of years older than white discovery. To the west the cliff dwellers in the Colorado desert had left equally tangible evidence of their existence at a remote period. But the plains had been the home of the hunting tribes. Conditions there were not favorable to the development of an early civilization or the preservation of records.

The first work of prehistoric man in Nebraska to attract attention was on the Weeping Water, near Nehawka, Cass county. There the limestone terrace above the stream is gashed with trenches, while hills a mile back are honey-combed with pits and tunnels and covered with the debris of ancient workings. The pits and trenches have filled with soil, and in some of them oak trees hundreds of years old are growing.

A century ago French trappers brought down the Missouri wonderful tales of abandoned Spanish silver or lead mines upon the Weeping Water. Fifty years later expeditions were fitted out to explore them,—the disgusted prospectors returning with the declaration that there was not a trace of metal there. In 1856 Mr. Isaac Pollard, from Vermont, settled upon the site. He took an immediate interest in the workings, but years passed before their mystery was solved. In the year 1900, at his own expense, he made an open cut sixty feet long, six feet wide, and ten feet deep,

through the debris. In the cut were found loose limestone boulders, torn from their original position in the horizontal ledges, hammered made centuries ago by aborigines in search of the only material they knew for tools and weapons. The extent of the workings of these

Ancient Indian Fireplaces in the Bad Lands

and broken and most significant of all, with their flint nodules removed. During the next two years the locality was studied by Mr. E. E. Blackman, of the State Historical Society, and by Professors Brower, Upham, and Winchell, of Minnesota, noted archaeologists and geologists. These studies have established that the workings were ancient flint mines,

Ancient Flint Mines

savages who had no iron tools is surprising and will repay a visit to the spot.

On the tops of rounded hills above the Missouri, the Platte and other streams, are occasionally found burial mounds, not so large as the great mounds of the Mississippi Valley, but evidently hundreds of years old. One of these on the farm of Hon. Cass Jones, near Rulo, was opened a few years ago. In it was the skeleton of a man over six feet tall, and a very large collection of stone battle axes, flint knives and spear heads. On the Lowe farm, six miles south of Nebraska City, is a very old site which was explored in 1901 by J. Sterling Morton, his son Paul Morton, now secretary of the navy, and Mr. Blackman. Beneath six feet of soil were found the remains of old fires, broken pottery, and a pottery kiln.

In the summer of 1903, the writer discovered in a Bad Lands valley, a few miles from the Nebraska line, buried beneath ten feet of

stratified soil, some of the strata filled with shells of fresh water animals, and other evidences of an old lake bed, numerous prehistoric fire places, flints, arrow heads, fragments of pottery, and a vast quantity of bones and kitchen refuse.

Ancient Pottery Unearthed

The traditions of all the Indians found in Nebraska by white men assert a comparatively brief residence here, and a migration from regions farther east and south. These scattered discoveries raise the question: Is it possible that a thousand years ago or more scattered off-shoots of the mound builders found their way up the Missouri, made their homes upon its hill tops and in its secluded valleys, burned pottery, mined for flint, and were finally exterminated by the ruder tribes of hunters who migrated here later? Or was it rather the ancient ancestors of the Pawnees who left these memorials in a time far antedating Pawnee traditions? The systematic exploration and investigation which will furnish the data to answer these and other questions has only recently begun. The evidences themselves are fast being destroyed. All over the state the broken pottery of ancient Indian villages is being trampled into smaller fragments and even into dust by the thousands of head of domestic stock close grazing the fields; the plow and harrow are leveling the traces of old fortifications and burial mounds; the flint knives, arrow-heads and spalls once so abundant are being picked up and sent out of the state by private collectors. If even a part of the story of prehistoric man in this state is to be deciphered and preserved it must largely be through the scientific interest and generous state pride of her citizens. There are now living in nearly every one of the six thousand school districts of Nebraska some of the first settlers who knew every mark and mound on the prairie before it was cut by the breaking plow; there are children born in these school districts who know, as only children learn to know, every feature of their native fields and woods, the spots where arrow heads and burnt clay and curious stone tools were found, where pits or trenches used to be. It is to these the appeal is made by the writer of these pages to communicate to him the hint which may lead to careful exploration and mapping of these sites —possibly to discoveries unthought of.

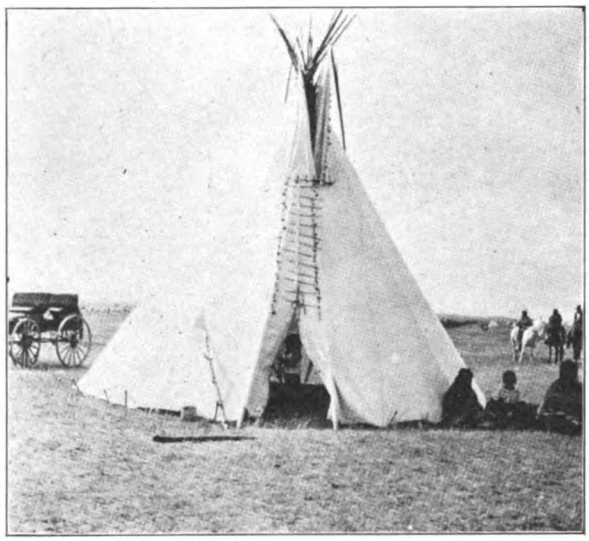
A few general outlines of the localities where remains of early and probably prehistoric aborigines have been noted in the state: The tops of bluffs along the entire course of the Missouri river. The valley of the Weeping Water. The upper valley of Salt Creek. The valleys of the Loups for a long distance up each of the forks. The upper Elkhorn and especially in Madison, Antelope and Holt counties. The upper Niobrara in Sioux county. There are probably other localities, but these

are where most of the exploring has been done. The Loup region is especially rich in suggestions of far-distant inhabitants. For example a few years ago an irrigation ditch was being dug near the little town of Alpine in the Middle Loup valley. The ditch followed the base of the hills and at a distance of more than half a mile from the river and four feet beneath the surface was uncovered the remains of an ancient settlement. There were piles of clam shells, heaps of charcoal and pottery and every indication of long use as a home, and far enough in the past for four feet of earth to cover them. The chance excavation of the ditch brought them to the light of day. Wherever such are found in the future they ought to be left undisturbed until a scientific explorer with a camera can be summoned.

Wild Poppy of Northwest Nebraska—The Pet of the Plains.

THE NEBRASKA INDIANS.

CHAPTER III



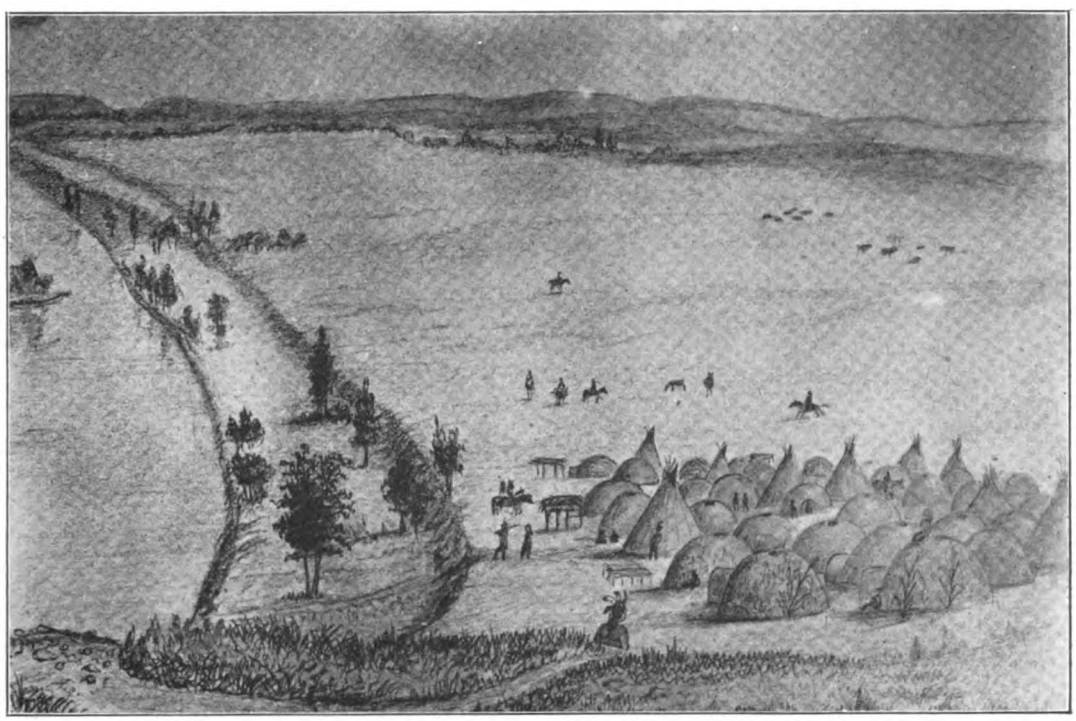
Typical Indian Tepee

Three distinct Indian peoples,—the Pawnee, the Sioux and the Algonquin,—differing in language, customs and traditions, were found in Nebraska by the earliest white explorers.

The Pawnees were the dominant Nebraska tribe. They numbered from 10,000 to 20,000 and occupied the fairest and most fertile parts of the state in the valleys of the Platte, the Elkhorn, the Blue and the Republican. They were the most advanced in the arts of any Nebraska Indians.They lived in large permanent villages whose houses were built of sod and poles. Sometimes the village was surrounded with a dirt wall for defense against enemies. Near the villages were fields where the squaws raised corn, beans, pumpkins and melons,—digging the ground with a sharpened stick or a hoe made by fastening the shoulder blade of a buffalo to a pole. Like some of his fashionable imitators today the Pawnee spent only half the year at home. About June first, after the corn and vegetables had been planted and hoed, the entire village departed on its summer buffalo hunt. In September the band came back, gathered and dried its crop of corn and pumpkins and left again in October for the winter hunt which lasted until March. Among the vivid recollections of the writer's own childhood thirty years ago are the Pawnee encampments near the old homestead on the West Blue made by them four times a year while going and coming from their home on the Loup to their hunting ground on the Republican.

The Pawnee alone of Nebraska Indians made pottery. The art died out like the art of chipping flint, after contact with traders had brought iron and brass implements into use. They tempered their clay with burnt rock and clam shells pounded until reduced to powder, moulded it into shape desired on a framework of braided grass, woven wilow or the smooth rounded end of a log and burned in kilns excavated in hill-sides. The fragments of tens of thousands of vessels are found everywhere on Pawnee village sites in the state.

The Pawnees were in almost constant warfare with all of their neighbors. The Sioux, Cheyenne, Crow, Arapahoe, Comanche, Kiowa, Osage tribes—each and all sharpened their knives on a common whetstone of hatred to hunt the Pawnee. Was it because of radical difference of blood and speech or because the more savage, wilder tribes hold a natural animosity toward those who are passing out of the hunting into the agricultural stage? Tribes that have begun to make permanent settlements and cultivate the soil offer more incentive to their wild neighbors in the way of booty and are always in danger of extermination until they form communities strong enough to reduce the wild men to submission. So we find the Omahas, Otoes and Poncas—all of them really Sioux Indians as both language and tradition establish—but Sioux who had begun to farm and settle down, living at the time the historical period begins along the Missouri river under the protection of the Pawnees, with the latter nation acting as a buffer state between them and their own wild relatives—the Oglala and Brule Sioux. Besides these little tribes the only people in the trans-Missouri region with whom the Pawnees were on terms of peace and commerce were the Wichitas, of Kansas, and the Aricaras and Mandans of Dakota,—the first two being their own kinsmen speaking dialects of the same language.



Pawnee Indian Village on Platte River Near Fremont. Sketch by Simmons, 1856.

The traditions of the Pawnees as to their origin were two-fold: one declaring that they came from the southeast near the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi—the other that they came from the southwest beyond the

mountains. The latter story was known only to the old men. Many things which cannot be enumerated here confirm its main outlines, and indicate that the tribe had come in contact with the semi-civilization of the Mexican Indians and through long centuries had slowly migrated northeast and then northwest. The migration was in waves, the Aricaras being the pioneers and going on up the Missouri, then

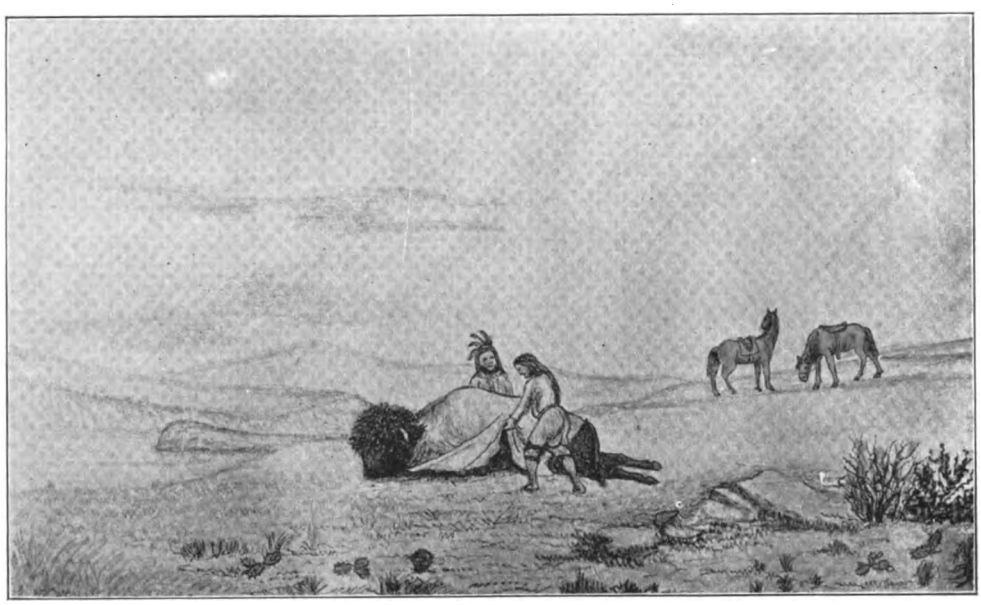
Site of Ancient Pawnee Village. Scene of General Thayer's Treaty of 1855, Three Miles Southeast of Fremont, Neb.

followed the Skidi band of Pawnees who were in Nebraska many years before the Grand, the Tapage and finally the Republican bands followed them. One significant fact may well be mentioned: The Pawnees offered human sacrifices—the last ones occurring since they became subject to the United States.

Pawnee society had progressed so far that there were distinct tokens of the beginning of the feudal system. Strong, far-sighted war chiefs gathered around themselves groups of youth and even old men who were glad to do the work of their households, serve under them in war and the chase, for the share that fell to them of the chief's food, protection and glory. We shall find similar associations among the Sioux,—with some differences. There were jealousies and differences of custom and speech between the four bands, but during a large part of the past century they were united under one chief of the whole Pawnee nation,—Pita-Leshar-u, a really great leader, the memory of whose name is still cherished by many white people.

The constant wars of the Pawnee nation made great gaps in their numbers which were never filled. In the very earliest days of contact with whites they probably had 20,000 people, but the first careful estimates of their numbers made early in the nineteenth century by counting their lodges put them at 10,000. The Pawnee country was directly in the path of the early routes of travel across the plains. The white man's liquor and diseases made large inroads upon the tribe. Their enemies

made fiercer attacks upon them. In 1832 the Skidi band was severely defeated on the Arkansas river by Comanches, losing several hundred. In 1847 the Sioux, seven hundred strong, raided a Pawnee village and killed eighty-three. In 1854 the Cheyennes and Kiowas cut off a band of 113 Pawnees and not one escaped. In 1873 a Sioux war party of six hundred attacked four hundred Pawnees while hunting buffalo in Hitchcock county and killed eighty-six. When they moved to Oklahoma in 1875 there were a few more than two thousand. The census taken in June, 1902, disclosed 638 remaining.

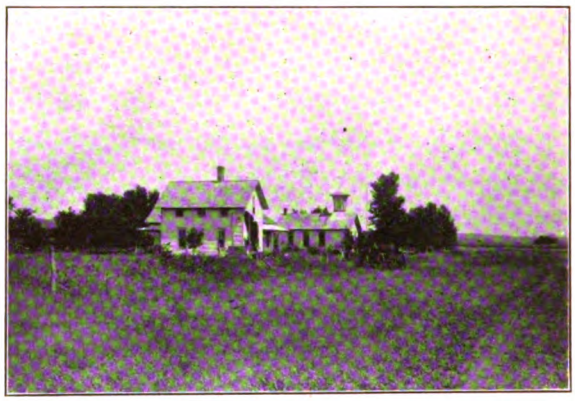


Indians Skinning a Buffalo

On both sides of the Missouri river from Rulo to Niobrara were the early day homes of the Otoes, the Omahas and the Poncas. These were small tribes, numbering between one and two thousand people each when first encountered by white men. They were near relatives in blood, being members of the great Siouan family. Their languages were so much alike that they could converse and for most of the historic period they were at peace with each other and often intermarried. To the Otoe tribe had joined itself the small remnant left of the Missouri band. The chief seat of the Otoes and Missouris a century ago was in Saunders county, about twelve miles north of Ashland. Later their main village was in Sarpy county, though they hunted and camped over the entire region from the Platte river south to the mouth of the Nemaha. In the early part of the last century the Otoe nation had a great chief, Ietan. He made his little people widely feared by his own ability as a fighter and organizer, but was killed April 29, 1837, in a fight with some of the young men of his own tribe. No successor to him in prominence and ability has ever appeared. The tribe was greatly reduced by whisky introduced by fur traders. It early ceded all its lands except a

reservation on the Big Blue river in Gage county. This in turn was demanded by the white man and in 1881 it was sold and the tribe went south to its present home in Oklahoma.

The story of the Ponca tribe is one of the most interesting and romantic in Indian annals. The little tribe, numbering something over a thousand was found by the earliest white explorers occupying the country at the mouth of the Niobrara river. During the whole of the eighteenth and three-fourths of the nineteenth centuries this was the most exposed outpost against the wild Indians of the northwest, the fierce Oglala and Brule Sioux, who, although the blood kindred of the Ponca, were their bitterest enemies. In spite of losses by this ceaseless border warfare, and by smallpox, the little band maintained itself in its ancient home and remained from the first the firm friend of the whites. When the great Sioux treaty of 1868 was made at Ft. Laramie by some blunder that no one has ever explained, the whole Ponca reservation, which had been guaranteed to the tribe over and over again in repeated treaties by the national government was given to their deadly enemies, the Brule and Oglala Sioux. Soon as their enemies understood that the Ponca territory had been given to them by treaty of the United States their raids became more fierce and frequent. The seven years that followed the Ft. Laramie treaty were years when the Poncas were obliged to work their little gardens and cornfields as did the Pilgrims in New England or the early settlers of Kentucky, with hoe in one hand and rifle in the other. In 1876 congress passed an act providing for the removal of the Poncas to Indian Territory, with their consent. The next year another act was passed for their removal to the territory without regard to their consent.In the spring of 1877 the Poncas were busy putting in their crops. Many



Ponca Indian Agency and School August 19, 1904.

had sown spring wheat. Some had put in corn and were engaged in gardening. A force of soldiers arrived and orders were sent out for all the Indians to prepare to move at once to Indian Territory. There were heart-breaking scenes in the little tribe. The Niobrara and Ponca valleys had been their home so long they knew no other. The graves of a dozen generations were there. The little fields their foremothers had cultivated with buffalo-bone hoes before the white trader brought in iron tools were to be abandoned. There were tears in the teepees and hot words in the little councils. The cooler heads prevented an outbreak and the long march to the south was begun. Arrived at their new home the warm, moist climate, so different from the dry, bracing air of their Nebraska home, brought on sickness. Out of seven hundred and ten, one hundred and fifty-eight died the first year. Homesickness, worst of all diseases in misery that it carries, was in every lodge.

In the mid-winter of such a scene of wretchedness, Chief Standing Bear, with a little band of thirty relatives and retainers,

slipped away from the reservation and turned their faces north. Seven of the party were very sick when they started. They were ten weeks on the road and arrived, ragged and nearly starved, at the Omaha agency in March. Their presence there was reported by the agent to Washington and on request of Secretary of Interior Carl Schurz, the commanding officer at Omaha, General Crook, was ordered to arrest them and return them under military guard to Indian Territory. When the party was brought to Omaha, March 26, 1879, the news of their misfortunes became known and in their behalf was brought one of the most important law suits to determine the status of Indians ever tried. Friends of the prisoners induced John L. Webster and A. J. Poppleton to volunteer their services in their behalf. This was the case of Standing Bear vs. George Crook, brigadier general of the United States army, and asked that a writ of habeas corpus be issued to restore them to the liberty of which they had unjustly been deprived. The case was argued by Webster and Poppleton for the Poncas and by United States District Attorney Lambertson for the government. The great issue raised was whether Indians were citizens and as such entitled to the protection of the constitution and laws of the United States. Judge Dundy did not decide this question in his opinion, but held that an Indian was a person within the meaning of the laws and had therefore the right to the writ of habeas corpus; that inaddition an Indian had the right to sever his tribal relations and that Standing Bear and party having done this could not be imprisoned without trial and were entitled to their liberty.

Standing Bear, Wife and Daughter.

Standing Bear and his band remained in Nebraska. A few years later the great Sioux nation, to show that the wars were all ended, ceded enough lands on the old Ponca reserva-

tion to provide farms for such of the Poncas as returned to Nebraska. There were 233 of them in the old neighborhood at the last census. The men are citizens of the state and vote at all elections the same as white men. Standing Bear, now past seventy, but strong and vigorous, owns 400 acres of beautiful valley land on the Niobrara and when the photograph which illustrates this text was taken,—July 25, 1904,—sent his warm remembrances to the only living one of the two Omaha lawyers who made the successful fight for his own liberty and the rights of his people a quarter of a century ago. There are 557 of the tribe in Oklahoma on a new reservation given them by the government in 1881 and on which they have been content to remain.

Omaha Indian Village on Papillion Creek, 1854.

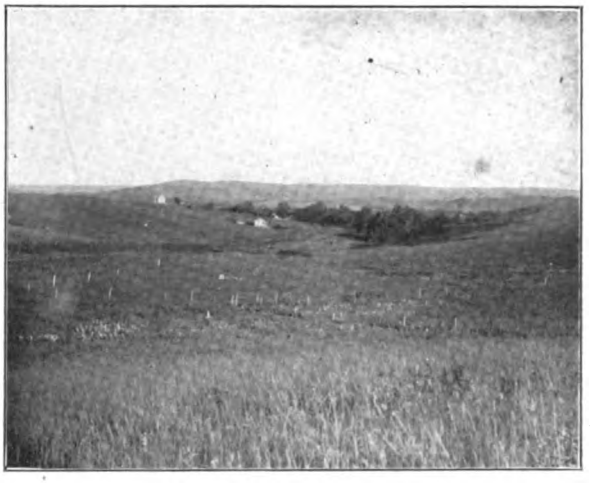
Alone of all the Indians who made Nebraska their habitat the Omaha tribe remains with us upon the old camping ground where their fathers lived when the first white men met them. Their traditions declare that along with the Otoes, the Osages, the Iowas and the Poncas they came from the east, the region of the Ohio and the Wabash, centuries ago to the junction of the Missouri and Mississippi. From this point they worked their way northwest, the Osages making their home on the river which bears their name in Missouri, the Otoes following up the Missouri to the Nemaha and Platte, while the other three journeyed by slow stages across the state of Iowa to the Great Pipestone quarry in southwestern Minnesota. Wars with the Yankton Sioux drove them across the Missouri river and they became residents of Nebraska about two hundred years ago. Since that time their village site has been moved from Blackbird Creek to Bell Creek near Fremont, from there to Salt Creek above Lincoln, from Salt Creek back to Blackbird, from there to the Elkhorn near West Point, from West Point to Shell Creek, from there to Omaha creek, from Omaha creek to the Elkhorn near Wisner, from there about the year 1832 to Omaha Creek, in 1845 to the neighborhood of Bellevue and in 1855 to the present location where they have since lived.

In the Omaha tribe have been a number

of men and women of remarkable ability whose names are treasured in the tribal lore and will be themes for future poets and novelists. Two or three only may be mentioned here. Blackbird, the most cruel and despotic of all the Omaha chiefs, died of smallpox in 1800. Stories of the fear he inspired are common. He was recognized by both French and Spanish governors at St. Louis as a great chief and original commissions issued to him as such are in the State Historical Society collections. After Blackbird, Big Elk was head chief and the accounts of the exploring expeditions in the early part of the last century have frequent tributes to his good qualities. He was succeeded by Iron Eye or Joseph LaFlesche who was the pioneer in teaching the tribe to adopt civilized customs and methods of farming. His daughter, Bright Eyes, became an author, a public speaker in behalf of her race in Europe as well as America and the wife of T. H. Tibbles, populist candidate for vice-president in

Logan Fontanelle

1904. A son, Frank, has written several books on Indian life and is in the Indian Bureau at Washington. The popular hero among the Omahas is Logan Fontanelle, son of a French trader and Omaha woman. He was the first Omaha chief who could speak English as well as Indian. In the summer of 1856 he was killed in a battle with the Sioux on Beaver Creek in Boone county. He was buried in his own door yard on a wooded point about a mile north of Bellevue. The whole Omaha nation and the white settlers as well, attended the funeral and mourned his loss.



Omaha Agency, Looking Southeast.

The Omaha tribe has always been at peace with the whites, sometimes at war with the Pawnees, Poncas and Otoes and practically always at war with the Sioux. In the early part of the century they lost half the tribe by smallpox, but suffered far less than their neighbors by the white man's liquor, which destroyed the Otoes and Pawnees. This was largely due to the action of the leading men who called a council over fifty years ago, which passed stringent laws against the use of liquor and enforced them for many years with severe punishments by the "soldier lodge," the tribal militia and police. The tribe now numbers about 1,100 people, living in comfortable homes on their beautiful reservation in Thurston county. The men are voters in the state they have good right to call their own, and the future prospect is that so long as there are Nebraskans some of them will carry Omaha blood in their veins.

The real Nebraska Sioux were chiefly the Oglala and Brule bands of the great Sioux nation. They were the advance guard, the border rangers, of the Siouan people. They scorned to make gardens or build permanent villages. Skin tents were their only houses and wild meat and wild fruit their food. They came from the east and southeast out upon the plains probably not more than two or three hundred years ago. They advanced to the west, fighting their way against the Pawnees, Mandans and Aricaras, and according to one of their own picture-calendars drove the Crows out of the Black Hills about 1775. From that time on they are in perpetual war with the Pawnees and Crows. The latter were driven into the Big Horn country and the former back upon their ancient site near the forks of the Loup. A hundred years ago the plains Sioux had taken possession of the hunting ground between the Niobrara and North Platte and their expeditions went as far south as the Republican. French traders used to come up the Missouri to Pierre and from there carry their goods on ponies or sometimes in canoes to the headwaters of White river from which point they reached the different Sioux camps scattered over that beautiful region of pine hills and broad valleys. The total Sioux strength west of the Missouri was between 10,000 and 20,000 of the best fighting stocks on the plains. They were high-spirited, but hospitable and honest in their relations with the whites. For a hundred years traders, both French and American,had been going freely among them without difficulty. Many of these men now living have told the writer that they have left thousands of dollars of goods in Sioux camps without losing a dollar's worth.

Fire Thunder and His Garden. An Early Resident of Nebraska, Sioux Nation.

The opening of the Oregon trail in 1834 and the subsequent Mormon migration and rush for the California gold mines in 1846-50 poured a vast white population through the heart of the Sioux country in Nebraska and led to the establishment of Fort Laramie. There the Sioux resorted to trade. What is known as the "Mormon ox" episode was the beginning of a long

series of bloody wars with the Sioux extending over forty years. On August 19, 1854, a report was brought to the commander at Fort Laramie that an ox which had strayed from a party of Mormon emigrants had been killed and eaten by the Sioux, several thousand of whom were camping along the North Platte. Lieutenant John L. Grattan, of the Sixth infantry, was sent with two pieces of artillery to bring in the guilty Indians for punishment. The reports are conflicting as to just how the trouble commenced, but two cannon shots were heard and the lieutenant and his entire command were killed in ten minutes time. American Horse, who was a boy of fourteen at the time, and saw the fight, says the officer trained his cannon on the teepee of Chief Conquering Bear, the head of the Sioux nation, and ordered him to produce the bad Indians or he would open fire. The cannon were fired and Conquering Bear was killed, but the soldiers were almost instantly shot to death with arrows. The Indians having a taste of blood and wild at the death of their great chief, plundered Bordeau's trading post near the scene of battle and killed a mail carrier on the route in November.

Roast Dog Dinner, Pine Ridge. Photo by Sheldon, July 4, 1903

On September 3, 1855, these affairs were signally avenged by General Harney at Ash Hollow, in what is now Deuel county. He surprised a camp of Brule Sioux under Little

American Horse, Family and Home. Photo by Sheldon August 1, 1903.

Thunder, killing eighty-six and capturing seventy women and children. From this date until their transfer from Nebraska soil in the summer of 1878 the attitude of the great body of Nebraska Sioux is, at heart, one of hostility to the white men. August 3, 1871, Old Red Cloud Agency was established on the north side of the Platte, a short distance from the town of Mitchell, Scotts Bluff county, and thirty-two miles from Fort Laramie. August 1, 1873 the agency was removed to the beautiful valley of the upper White river at Fort Robinson. Two great leaders of the Nebraska Sioux had arisen during the wars and negotiations since the Mormon ox was eaten, Red Cloud and Spotted Tail. In their honor two separate agencies about forty miles apart are named. These become the last Nebraska home of the Sioux who so long have hunted and fought upon her soil. Here, in Scenic Nebraska,

flanked on the north by the wild fastnesses of the Bad Lands and on the south by the picturesque beauty of the Pine Ridge, were enacted some of the most notable scenes in the last act of the great Sioux drama in our state. During the next five years this White river valley was the camping ground of the bulk of the Sioux nation. From these camps the adventurous young men slipped away to join the hostile Sioux during the Sioux war of 1876 and 1877. Here on September 26, 1876, the council was held which made the purchase of the Black Hills. Hither in April, 1877, came Crazy Horse with the ragged remnants of the hostile Sioux who had been on the war path for two years, except the few who escaped north under Sitting Bull. Here on September 5, 1877, Crazy Horse himself, the Napoleon of the latter years of Sioux warfare, was run through by the bayonet of a United States soldier. From this valley October 26, 1877, set out the most remarkable pageant in the history of the Sioux nation, the last, spectacular, farewell to their long cherished Nebraska. In two great moving columns, separated by about twenty miles of space, the followers of Red Cloud and Spotted Tail moved away to make their permanent home on their present reservation in Dakota. The column of Spotted Tail included 4,600 Indians, two companies of United States cavalry, 120 transportation wagons and 2,000 head of beef cattle for subsistence. The Red Cloud column was larger. Marking their course with pillars of dust by day and a thousand watch fires by night, they marched away toward the Missouri river, leaving a thousand memories of the days of border warfare to be read by future generations of white men as an imperishable part of the early history of Nebraska.

Red Cloud and Squaw. Photo by Geo. L. Gerlach, June 13, 1900

The third distinct Indian people of Nebraska were the Cheyennes and Arapahoes, whose hunting grounds were the headwaters of the Platte and Republican, partly in Nebraska and partly in Colorado and Wyoming. Their language is utterly unlike the Pawnee or any of the Siouan dialects,---Brule, Oglala, Ponca, Omaha, Otoe or Missouri. It is Algonquin, the same language the Pilgrims heard from the tribes about Plymouth Rock and into which the Apostle Eliot translated the first Indian bible two hundred and forty years ago. One of the most remarkable proofs of Indian migrations is the presence of this little nation,---not more than 3,000 people,---surrounded on all sides by tribes different in blood and speech,---here at the base of the

Rocky mountains with unmistakable evidence of their relationship to King Philip and Samoset. Their own traditions relate that they came from the northeast a long distance. Their part in the story of Nebraska is mainly that of the Oglala Sioux, whose allies they were. The Northern Cheyennes have marked tribal differences from the Sioux,---even those with whom they were associated. They are lighter colored in complexion and very much more restless and active. They were among the bravest and hardest fighters of all the plains tribes and have given more trouble in management at agencies than any other tribe. Part of the tribe is now in Oklahoma and part at Tongue River in Montana.

Besides the Indians mentioned who were found in Nebraska by the first white men there have been brought in and settled here by the United States government the following: The Winnebagoes, 1,100 in number, located in 1864 in the northern part of the Omaha reservation. The Santee Sioux---1,047 in number, located in 1866 in what is now Knox county. The Sac and Fox and Ioways whose reservation is mostly in Kansas, but includes a narrow strip in Richardson county near the Missouri river.

A Typical Winnebago Indian Village Near Winnebago Lake, Nebraska.

THE FIRST WHITE MEN

CHAPTER IV

Benjamin Gilmore, Blacksmith and Interpreter
Otoe Indians, 1832, 1847.

It was on the 29th of May, 1739, that a party of eight Frenchmen,---Pierre and Paul Mallet, (brothers), Phillippe Robitaille, Louis Morin, Michel Beslot, Joseph Bellecourt, Manuel Galien and Jean David---set out from the village of the Panimaha or Skidi band of Pawnee in northeast Nebraska and became the first explorers of this territory to leave undisputed record of their work. On the second of June they reached and named the river Platte. They followed this to the forks and from there went up the North Platte three days. Finding it leading them in the opposite direction that they wished to go they crossed the neck of land to the South Platte. They continued a southwesterly course, losing seven horses and nearly all their goods in crossing the Arkansas. After many hardships they reached Santa Fe on the 22nd of July where they were cared for by the Spaniards and returned to New Orleans the next year via the Arkansas river.

The object of the Mallet brothers' expedition was to open trade between the French settlements in the Mississippi valley and the Spanish settlements in the Rio Grande valley. These Spanish settlements and their relation to Nebraska form one of the earliest and most captivating chapters in our history,---one antedating the French, but less definite. Just two hundreds years before the Mallet brothers started up the Platte valley in February, 1540, Francis Vasquez Coronado left the city of Compostella on the Pacific coast of southwestern Mexico to discover and conquer the Seven Cities of Cibola, marvellous stories of whose population and wealth had reached Mexico. The expedition followed the coast of the Gulf of California almost to its head, then turned

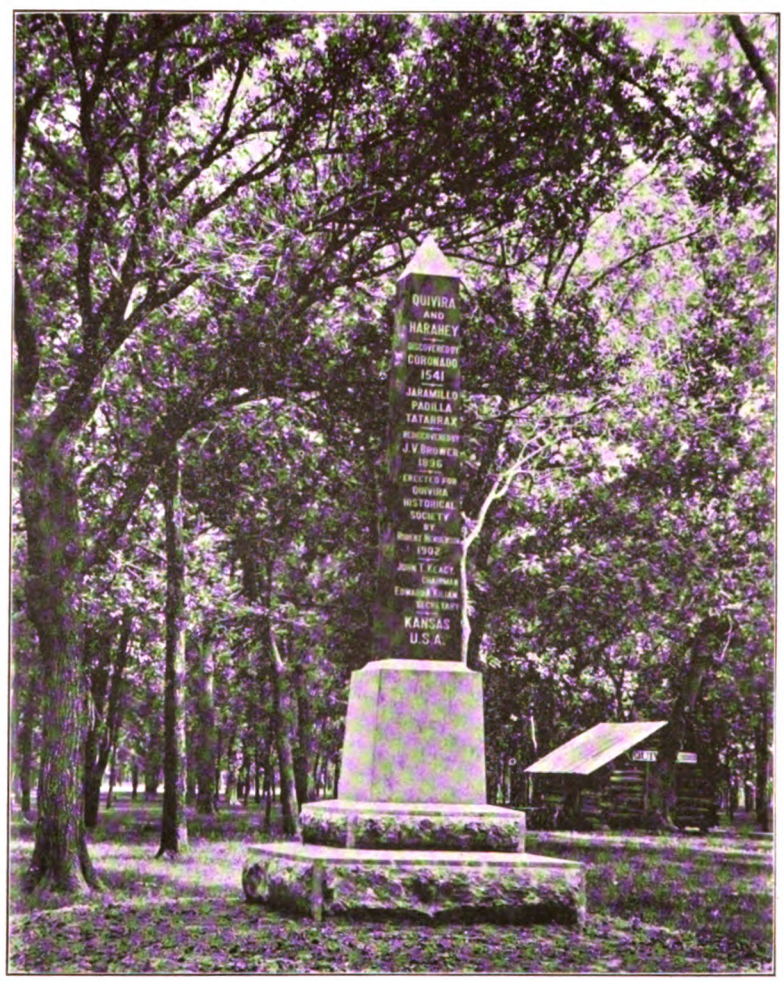
northeast, crossed the region now known as Arizona and found in the pueblo towns of the Zuni and Moqui Indians the Seven Cities, but instead of cities of gold and splendor the sunbaked homes of poor people. Greatly disappointed here, Coronado heard eagerly reports of larger and more numerous settlements further east and crossed the desert and mountains into the Rio Grande valley where he found eighty towns of Pueblo Indians irrigating their gardens with the waters of the Rio Grande and dwelling in peace and plenty. Coronado's army spent the winter of 1540-41 in the Rio Grande valley. Their relations with the Indians, at first friendly, became embittered by Spanish greed and arrogance and broke out into revolt. It was a short story. The Spanish veterans stormed the mud walled pueblos, massacred their defenders, reduced the whole valley to servitude and laid the foundation for the Spanish-Indian population and government which has ever since held the valley of the Rio Grande. It is at this time, in the midst of the greatest suffering of the pueblo Indians there appears for the first time the story of Quivira, a rich Indian country far to the northeast where the great King Tatarrax ruled sitting under a tree hung with golden bells which played whenever the wind blew. There was a great river seven miles wide on which floated canoes with forty oarsmen. The common tools and vessels were made of silver and gold and King Tatarrax himself worshipped a "cross of gold"—which certainly sounds familiar to Nebraskans of the present day. This story was told the Spaniards by an Indian from the plains who was held as a slave by those pueblo Indians who lived on the Pecos river in what is now eastern New Mexico. The Indian was called "The Turk" by the Spaniards—because he looked like one as their writers say,—and this leads to the surmise that he was a Pawnee and it was the peculiar Pawnee fashion of wearing the hair which reminded the Coronado soldiers of a Turk. After much questioning of

The Pawnee Indian

the Turk, on April 23, 1541, Coronado left the Rio Grande with his whole force of three hundred Spaniards and about seven hundred Indians to seek Quivira. This army traveled thirty-five days from the Pecos river out upon the high plains. Coronado then sent the main army back to the Rio Grande and with thirty picked horsemen and the Turk rode north forty-two days more when he came to the land of Quivira. Instead of palaces with gold and silver he found naked Indians living in straw houses and eating raw buffalo flesh which they cut with knives of flint. There were twenty-five villages of these straw houses in the valley of a very large river. The land was rich and black. There grew wild plums, grapes, walnuts, sumach, mulberries and a kind of wild flax having blue flowers. Coronado says in his report to the King of Spain "the province of Quivira, where I reached it, is in the fortieth degree of latitude." Beyond Quivira was another Indian nation called Harahey. A delegation of these Indians two hundred strong came

to visit Coronado. They were dressed in breech clouts, carried bows and "wore things upon their heads,"—a description again which points toward the Pawnees. After a stay of twenty-five days in Quivira the Spaniards returned to the Rio Grande, having strangled the Turk, who confessed before his death that he had lied to them about Quivira at the instance of his masters, the pueblo Indians of the Pecos river, in order to lead the army out of their country and into the desolate plains where it might be destroyed.

Was Quivira in Nebraska,—and Coronado the first white discoverer of our state? The question has been fiercely debated by scholars and the last word is not said. In a paper read before the Nebraska state historical society April 16, 1880, Judge James W. Savage, of Omaha, presented the theory for the first time in this state that Quivira was upon the Platte river in the neighborhood of Fremont. There is not space here to give his argument, but it was very plausible, appealed strongly to state pride and was generally adopted. We have



Quivira Monument, Junction City, Kansas

had Quivira parades in Omaha wherein King Tatarrax rode in all the savage glory of an early Nebraska sovereign. In the twenty-five years since Judge Savage presented his paper a great deal of new light has been shed on the subject. The route of Coronado has been minutely studied. It has been established beyond question that the Quivira Indians were the Wichitas,—they being the only Indians in all this region who built grass houses. A great river which Coronado crossed on his way to Quivira has been very closely identified as the Arkansas. With these two points conceded it is not hard to fix the valley of the Kansas river in the vicinity of Fort Riley as the true site of Quivira. Here are the remains of a vast former Indian population,—acres of rough flint axes, knives and arrow heads, and at a distance of a few miles other remains of finer flint workmanship mixed with thousands of fragments of pottery. Explorations begun in 1896 on this site by Mr. J. V. Brower, of Minnesota, culminated in the declaration by him that he had rediscovered Quivira. In the summer of 1902 the writer was present at the unveiling of a granite monument a few miles from Fort Riley designed to commemorate the rediscovery. The last word is not yet said in the Quivira controversy, but the present weight of opinion and evidence is that Coronado was mistaken in his reckoning of latitude, did not cross the fortieth degree into Nebraska, and that Quivira was in the Kansas valley instead of the Platte. So much space is here given to the subject because the story of Coronado and Quivira has passed into current Nebraska newspaper literature with the assumption that they were proven to belong to Nebraska history.

Between the time of the Coronado expedition in 1541 and the Mallet journey in 1740 Nebraska was Fable-land or Liar's Paradise. The Spanish and French literature of that period is filled with the most fantastic tales of wonderful nations, vast cities, great treasure of gold and silver—all located in Nebraska. A number of these were accepted for many years as real narratives of journeys into this region. Some of them are still quoted in historical works. A brief reference to the more important of these romances belongs properly to a history of Nebraska. It might perhaps be called "the legendary history of Nebraska" if the legends were not known to be fabrications of the authors and not—like the fables of early Rome—popular tales handed down by word of mouth for many generations before they were written.

One of the earliest of these stories is connected with Onate who was governor of New Mexico from 1598 to 1608. In the year 1601 he led an expedition of 80 men northeast across the plains a distance of about 700 miles in search of Quivira. He fought a battle with an Indian tribe whom he calls "Escanjaques," killing 1,000 of them. Large villages were seen beyond and reports were brought him

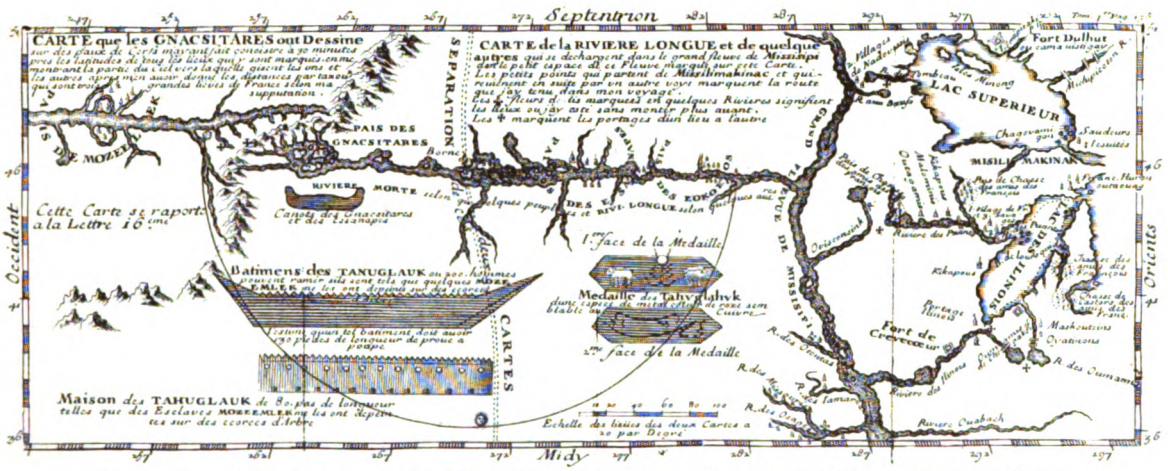
The Quivira Tomahawk

that nations living still farther had vessels of gold in common use, but he was willing to return to the Rio Grande without seeing them. The whole story as told in the old Spanish records has elements of exaggeration, yet the main fact of an expedition northeast and probably into the Kansas-Nebraska region cannot be doubted.

Don Diego Penalosa is the next of these Spanish explorers—and falsifiers—and perhaps the most noted. The story of his expedition purports to be written by Nicholas de Freytas, chaplain of the command. It relates how in the spring of 1662 Penalosa with a thousand Indians and eighty Spanish knights, six cannon and eleven hundred horses and mules marched out from Santa Fe. For three months they held their course northeast until stopped by a wide and rapid river where they met a war party of the same "Escanzaques" seen by Onate sixty years before. This war party, 3,000 strong, was on its way to fight one of the great cities of Quivira. Penalosa joined with them and they followed the great river which made a bend and now flowed from the north. After many more days marching they came to one of the cities of Quivira. It was over seven miles long and contained thousands of houses, some of them three and four stories high built out of hard wood. The Spanish commander made a truce with the Quiviras, but the Escanzaques broke the truce, captured and burned the city and killed all the inhabitants who did not escape by flight. Penalosa and his army returned to New Mexico. So much for the story. As late as 1887 Judge Savage in a communication to the Nebraska state historical society accepted its truth and identified the site of the destroyed city as the Loup valley near Columbus, Platte county. Critical study of the later years has established that Penalosa was governor of New Mexico from 1661 to 1664, that he left there because of a quarrel with Jesuit priests and went to France where in 1670 he petitioned the French king to place him at the head of a force to conquer the Span-

ish provinces west of the Mississippi. He never made an expedition to Quivera, but used the account of Onate's expedition in 1601, with embellishment, as an incentive to persuade the French court to give him an army.

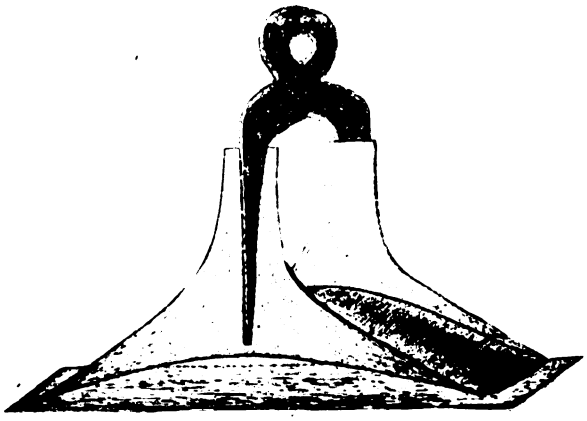
Passing over other Spanish accounts of wonderful adventures in Nebraska-land we may consider a few samples of French fancy relating to the same field. The first of these to deserve special notice is the tale of Mathieu Sagean, a Canadian by birth, told by him in



French Map of Territory including Nebraska, Printed Over Two Hundred Years Ago by LaHonton

France to the ministry of marine about the year 1700. Sagean's story was that with eleven other Frenchmen and two Indians he crossed the divide west of the upper Mississippi, 120 miles, to a great river flowing southwest. He floated down this river several hundred miles in canoes until he came to the nation of the Acaanibas, living in many cities and strong forts. Their houses were built of wood and of bark. Their king was called Hagaazen and claimed descent from the Montezumas. His palace was 54 feet high with walls and floors covered with plates of gold. There were two wonderful giant idols, a male and a female, in front of the palace and every morning the king with his people made adoration before them. This Indian nation carried on commerce with countries so distant that it required six months for a caravan to pass from one to the other. Sagean saw one of these caravans, having 3,000 head of cattle all loaded with gold, depart. There was an army of 100,000 men ready always for war. The women were white and beautiful with most remarkably large ears in which were hung great rings of gold and the society belles had extremely long finger nails. All of this and much more of the same kind so much stirred the French ministry that it forthwith sent letters to its agents in America demanding further information of this great unknown country.

All these splendid Nebraska liars were eclipsed by Baron La Hontan, a Frenchman, who shall be the last one here noticed. In the year 1703 he published in French at The Hague two volumes of his travels in what is now Nebraska and Dakota. The original volumes are before me as I write, with numerous illustrations of the people who lived here and a map showing the entire country between the Mississippi and the mountains. He found three



Ancient Spanish Stirrup, Found in Franklin County Under Four Feet of Soil in 1872. Property of Hugh Lamaster, Tecumseh

great nations, living in this region—the Gnasticares, the Mozamleek and the Tamuglauk. Some of them wore beards a foot long. There were ships with 200 oarsmen, houses built of stone, forts and palaces. When an Indian was about to die friends gathered around to catch his spirit as it left the body,—from which La Hontan concluded they were Pythagoreans and believed in the transmigration of souls. The extraordinary industry and ingenuity of La Hontan is shown by a long vocabulary of Indian words with their French equivalents. Many of the customs, animals and plants are given by him correctly, but as a whole his work is a mass of fabrication rivalling Gulliver's Travels.

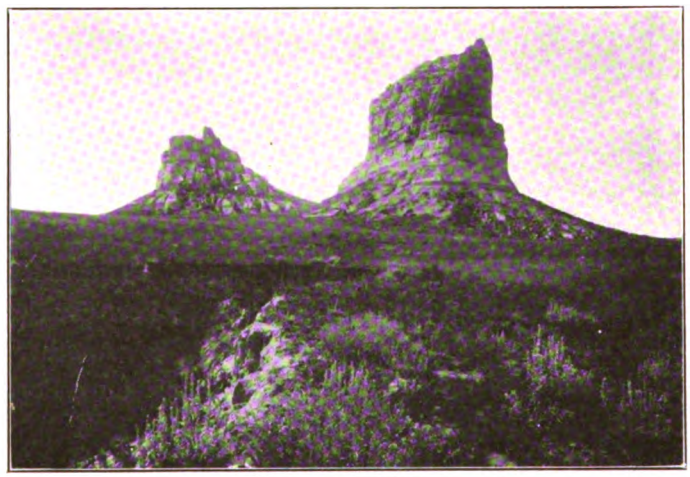
The period of the real explorer of Nebraska was at hand when La Hontan printed his book. As early as 1700 the French archives begin to contain reports of Canadian voyageurs who had gone into the Missouri country. On Nov. 16, 1705, two canoes of voyageurs came to the Illinois settlements. In one of them was a Frenchman named Laurain who had been in the Missouri river valley and brought vague news of the Indians who dwelt there and of the Spanish provinces beyond. In 1708 Nicolas de La Salle, brother of the great discoverer, met French trappers who had been up the Missouri seven or eight hundred miles. They said it was the most beautiful country in the world, with herds of wild cattle beyond power of the imagination to conceive, with mines of copper and iron and other metals. Again in 1717 numerous trappers coming down the Missouri declared that the climate was the best in all the French colonies, that the country was rich and that trees of all kinds grew, wild cattle, deer and goats were abundant and there was great plenty of salt although it was so far from the sea. This hints strongly of central Kansas or eastern Nebraska. In 1719 an expedition under command of Du Tisne came up the Missouri, camped at the Osage village and from there went westward until he reached the Pawnees. The next year French voyageurs brought the news that an army of two hundred Spanish cavalry, accompanied by a large force of Comanches, invaded the Pawnee country but were surprised by a large war party of Otoes and Pawnees and entirely defeated. This story of war between Nebraska Indians and the Spanish is repeated so many times by the Frenchmen who came down the Missouri that it seems as though it must have adequate foundation. The same travelers, however, repeat over and over the story of valuable mines along the Missouri from which the Spaniards carry mule loads of different metals. Finally in 1724 M. Bourgmont establishes a French fort in what is now the state of Missouri about ninety miles below Kansas City. His reports are full of interest and show that he knew correctly the location of the Otoes, the Pawnees, the Omahas and the Aricaras; he describes the

Platte river under the name of the river of the Pawnees and even the Elkhorn river (or Horned Deer river) as flowing into the Platte and having eight villages of Pawnees on its banks. It does not appear that Bourgmont was ever in Nebraska, but certainly some Frenchmen about him were in order to obtain such accurate information. We get a glimpse even so long ago as this of Frenchmen living with Indian women in this region and half-breed children being born. And we get more than a glimpse of gold and silver mines. From the region of the Aricaras and Omahas come story after story of what the Indians named "white-iron"—the name that silver bears today among the Sioux,—and (what is not so impossible) the Aricaras tell the story of streams of their land flowing from mountains where there is yellow sand which can be hammered flat with a stone hammer. Can it be this is the first unheeded hint of the Black Hills? The next French explorers after Bourgmont are the Mallet Brothers, to whom I have already assigned the honor of the first unquestioned white travelers in Nebraska.

From the time of the Mallet expedition the outlines and general character of Nebraska and its habitants grows clear, even though the yearly record is obscure. We know that the stream of hardy French frontiersmen continued to penetrate the tributaries of the Missouri and mingle its blood with that of the native tribes. In 1740-42 French explorers from the Minnesota lakes reached the upper Missouri near Bismark and discovered the Rocky mountains. In 1764 St. Louis was founded and soon becomes the center of the fur trade from up the Missouri. It is so much easier to float down the river with packs of furs than to carry them across the portages to the chain of great lakes and then down the St. Lawrence to Montreal. Swarms of young Frenchmen from the province of Quebec came to St. Louis and thence to the Missouri river trade. Trading posts were soon established to gather the furs and hold them for shipment to St. Louis. The oldest one we know in Nebraska was Fort Charles in Dakota county, founded in 1795. Another one was Cruzatte's Post, two miles above Fort Calhoun and dates from 1802.

AMERICAN EXPLORATION

CHAPTER V



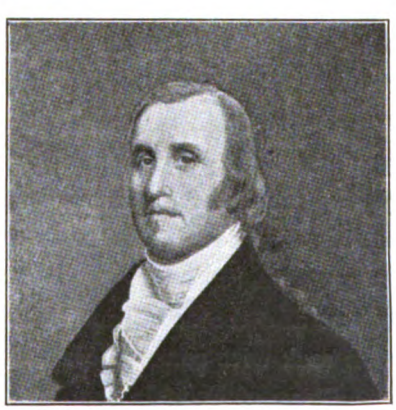
Court House and Jail

The story of the negotiations of Napoleon and Thomas Jefferson which ended in Nebraska's becoming part of the United States need not be told here. Enough to say that when the French flag came down at New Orleans on December 20, 1803, the prairies and valleys of Nebraska had changed sovereignty at a price of less than five cents per acre, with the inhabitants thrown in. There were about 40,000 of these inhabitants, half of them, like the Pawnees and Omahas, living in settled villages with the crude beginnings of agriculture, the other half, like the Sioux and Cheyennes, in a nomad state. For a hundred years the French influence had been dominant in Nebraska. It is true that from 1762 until 1802 the province was nominally a possession of Spain. There were Spanish governors at New Orleans and at St. Louis, but the people, the language, the civilization, remained French. The earliest documents written on Nebraska soil were in the French language. There is an interesting

William Clark

affinity between the sounds of the Gallic tongue and those of the aboriginal Nebraskans. The nasal "n" which the English has not is prominent in both of them. The half-breed and even the Indian population here had made progress in learning how to "parley voo" and I have myself heard at this day French words and phrases with a correct pronunciation from the lips of full-blood Indians in their Nebraska homes. An interesting proof of the French influence is found in the commissions and letters sent by the American governors at St. Louis to Nebraska chiefs. For a number of years these were written in parallel columns,—English on one side, French on the other. And even as late as 1854 the log books of the steamboats running to Nebraska towns are written in the language of Victor Hugo and Maupassant.

It was a part of the far-reaching plans of Thomas Jefferson to explore and Americanize as quickly as possible this western empire. In pursuance of this plan he commissioned his own private secretary, Meriwether Lewis, and William Clark, a brother of General George Rogers Clark, whose daring conquest of Illinois during the revolutionary war forms the leading theme of President Roosevelt's "Winning of the West" to command an expedition. This expedition, forty-five men in all with three boats and two horses, started May 14, 1804 on its voyage up the Missouri and reached the mouth of the Big Nemaha in Nebraska on July 11. On the 12th Captain Clark went up the Nemaha two miles in a boat and landing not far from where now stands the town of Rulo found a number of Indian mounds and was delighted with the fruits, flowers and grass there growing. On July 15th the party reached the Little Nemaha which was forty yards wide. There were then no trees growing in the Nemaha country except near the water. The plan was to have the best hunters go ahead on shore with the two horses and kill meat for the party. On the 18th the record says the hunters on the Nebraska side brought in two deer. On the 20th the party camped in Nebraska a little above the mouth of the Weeping Water and the next day reached the "mouth of the great river Platte, three-quarters of a mile wide." Sunday, July 22, the camp was pitched nine miles above the Platte and here on the 23rd the Stars and



Meriwether Lewis

Site of Lewis and Clarke Council

Stripes was raised for the first time in Nebraska and two men sent with another flag up the Platte to the villages of the Otoes and Pawnees. At nine o'clock on July 30th the expedition came to some timber land at the foot of a high bluff and made camp. Here was killed the first elk and the first badger, and here, on August 3, 1804, was held the first council between representatives of the United States and the Indians of Nebraska. This council is the great historic event in early Nebraska annals. Fourteen Indians, members of the Otoe and Missouri tribes, were present on one side and the whole white force on the other. The meeting was held under an awning made from the sail of the largest boat. Presents were exchanged. Peace and protection were promised and the Indians acknowledged the authority of the United States. The spot was called by Captain Lewis Council Bluff. The events of this day were celebrated August 3, 1904, by a pageant reproducing the council of a century ago and the dedication of a boulder of Nebraska rock with commemorative inscription. The village of Fort Calhoun now stands on the summit of Council Bluff and the council of 1804 was held within a few hundred yards of the railway station there.

On August 11 the expedition reached the tomb of the great Omaha chief Blackbird, on a high hill of soft yellow sandstone about three hundred feet above the river. Upon the top of this hill a mound thirty-six feet around the base and six feet high enclosed the body of the dead chief. The site is not far from the present village of Decatur. On August 16th the party went fishing in Omaha creek and caught over eleven hundred fish of all kinds. August 24th Ionia mountain or the "Nebraska volcano" in Dixon county was reached and the comment made that it seemed to have been on fire lately as the ground was so hot that they could not keep their hands in it. August 31 at a point in Nebraska called Calumet Bluff, the first council was held with the Sioux. A large party of the Yankton band crossed the river from their homes in South Dakota and after the usual ceremonies received presents and pledged their allegiance to the United States. September 4th the expedition arrived at the mouth of the Niobrara and camped just above its confluence with the Missouri on

Lewis and Clarke Point

some low ground with a heavy timber consisting of oak, elm, honey locust, coffee nut and red cedar. This low ground was long ago cut away by the Missouri current. There is now a bold rock promotory jutting into the river which the writer has named "Lewis and Clark Point." September 5th the expedition passed the mouth of the Ponca river and so beyond the present limits of our state. It had spent two months navigating the eastern shore of the state, held two important councils with the Indian tribes, made a record of the soil, the general character of the plant and animal life, and the conditions of navigation. It was the opening of the west to Anglo-Saxon energy and enterprise and led to the early location of numerous trading posts in Nebraska.

The second American exploring party to reach Nebraska was that of Lieutenant Pike who left St. Louis on July 15, 1806, with a force of twenty-three men, arrived in the Republican valley and held a grand council with the chiefs of the Republican Pawnees on September 29, of the same year. A force of 400 Spanish cavalry had visited the Pawnee village just a few days before, left many presents and a large Spanish flag floating at the door of the principal chief's lodge. Pike ordered the flag taken down and the American flag run up in its stead. The Pawnees at first refused, but when Pike took a determined attitude with his little detachment they obeyed. In the summer of 1901 the state of Kansas erected a monument to mark this event, about eight miles south of Hardy, Nebraska, on a hill overlooking the Republican valley. It is an open question whether Pike's action was not taken in this state. The official correspondence indicates clearly that he was north of the state line. This was the last Spanish military expe-

dition into the Nebraska country and was made for the purpose of conciliating the Indians to secure their trade at Santa Fe and to hold their allegiance to the King of Spain.

The time for the first permanent settlement in Nebraska was near at hand. The very week that Lieutenant Pike was striking the Spanish flag in the Pawnee village, Lewis and Clark arrived in St. Louis after more than two year's absence. The summit of the Rocky mountains had been crossed; the shores of the sunset ocean had been seen. The news they brought stirred the spirit of adventure and commercial enterprise. There was room for both in the new empire and at last there was a sympathetic, responsible home government to sustain both. Manuel Lisa, the leading spirit of young Nebraska appeared on the scene. Born of Spanish parents in New Orleans he had been for some years at St. Louis. In the spring of 1807 he formed a partnership with George Drouillard, a Frenchman who had made the trip to Oregon with Lewis and Clark to engage in the Missouri river Indian trade. They had a capital of $16,000. They came up the river that summer and again in 1808 establishing trading posts as far up as the Big Horn river. In 1809 the Missouri Fur Company was organized by Lisa and a number of others with a capital of $40,000. Lisa was field manager. Every year he traveled thousands of miles in the Indian country in pursuit of trade. He became the best known white man to all the Missouri river tribes. Some time about 1810 or 1812 he founded Fort Lisa, about ten miles above Omaha, just where the Nebraska bluffs jut farthest to the east presenting a promontory that was the most striking mark on the river front. The river washed the bluff in those days exposing its foundation of solid limestone. Here was the first commercial center of Nebraska. The Omaha, Otoe, Pawnee and Ioway tribes came here to trade. In 1812 the second war with Great Britain broke out.

Lewis and Clarke Memorial Boulder

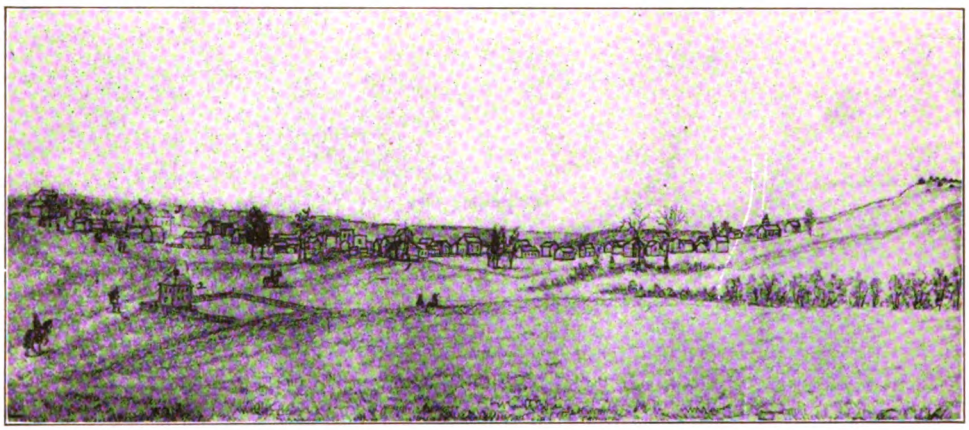
The Indians of Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota, with a few exceptions, were on the British side. The great Indian leader, Tecumseh, was sending the war belt to all the nations to join and drive the hated Americans from the land. British traders were supplementing his efforts with presents of powder, guns and liquor. The Ioways took up the tomahawk against the United States. The influence of Lisa, exerted from his trading fort on Nebraska soil, was strong enough to hold all the Missouri river Indians firmly in alliance with the American people. The Nebraska Indians not only kept peace with the United States but sent war parties against the Ioways. At this time the Missouri River Indians were four times as numerous as those of the upper Mississippi. If they had joined the great Tecumseh alliance against the United States and swept down under British commanders upon St. Louis and the scattered settlements in the Mississippi valley the story of the war of 1812 might have made far worse reading to American eyes than it now does. The records of the United States at Washington recognize Lisa's great service to the government at this trying time and we have the statement over his own signature that when the war ended in 1815 he had an agreement with forty-three chiefs in this region to start an expedition of several thousand warriors against the British Indians on the Mississippi. As it was he took them all down the river with him to St. Louis the spring of that year.

Site of Old Fort Lisa

Lisa not only made Nebraska the seat of western diplomacy and war, but introduced improved agriculture. In a letter written at St. Louis July 1st, 1817, he resigned his government position of sub-agent for Indian tribes above the Kansas river with a salary of $548 per annum, saying among other things: "I carried among them (the Indians) the seed of the large pompion (pumpkin) from which I have seen in their possession the fruit weigh-

ing 160 pounds. Also the large bean, the potato, the turnip, and these vegetables now make a comfortable part of their subsistence, and this year I have promised to carry them the plow."

With a white wife in St. Louis, Lisa married a young Omaha woman and had by her two children. His white wife died and a year or two later he married another white woman and brought her to Fort Lisa to spend the honeymoon. She was, beyond doubt, the first white woman in Nebraska. He gave rich presents to his Omaha wife to avoid trouble and left each of his half-breed children two thousand dollars to give them an education. He died at St. Louis in 1820. The site of Fort Lisa was visited by the writer in August, 1904, and the picture is from a photograph taken there.



Bellevue, Nebraska in 1865

Besides Lisa among the early builders of trading posts in Nebraska were Robert McLellan and Ramsey Crooks who had an establishment near the mouth of Papillion creek in 1810. Bellevue, only a short distance from this early trading post, is conceded to be the oldest town in Nebraska, but the exact date of its foundation is yet to be determined. The year has been variously given from 1805 to 1811. The first unquestioned original reports we have of Bellevue date from 1821 when the Missouri Fur company had a post there in charge of Joshua Pilcher. From that time, at least, until the present day there has always been a white settlement there.

In the spring of 1811 came to Nebraska shores the expedition of Wilson P. Hunt with seventy men on their way to Astoria, Oregon. Along with the expedition came John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall, two English scientists. Their coming marks an epoch in the history of our state—the time when its plants and animals were first named and compared with those of other parts of the world. The Hunt expedition reached Oregon after severe hardships. The next year four men,—Robert Steuart, Ramsey Crooks, Joseph Miller and Robert McLellan,—started on the return trip from Oregon to St. Louis. After long wanderings in the mountains they reached the North Platte river late in December, 1812, followed it down past its wild canon into the present Nebraska and went into winter

Site of Old Fort Atkinson

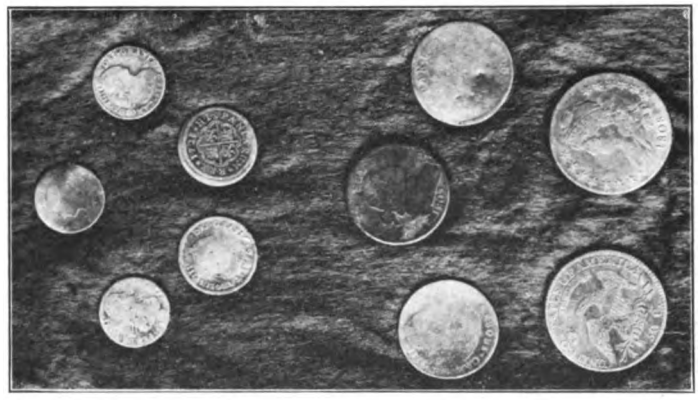
quarters in a bend of the river a few miles above Scott's Bluff. They were the first known white explorers of northwestern Nebraska. March 8, 1813, they broke camp and followed the Platte to the Otoe village near Ashland where they traded an old horse they had brought across the mountains for a canoe and went down the Missouri. Their story is told in Washington Irving's Astoria and is filled with startling adventures.

The founding of Bellevue and its contemporary stations mark the first period in Nebraska's permanent settlement—the fur-trading period. The second period—the military and steam engine period—begins in 1819. The fur traders continue, but are no longer the controlling force.The army and a little later the United States Indian agent come in as the ruling powers. The first steamboat to navigate Nebraska waters—the Western Engineer—arrived at Fort Lisa September 19, 1819. She was a steamer built at Pittsburg Pennsylvania, expressly for the use of the United States government, was a stern wheeler, seventy-five feet long, thirteen feet beam and drew 19 inches of water. The boat carried Major Stephen H. Long with a party of engineers, scientists and soldiers designed to explore the region between the Missouri and the Rocky mountains. The expedition built log houses under the shelter of the bluff about half a mile above Fort Lisa and made winter quarters there. During the winter councils were held with the Otoe, Omaha, Pawnee and Sioux Indians who came there. June 6, 1820, the party, numbering twenty-three men, left the Missouri and proceeded up the north bank of the Platte, halting at the Grand Pawnee village on the Loup. The Wood river valley was followed for some miles. June 22 they reached the forks of the Platte, crossed the North Platte and on the 23d the South Platte, which they ascended to the mountains. The party returned by way of the Arkansas. This expedition discovered and named some hundreds of plants, animals and fossils. The name of Thomas Say, botanist and zoologist, is forever linked in scientific history with these discoveries, many of which he had the honor of naming. The judgment of the expedition upon the value of the country is summed up in one sentence which asserts that the "plains on either side of the Platte river have an elevation of fifty to one hundred feet and present the aspect of hopeless and irreclaimable sterility."

Ten days after the arrival of the Western Engineer at Fort Lisa with Major Long's party came Colonel Henry Atkinson with the Sixth regiment United States infantry in keel boats. This force was ordered to Council

Bluff, the site of the first Lewis and Clark Indian council,—five miles above Fort Lisa where it at once began work on the first United States military post in our state. For several years this post appears in the report of the secretary of war as Council Bluff,—later as Fort Atkinson in honor of its first commander and finally when Nebraska is organized as a territory the town located on the site is known as Fort Calhoun. From 1819 to 1827 this is the center of Nebraska life and activity. Lisa, the early ruler of the region, is dead and his post is moved to Bellevue. At Council Bluff is an army of 600 to 1,000 soldiers, besides a host of traders and hangers-on. Hither came the distant tribes of the plains to get a glimpse of the military strength of the great father. Caravans were made up here which went as far as Santa Fe. Here came in 1824 an expedition of 26 Spaniards from the Rio Grande and Arkansas to make peace with the Pawnees who raided that far away. Through Major O'Fallon's influence the peace was made. Steamers going up the Missouri made this one of their principal stopping places. Here farming was first carried on in Nebraska by white men. Colonel Leavenworth in command of the post wrote John C. Calhoun, secretary of war, on August 30, 1823: "Our spring wheat has done well and all our crops are very good." In another letter he says they have raised enough crop to feed an extra regiment which it was proposed to send there. Here, also, was the first civilized cemetery. Over one hundred soldiers died the first year of scurvy and beyond doubt many others in the years which followed. Here was military and naval headquarters during the hostilities known in our early annals as "the Arickaree War of 1823." This war was brought on by an attack of the Arickaree Indians, who then lived in two large villages in South Dakota where the Grand river meets the Missouri, upon General Ashley's company of boatmen and trappers bound for the upper Missouri. Fourteen trappers were killed and nine wounded. The fight took place June 2. The news reached Council Bluff June 18th and June 22nd six companies of the Sixth infantry with two six-pounder cannon left the fort under command of Colonel Leavenworth and started up the river by steamboat. Joshua Pilcher, who had taken the place of Manuel Lisa in management of the Missouri Fur company, got together forty white frontiersmen, took another cannon from the fort at Council Bluff, collected about five hundred Sioux allies and came on in two other boats. Other parties of trappers and Indians joined and the whole army numbering eleven hundred men with four cannon appeared in front of the Arickaree villages August 8. The Arickarees were calculated to have about eight hundred warriors and had surrounded their villages with a wall of wood and dirt. After two days of skirmishing in which the Arickarees lost twenty or thirty killed and the whites but two wounded while the Sioux had two killed and seven wounded the Arickarees escaped at night and their villages were burned. The expedition returned to Council Bluff with a very bitter feeling between Colonel Leavenworth and Pilcher over the conduct of the campaign. It is thirty years after this before another Indian war affects Nebraska.

Fort Atkinson or Council Bluff was abandoned as a military post in 1827, the troops going to Fort Leavenworth which thenceforth becomes headquarters for the Santa Fe trade and the plains Indians. Although three-quart-

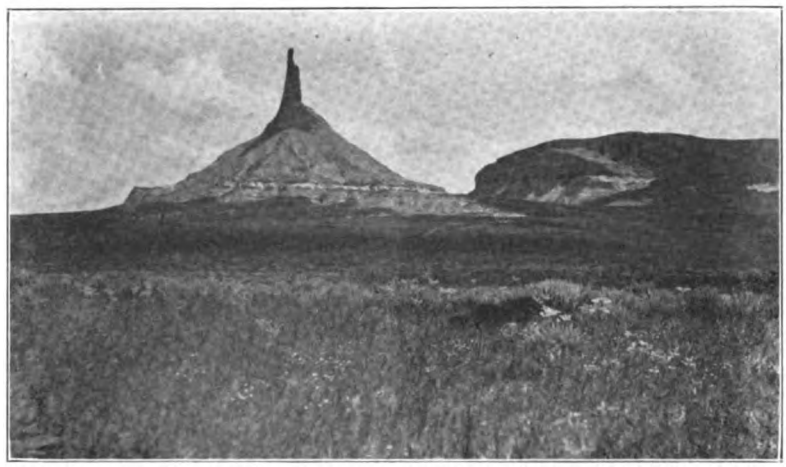


Coins Found on the Site of Old Fort Atkinson

ers of a century has passed the evidence of human activity at this first Nebraska fort are still abundant. Great piles of brick and stone still cover the soil and every year the farmer's plow and gardener's rake bring to light evidence of those pioneer days. Probably near a hundred gold, silver and copper coins have been found there and thousands of military buttons and tools. Marked as the site of the first Indian council and first United States fort in Nebraska it will become in the centuries to be the great early historic spot within our borders.

With the departure of the military in 1827 the Indian, Indian trader and Indian agent were left the masters of Nebraska. But a new epoch was at hand—that of the overland wagon trail, the missionary, the school. The early expeditions across our soil,—military, scientific, commercial,—were made on horseback or on foot. There has been dispute who was the first pioneer to make a wagon trail across the state. The honor seems to belong to William L. Sublette who left St. Louis April 10, 1830, with eighty-one men on mules, ten wagons loaded with goods and drawn by five mules each, two dearborns with one mule each, twelve head of cattle and one milch cow. The route was, in the main, the one later known as the Oregon Trail,—up the Big Blue, the Little Blue, the Big Sandy, across the divide to the Platte and up the North Platte. Sublette's party arrived in the Wind river country July 16th and returned to St. Louis the same fall bringing back their ten wagons loaded with furs and the milch cow. A picture of that cow herself which made the trip from the Missouri to the Wind river mountains and back would be worthy a place in a gallery of Nebraska pioneers.

After the Sublette wagon trail came that of Captain Benjamin Bonneville. Bonneville left the Missouri river near Independence, Missouri, on May Day, 1832, with an outfit of 110 men and forty wagons, bound for Pierre's Hole in the Wind river country. His route was up the Kansas river, across the divide to the Big Blue, up the Little Blue and Big Sandy and across the divide to the Platte which he struck about twenty-five miles below the head of Grand Island,—thence crossing the Platte near the forks up the North Platte, past Chimney Rock and Scotts Bluff to the Laramie fork where he arrived June 26. Washington Irving has told his story, more in the form of a romance than of history, in his "Adventures



Chimney Rock

of Captain Bonneville," and claimed for him the honor of first blazing the wagon track which soon after became the Oregon Overland Trail. After Bonneville came Nathaniel J. Wyeth, who followed Bonneville with a train of pack horses in the summer of 1832, crossed the mountains to Oregon and arrived at the mouth of the Columbia in October. In 1833 he returned to Massachusetts, but April 28, 1834, found him starting again from the Missouri river with a company of seventy men and two hundred and fifty horses on their way to Oregon. In the party were two scientists. Thomas Nuttall (whom we have met before) and J. K. Townsend. There are also five missionaries, among them Jason and Henry Lee. This party entered Nebraska May 12 in what is now Pawnee county and passed out of the present state June 1 when it reached Laramie fork, where it found a party of trappers building the first stockade which was afterward to become so noted as Fort Laramie. This expedition begins the real Oregon emigrant movement across the plains and continued in the general course taken two years' before,— up the Blues and Big Sandy, across the divide to the Platte and up the North Platte to South Pass.

On November 18, 1833, Rev. Moses P. Merrill and wife, the first missionaries to Nebraska arrived at Bellevue. They found there John Daugherty, United States Indian agent, his brother Hannibal, sub-agent, Gilmore and La-Flesche, government blacksmiths, Lucien Fontenelle, a French trader, Charlo the interpreter, and half a dozen other white families or rather families with a white father and Indian mother. Joshua Pilcher was in charge of Cabanne's old trading post about a mile below the site of Fort Lisa and Roubidoux had a trading station up the Platte about twenty miles, near the principal Otoe village. An old log house whose floor was piled with dirt the rats had brought in was the missionary home. It was cleaned and here, on November 25, 1833, the first Nebraska school began with Mrs. Merrill as teacher. The scholars were half breed and Indian children. A Sabbath school conducted by Mr. Merrill was begun the same week. One of the features of both schools was singing and in a few weeks the melody of religious hymns from the lips of

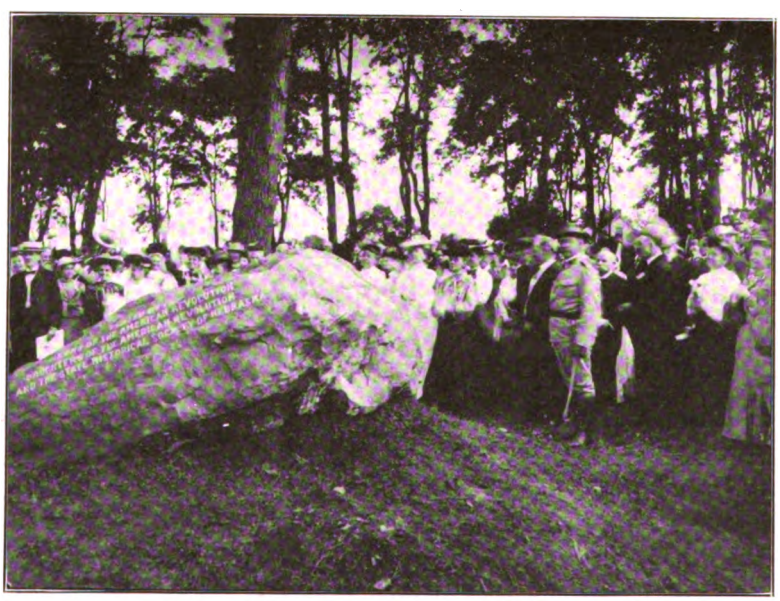
Oldest Mission Church

Indian children rejoiced the heart of the missionaries. The first convert, a boy of twelve years, was baptized by Mr. Merrill April 20, 1834. For the first eighteen months Mr. Merrill applied himself to the task of learning the Otoe language that he might preach to the people in their own tongue. On April 1, 1835, a contract between Moses Merrill and John Daugherty provided that the missionary was to teach the Otoe and Missouri children of both sexes and receive therefor the sum of $500 per year from the government. The same year the Baptist missionary society, which had sent out Mr. Merrill, made an appropriation of $1,000 to erect mission buildings at the Otoe Agency about six miles above the mouth of the Platte where the main Otoe village had been moved. In 1834 appeared the first Nebraska book, a little pamphlet of fourteen pages containing familiar hymns translated into the Otoe language by Mr. Merrill. It was printed at the Shawanoe (Baptist) Indian Mission at Shawanoe, Missouri. For the next five years the life of Mr. Merrill was crowded with the labors of both teacher and missionary. His diary (a copy of which is among the archives of the state historical society) is filled with incidents of frontier life, but most of all with the missionary's struggles against the indifference of the Indians and the terrible effects of trader's whisky in the tribe. The Otoes would exchange the furs of a whole year's chase for a few tin cups of poor whisky adulterated with water. Over and over on nearly every page is the record of more whisky brought into camp with the acompaniment of drunken stabbings and shootings. At one time the missionary when on a visit at Roubidoux's trading post writes: "This is not the house of God nor the gate of heaven. It is rather the house of Satan and the gate of Hell. Eight Otoes arrived who had come sixty miles to exchange their furs for whisky." In the summer of 1838 Mr. Merrill spent several weeks with the tribe on their summer buffalo hunt. February 6, 1840, the missionary pioneer passed away and the Otoes mourned the friend they called "The-One-Who-Always-Speaks-The-Truth." His son, Rev. S. P. Merrill, born July 13, 1835, at Otoe Mission was the first white child born in Nebraska—so far as known.

In October, 1834, there arrived at Bellevue Rev. Samuel Allis and Rev. John Dunbar, sent out by the Presbyterian churches. They met the representatives of the Pawnee nation at Bellevue and after a council with them Mr. Dunbar went to the Grand Pawnee village while Mr. Allis accompanied the Pawnee Loups—the first missionaries to the Pawnee nation. Both these ministers lived and lodged, ate and hunted, with the tribe, for the next two years. During that time they acquired the Pawnee language and made friends of their Indian brethren. In 1836 Mr. Allis married

Miss Palmer who had come out from New York and made his home at Bellevue, while Mr. Dunbar and Dr. Satterlee, who had come out to join the mission force, went with the Pawnees on their summer hunt. The next year Dr. Satterlee was killed by some Indian traders near the head of Grand Island. In 1837 Mr. Dunbar went east and returned with a wife and the first printed Pawnee book, containing simple words and designed to teach children. In 1842 both missionary families moved out to the Pawnee villages on the Loup and remained there four years, instructing the older Indians in farming and the children in the rudiments of an education,—and bearing the gospel to both old and young. The continual raids of the Sioux upon the Pawnee villages finally broke up the mission work—and the government had failed to station the troops so as to protect it.

The first mission to the Omahas was in charge of Rev. Samuel Curtis and wife who came to Bellevue, under Baptist auspices, in 1837. The next year they went to Blackbird Hills, near the present site of Omaha agency, and began a mission and government school. For some reason, not fully explained, both mission and school were failures and at the end of the year Mr. Curtis gave up the Indian work and went back east. The real pioneer in mission and school work among the Omahas was Rev. William Hamilton,—known for many years as "Father" Hamilton. He arrived at Bellevue June 6, 1853. In 1856 he built the Omaha mission school, a substantial structure of Nebraska stone, on a beautiful hill a few hundred yards from the Missouri river. Here for the next thirty years was the center of Christian and intellectual life in the Omaha tribe and from this center went forth the young men and women who have made the tribe one of the most progressive and civilized of Indian peoples. Father Hamilton died at Decatur in 1893. His widow still lives there.

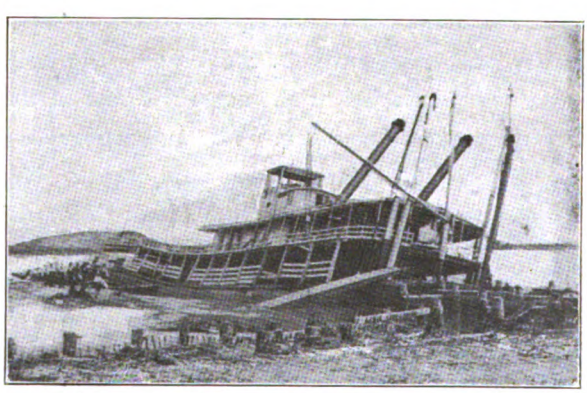


Dedication of Lewis and Clark Monument

EARLY POLITICAL AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS

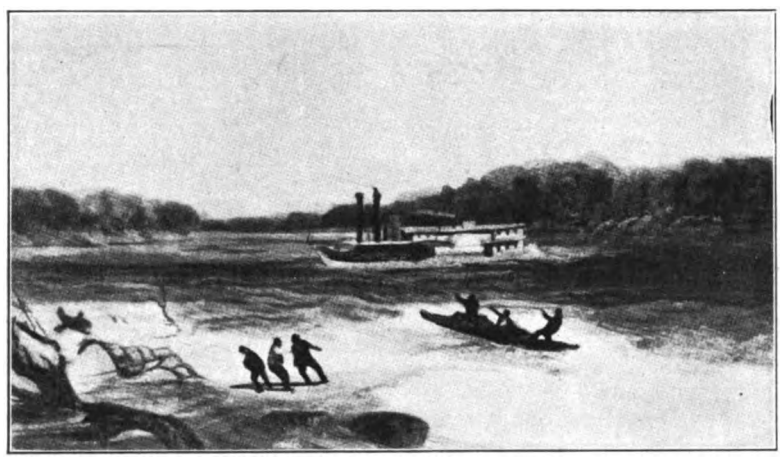
CHAPTER VI

Nebraska was claimed by Spain, France and England in the period of early voyages and discovery along the coast. The grants of the king of England to the Virginia and New England colonial companies ran "from sea to sea" and of course included this state, but these were purely paper pretenses. Spain sent an occasional military expedition out upon the plains at intervals of a century or more. But France, by her hardy sons of the forest and plains, first explored and made temporary settlement here. By virtue of this exploration and settlement Nebraska was part of the province of Louisiana,—and as such subject to the King of France,—from about the year 1700 until November 3, 1762, when by the secret treaty of Paris it was transferred to Spain. The king of Spain was the ruler from that date until October 1, 1800, when it was ceded back to France by the treaty of San Ildefonso. The Spanish governor, however, remained in possession until the time it was turned over to the United States which, for upper Louisiana, was March 10, 1804. From that date until October 1, 1804, this region was under a military government, under an act of congress, passed October 13, 1803, which authorized the president to take possession of the new territory and that all civil and judicial powers there should be vested temporarily in persons appointed by him. Under this act Captain Amos Stoddard, of the United States army was governor at St. Louis and had jurisdiction over Nebraska. From October 1, 1804, until July 4, 1805, our state was part of the District of Louisiana and annexed to the territory of Indiana, whose capital was then at Vincennes. William Henry Harrison was then governor of Indiana and with the judges for that territory, appointed by the president, enacted the laws for this region—the people having no voice in the matter. From July 4, 1805 until December 7, 1812, this was part of the territory of Louisiana, with a governor and judges of its own, appointed by the president, who enacted the law. From December 7, 1812, until 1821 it was part of the territory of Missouri. All free white males over



Wreck of Missouri River Steamer

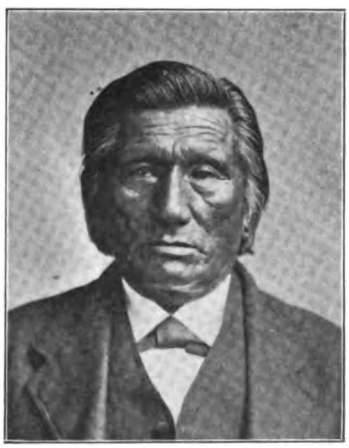
21 years old who had lived in the territory twelve months and had paid a territorial or county tax and whose homes were on lands to which the Indian title had been extinguished, were entitled to vote for members of a lower house of the legislature, which lower house in turn nominated eighteen candidates for an upper house of whom the president chose nine as members. The Indian title not being extinguished to Nebraska none of the few white men here could vote. From the date of the admission of the state of Missouri in 1821 until



The Yellowstone. The First Regular Steamer Plying on Nebraska Waters

June 30, 1834 Nebraska was an unorganized, unattached, wilderness. The state of Missouri was cut out of the old Territory of Missouri, and apparently in the heat of the fight over the admission of the state the rest of the territory was forgotten. The only provision in the United States laws applying to Nebraska was the eighth section of the Missouri bill—"the Missouri Compromise"—which forever prohibited slavery. As Nebraska was not a part of any judicial or other civil district there were no courts in which suits could be tried and no sheriff or marshal with authority to serve writs. This virtually made

"club law" the governing force in our state. The Indians settled their disputes according to Indian custom and white men theirs according to their own inclination. It was, in fact, the darkest period of our social history. Rival fur traders went everywhere carrying their vile liquor without hindrance. The Indians, debauched with drink, fought with each other, and sold their ponies and even their wives to get more liquor. White men were killed in the frontier brawls and the murderers went unpunished. After the withdrawal of the garrison at Fort Atkinson in 1827 disorders of all kinds grew worse. It was the period of unbridled competition. The fortunes made in the Indian trade had attracted a swarm of big and little adventurers. The American Fur Company, organized by John Jacob Astor in 1808, and maker of the foundation for the Astor millions of today, had come into the field to crush out all opposition. With the far-sighted keenness of combining politics with business, characteristic of corporations,—and sometimes observed in these later days of Nebraska life,—the first move of the Astor company was to get an act through congress abol-



Two Crows

ishing all government trading establishments in the Indian country. This act was signed May 6, 1822, and that very summer the American Fur company engaged in the Missouri fur trade with western headquarters at St. Louis. Some of the experienced St. Louis traders were taken into the company. In 1827 its strongest rival, the Columbia Fur company, which had Nebraska posts at the mouth of the Niobrara and at Council Bluff, was absorbed by consolidation. In 1831 the first regular steamboat line from St. Louis to the upper Missouri, stopping at Nebraska points, began business. The line consisted of the steamer Yellowstone and was owned by the American Fur company. It was now time for the new commercial giant to drive the rival fur dealers from the country. In the remote regions of the Missouri, beyond sound of the military bugles at Fort Leavenworth, this meant civil war and true to her historic destiny Nebraska was for some time the seat of war.

The use of liquor by the rival dealers to draw Indian trade had become so notorious and appalling in its effects by this time that congress passed an act July 9, 1832, forbidding the introduction of ardent spirits into the Indian country under any pretense whatever. Leclerc, a rival of the American Fur Company, had managed to slip away from St. Louis with two hundred and fifty gallons of alcohol in keel boats before the new law had been officially proclaimed. When he arrived at Bellevue in the summer of 1832 Cabanne, the Nebraska manager for the fur company, resolved that it would never do to let so much liquor go up the river for a rival trader, sent his clerk Sarpy with an armed force and small cannon a few miles up the river from Bellevue to a spot where the channel ran close to shore. When Leclerc's boats appeared the cannon was trained on them and they were ordered to surrender on pain of being blown out of the water. They obeyed and their goods were brought to Bellevue and confiscated, while three of the Astor company's men who had deserted to Leclerc were put in irons. This assumption of powers of government by the big fur company led to an agitation against it at Washington and it compromised with Leclerc by paying for his property. At the same time the Astor interests began a campaign to drive out of business all the rival traders in the Missouri region, —and particularly the firm of Sublette and Campbell which started into business in 1833 with fair capital and the support of General Ashley then a member of congress from Missouri. The method was similar to that since employed by the Standard Oil Company and great packing house combinations—to sell goods regardless of cost until the opposition went broke. In a year's time the Sublette firm went out of business, and other rivals were glad to hunt other fields. When a few years later other companies again entered the Amer-

Henry Fontenelle

ican Fur Company's domain the latter by shrewd political work secured the revival of the office of Indian agent for the upper Missouri and the appointment of one of its own employes, Andrew Drips, as that agent. One hand of this great corporation was Politics, the other Business and each washed its fellow. A good example of its enterprising methods occurred in 1833 when McKenzie, manager of the company's business, finding great difficulty in smuggling liquor past the military inspection at Fort Leavenworth, started a distillery at Fort Union near the mouth of the Yellowstone. The connection this fact has with Nebraska history is—that Nebraska corn was shipped up the river by Joshua Pilcher, the company's agent at Council Bluff, to run the distillery. McKenzie writes repeatedly to Pilcher to load the Nebraska-grown corn on the steamboats as the squaw corn grown on the upper Missouri is not so good.

Out of this maze of murder, intrigue, war, whiskey and throat-cutting competition there emerged June 30, 1834, an act of congress profoundly affecting the political and social future of Nebraska. It provided that all of the United States west of the Mississippi and not included in the states of Missouri, Louisiana or the territory of Arkansas should be called the "Indian Country." No person was permitted to trade in the Indian Country without a license from the Indian bureau. Any person taking goods there to trade without license forfeited his goods and a fine of $500. No person was permitted to make settlement in the Indian Country under penalty of $1,000 fine. No person, except Indians, was permitted to trap in the Indian Country or to hunt there except to obtain subsistence. No liquor was to be taken into the Indian Country (except by permit of the war department for use of troops) and no distillery might be operated there under severe penalties and right of search was conferred upon the military and Indian agents. The northern part of the Indian Country, including Nebraska, was annexed to the judicial district of Missouri and all United States laws for the punishment of crime were declared in force there. The military was authorized to remove from the Indian Country any persons unlawfully there. It was further provided that in any trial between a white man and an Indian concerning rights of property the burden of proof should be on the white man. And still further that no purchase, grant or lease from any Indian tribe in the Indian Country should be valid unless made by treaty of the United States.

It will at once be noticed that here was a radical program aiming at nothing less than white exclusion from this vast empire of territory. We shall better understand it if we take note of another great government move-

ment going on at this time. This was the transplanting of the bulk of the Indian population in the older states east of the Mississippi to new homes west of that river,—and most of them west of the Missouri. In pursuance of this plan there were transferred between the years 1830 and 1840 to the country lying west of a line drawn north and south through Kansas City an Indian population of some 75,000. Of these the Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws and Seminoles,—in all about 65,000,—had been located south of the Missouri Compromise line in what is now Oklahoma and Indian Territory. The Delawares, Kickapoos, Shawnees, Pottawotamies, Ottawas, Peorias, Kaskaskias, Piankashas, Weas, Senecas, Oneidas, Tuscaroras and Quapaws,—in all between 5,000 and 10,000,—had been settled in eastern Kansas and, with the transfer of the Sacs and Foxes and Ioways west of the Missouri, in southeastern Nebraska. Here was one of the greatest migrations of modern times carried on forcibly by the United States government. This large Indian population thus camped on the edge of the plains was of course an effectual block to white settlement. The act of 1834 was designed to make this permanent and to extend the protection of the government against white settlement to the other tribes, natives of the plains region, who made treaties with the United States. It looked forward to the formation of a great Indian state which should include all the country west of the Missouri river. President Andrew Jackson, in his annual message to congress, December, 1835, said:

"A country west of Missouri and Arkansas has been assigned to the Indians, into which white settlements are not to be pushed. No political communities can be formed in that extensive region, except those which are established by the Indians themselves, or by the United States for them, and with their concurrence. A barrier has thus been raised for their protection against the encroachments of our citizens, and guarding the Indians, as far as possible, from those evils which brought them to their present condition. Summary authority has been given by law to destroy all ardent spirits found in their country, without waiting the doubtful result and slow process of their legal seizure."

By solemn treaty engagements the government promised that the Indians should never be disturbed in their home and by the act of 1834 sought to make its engagements effective. We know what a rope of sand treaties and laws are against the adventurous spirits of a borderland. Meanwhile two or three points deserve notice before taking up the story of Nebraska's territorial organization. One is that the Indian population in the free territory north of the line of 36 degrees and 30 minutes was much less dense than that south of that line, and in the coming movement of white population west would offer much less resistance.

Another matter deserving mention is that of two or three distinguished travelers whose work in this period served to make Nebraska famous over the civilized world,—while at the same time they preserved for later Nebraskans scenes and memories which, without them, would be lost to mankind forever. The first of these is George Catlin, dreamer and

painter, who gave his life to the task of preserving the faces, the costumes, the scenes, of primitive America, whose books and paintings will always be classic upon the subjects treated. Catlin came up the Missouri river in 1832 upon the "Yellowstone" and wintered with the Mandan Indians in North Dakota. Coming down the Missouri the next year he stopped with all the Nebraska tribes, painting representative chiefs, gathering Indian handiwork and notes upon Indian life. At Blackbird's grave near Decatur he painted the landscape and for pay carried away Blackbird's skull to Washington. At Bellevue he stopped with Indian Agent Daugherty and preserved for us the picture of Bellevue at that day, besides many other persons and scenes. In 1833 Maximilian, Prince of Wied, a German nobleman with a passion for science and travel, came up on the annual steamboat. He had a party of friends, among them an artist named Bodmer, who preserved many scenes which Catlin's brush had missed. On his return to Germany Maximilian published the story of his travels in a book of great beauty and value.

The third traveler was John C. Fremont whose expeditions under authority of the United States government made him a candidate for the presidency and a part of western history. On his first expedition Fremont left the mouth of the Kansas river June 10, 1842, with a party of twenty-eight men, with eight two-mule carts and horses to mount the party. Kit Carson, the famous scout, was guide. The route was the now familiar one of the Oregon trail to Fort Laramie. There is now living on the Sioux reservation at Kyle, South Dakota, one of the earliest of the Canadian fur traders who came to Nebraska, Mr. J. T. McClsukey, who

Peter A. Sarpy

remembers seeing Fremont and Kit Carson come to the post. After reaching the Wind river mountains and gathering scientific and engineering data Fremont returned by way of the Pawnee villages on the Loup and the site of the Nebraska city which now bears his name, reaching Bellevue post, now in charge of Peter A. Sarpy on October 1 of the same year. The second Fremont expedition left the mouth of the Kansas river May 29th, 1843, and followed that stream to the forks where the Republican and Smoky Hill unite. Here the route was up the Republican, crossing into Nebraska June 25th and still up the Republican as far as Prairie Dog Creek in Harlan county, where the command turned north over the divide to the South Platte, up that stream to the mountains and finally to the Pacific.

A parting glance at Nebraska in the forties of the last century—just before the train of events started that was to make her name the one oftenest in the nation's mouth: Bellevue is the principal white settlement within the state,—a cluster of log houses between the bluff and the river mostly occupied by "amalgamated" families—the whole ruled over by

"Peter A. Sarpy, Sir," as he familiarly styled himself, a boisterous, rude, profane frontiersman, yet with many kind qualities beneath a rough exterior. Above this on the river are some of the trading posts already named, each with its little group of frontier characters as the nucleus of an Indian constituency. On the Loups at the Pawnee villages the brave little missionary band headed by Dunbar and Allis struggling in the savage darkness that surrounds them. Far out at the other end of the state,—in fact just over the line of the present Nebraska,—is another and larger nucleus of border civilization,—Fort Laramie, with its adjacent and rival posts,—Fort Platte, Fort John, Fort William,and other temporary stations not designated by name. None of these are United States "forts" as yet, merely fur trade fortifications,—the chief ones always those of the American Fur Company, of which Pierre Chouteau,of St.Louis, is now the ruling genius. This fur trade around Fort Laramie is the big thing of the plains,—the magnet which draws Indians and white men from the most distant mountains and the far southern plains. Many of the men who took part in it are living and can tell tales that move the blood. At first the goods for this trade were brought up to Pierre on steamers and thence on horse-back through the Bad Lands to the Platte. When the Oregon Trail became a fixed thing this was changed and caravans from the mouth of the Kansas river carried the immense fur trade that was soon built up here. Between these two nuclei,—Bellevue and Fort Laramie,—were the plains that Major Long had pronounced "wholly unfit for cultivation" and "calculated to serve as a barrier to prevent too great an extension of our population westward," threaded by buffalo paths and the Overland Trail, battle ground for hostile Indians bent on self-extermination.

U. S. Indian Office.—Santee Indian Agency, August, 1894

ORGANIZATION

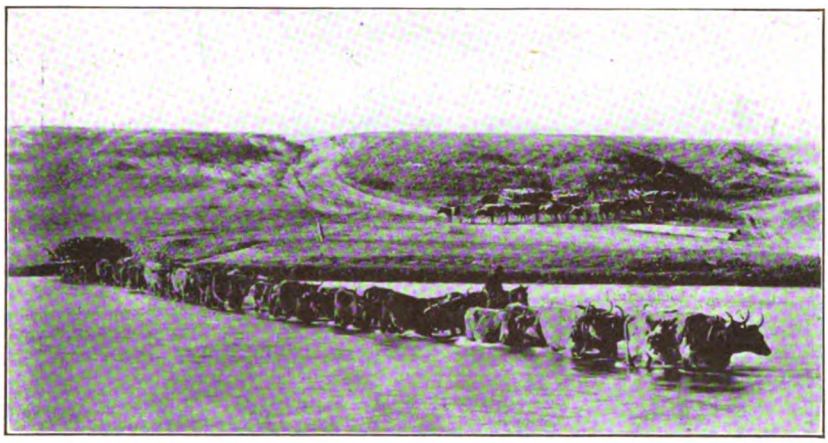
CHAPTER VII

Oliver P. Mason, Nebraska's First Chief Justice

The first movement to organize the territory of Nebraska was a "war measure"—a means of fighting England for the possession of Oregon. The first time the name "Nebraska" occurs in our annals applied to any tract of land is in the annual report of Secretary of War William Wilkins, November 30, 1844. The secretary discusses the dispute between England and the United States over Oregon, which had been going on for thirty years, and refers to the results of Fremont's first explorations in the Rocky Mountains, just published, as foreshadowing a great movement of population to the Pacific. He then asks congress for two things: First, the organization of a new territory in order to throw the authority of the federal government around the Oregon emigrants. Upon this point I quote in full as it is the earliest suggestion of the name I have found. He says:

"The Platte or Nebraska being the central stream leading into or from the South Pass would very properly furnish a name to the territory which I propose suggesting to be erected into a territorial government, with, and preliminary to, the extension in that direction of our military posts. I would confine the Nebraska territory to our undisputed possessions on this side of the Rocky Mountains. Its boundary line would commence at the mouth of the Kansas and run up the Missouri river to the mouth of the Running Water and pursue that river to the head of its northern branch, thence due west to the Wind river chain. From this point turning southward the line would continue alongside the Wind river range and the main chain of the Rocky Mountains to the head of the Arkansas, and following that stream to the mouth of the Pawnee fork, would pass by the heads of the Neosho and Osage again to the mouth of the Kansas."

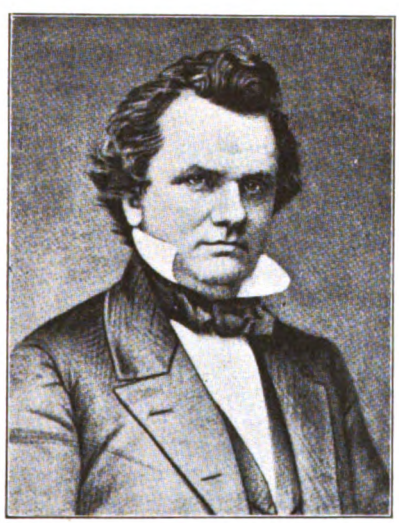
The second item asked from congress is an appropriation of $100,000 to erect a chain of forts from the Missouri river to the summit of the Rocky Mountains. These forts and the pioneer settlers who will come into the new territory when it is organized are to be a preparation for war with England. Very significantly the secretary concludes, "troops and supplies from the projected Nebraska territory



An Early Method of Transportation

would be able to contend for the possession of Oregon with any force coming from the sea."

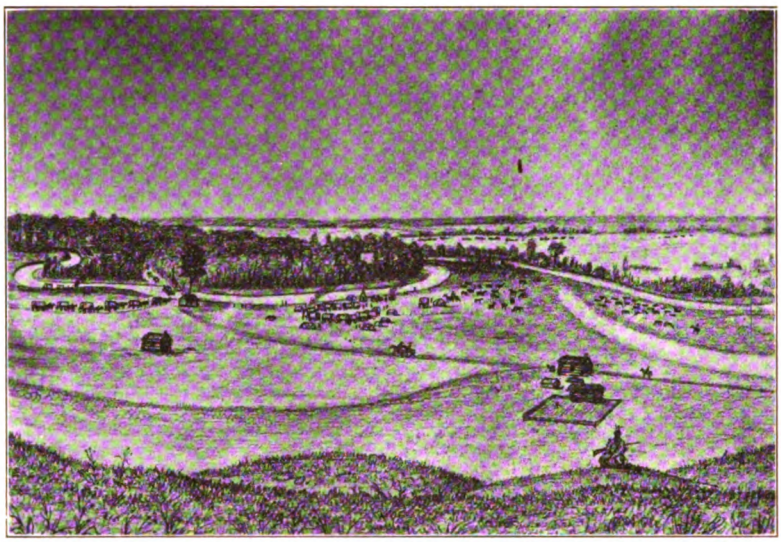
The word "Nebraska" itself is from the Omaha or Otoe language in both of which Ne-brath-ke or Ne-prath-ke means broad or shallow water. It had been applied very naturally and appropriately by these Indians to the stream which they had so long known.



Stephen A. Douglas

The first bill to create the territory of Nebraska was introduced in the house of representatives December 17, 1844, by Stephen A. Douglas. The boundaries and the name were those Secretary Wilkins had suggested. There was no mention of slavery, but the bill provided that the laws of Iowa should be extended over Nebraska until a territorial legislature met, and that only free white males should vote until the legislature should provide otherwise. This bill was favorably reported from the committee on territories on January 7, 1845, went on the general file and never reached further consideration. There was a reason for this and before going farther in the events which follow we shall do wisely to review underlying causes of the conflict which culminated in the struggle over the organization of the territory.

When the first Nebraska bill was put to sleep in congressional pigeonholes in the winter of 1845 a sectional conflict was fast hurrying to its climax. It had been pending for two hundred years. Two streams of migration,—one from Jamestown, the other from Plymouth Rock, had set out to subdue the American continent. Each carried with it its own economic system and type of civilization. They



Emigrants to Utah and California Crossing Elkhorn River
Twenty-three Miles from Omaha.

moved westward along parallel lines of latitude, mingling only lightly along the edges. The northern stream with some re-enforcement of Dutch and Quaker stock, colonized New York, Pennsylvania and the region north of the Ohio, while the southern one, supplemented by Scotch-Irish and Huguenot blood, filled Kentucky, Tennessee and the country south to the Gulf. The immigrants into these newer parts, northwest and southwest, had many common characteristics, forest-bred in the same hardships and dangers of frontier life. They fought together with mutual enthusiasm against England and Indians during the war of 1812; their general views of politics and society were much the same; their personal qualities of independence and self-confidence were quite alike; their problems of internal trans-

Captain Carlisle's California Train Nooning in the Platte Valley

The First Claim Cabin in Nebraska, Built by Daniel Norton in 1853, Between Omaha and Bellevue.

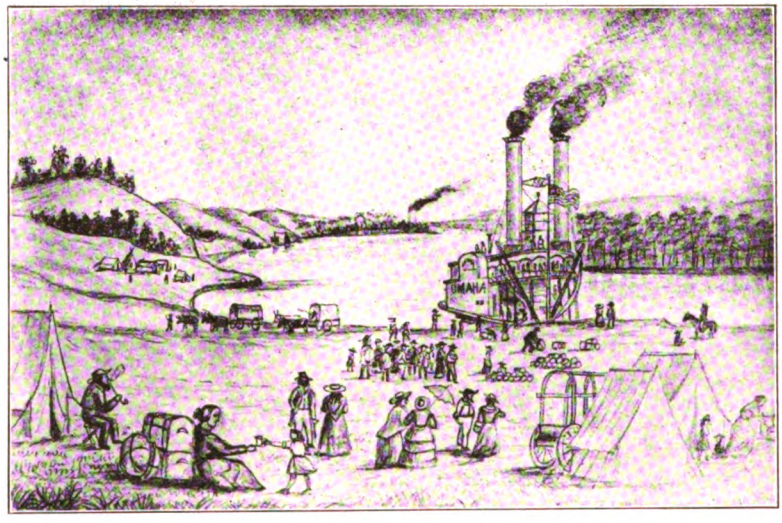
portation and development similar. They were linked together in interest by the great river which drew them into one focus of navigation and exchange. There seemed no good reason why the two wests,—the northwest and southwest,—should not work together for common political and social ends in the new nation. That was, in fact, their tendency and the night-

Where Three States Meet, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri
Descendants of Joseph Roubidoux, Early French Fur Trader.

mare of the older states along the Atlantic. One fundamental difference turned into border conflict what should have been harmony. Back of one group of pioneers was a slave labor society; back of the other a free labor society.

Missouri overlapped the western front of both streams of migration. Both of them flowed in. Then it was first realized, north and south, that a fundamental difference of labor systems meant a war of institutions. The bitter conflict in congress which followed was concluded by the Missouri Compromise of 1820 which fixed for more than thirty years the status of Nebraska with reference to slavery.

This act provided for the admission of Missouri with her slave constitution, but that "in all the remainder of the Louisiana Purchase west of Missouri and north of 36 degrees and 30 minutes north latitude, slavery . . . . is forever prohibited." This compromise,—one of the great landmarks in American as well as Nebraska history,—was regarded at the time as a settlement of the sectional slavery struggle. We now recognize it as the beginning of that struggle. So when the first bill to organize the territory of Nebraska was put away to its last dusty slumber in the winter of 1845, we understand now why it was so. Other phases of the slavery question absorbed the public mind and heated the congressional arena; the annexation of Texas, the war with Mexico and the fierce debate whether the territory acquired from Mexico shall be slave or free, consume congressional hours. But while the Nebraska Bill sleeps in its pigeon hole the emigrant's wagon marches on. By 1846 there are 12,000 Americans in the Oregon country. Summer of the same year witnesses the strangest migration Nebraska prairies have yet seen—the Mormon exodus. Ten thousand Mormons emptied from Missouri river steamboats upon the Nebraska shores at Florence,—an entire church on the march,—more white people in one body than Nebraska had ever seen before. Several hundred more land at Niobrara and during the winter of 1846-7 the



Steamer Omaha Landing Mormons at Florence, Nebraska

Rockport and Old Fort Lisa—Site of Old Saw Mill

Mormon population in this state was large enough to organize a commonwealth with their leader Brigham Young for governor, and in which none but Mormons might hold office. But these are birds of passage. In the spring the overland trail is trodden smoother than it has been before by the feet, the cart wheels, and the cattle of these pilgrims for another promised land. The same year which saw the Mormons land on our shores witnessed the erection of the second United States military post within the borders of the present state at Old Fort Kearney—established April 22,1846—on the bluff where today stands Nebraska City. A garrison was maintained there until 1848 when the new Ft. Kearney was located on the south bank of the Platte river, opposite the present city of Kearney and Old Ft. Kearney is left in charge of a sergeant's squad until 1854, when it is abandoned. The southern democratic administration of President Polk has compromised our Oregon claim with Great Britain, cutting it in two in order to have a free hand for the acquisition of Texas and the war with Mexico. Texas and Oregon,—not the old Texas or the Old Oregon, but an Oregon shorn of half its territory and a Texas grown into an Empire which includes Arizona, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California,—come into the American Republic at one long national breath. The Plymouth Rock and Jamestown streams have touched Pacific tidewater at the same moment.

March 15, 1848, Senator Stephen A. Douglas introduced a second Nebraska Bill. Someone had evidently given him a hint, for this new proposed Nebraska is only half as large as the former one, lying between the fortieth and forty-third degrees of latitude—as the present Nebraska does—but extending from the Missouri river to the summit of the Rocky mountains. There is no mention of slavery in the bill and the laws of Iowa are to be extended over the new territory until its inhabitants frame new ones. This bill has the same fate as its predecessor-death without a hearing, but a recommendation to mercy from the committee on territories.

There is a new phase to the Nebraska question now—one not mentioned by any of the historians who have written upon the topic. The Oregon dispute is settled. There is no longer need for Nebraska as a base of war against England. But the organization and settlement of this region is a long step toward making the Platte valley route for a Pacific railroad and far-sighted leaders north and south have grasped that point. Senator Benton, of Missouri, pioneer in the propagation of Pacific railroad plans, on February 7, 1849, introduced the first Pacific railroad bill in congress. The bill is suggestive of how the west-

ern mind began to attack the gigantic problem of those days,—a railroad across the mountains and desert to the Pacific ocean. It provided for the reservation of a right of way one mile wide from St. Louis to San Francisco, and that 75% of the proceeds of all land sales in California and Oregon, and 50% of the proceeds in other states should constitute a railroad building fund,—the road to be built by the United States government. Now begins to appear, in the fierce southern opposition to Senator Benton's Pacific railroad bill, the identical opposition which all bills for the orgnaization of Nebraska must meet. The next ten years in congress is one continuous skirmish and battle, plot and counterplot, between the representatives of the north and south on the subject of Pacific railroad. At first the position of the south is against any railroad built by the government. All the old arguments of the Madison, Monroe and Jackson vetoes against federal internal improvements, against the constitutionality of such measures, are set up in order of battle. When, after a time, it begins to appear that the Pacific railroad will be built in the not distant future,—by a clever flank movement, the fight is shifted to the question, which of several routes is the best. Then there are surveys and reports, more surveys and more reports, but the Pacific railroad bill never gets further in congress than the stage of debate until after the climax of contention comes and war between the north and south has taken the place of debate.

The question of organizing the territory of Nebraska was therefore complicated with two other questions,—the opening of a northern route for the future Pacific railroad and the crowding of Indian population further south and west to still farther obstruct white settlement in those regions. Rival commercial interests north and south, thus become participants in the struggle which is about to ensue. Missouri is a slave state, but her people have become the pioneers of the west; her great city of St. Louis is the metropolis of the western trade and the interests of her active ruling class of merchants and politicians are enlisted in favor of every proposition to develop the west. Accordingly the next move in behalf of organizing the new territory originates in Missouri. December 12, 1852, Representative Hall of Missouri introduces a bill to organize the territory of Platte, which is simply another name for Nebraska. This bill was referred to the house committee on territories, of which W. A. Richardson of Illinois, Senator Douglas' personal friend was chairman. Congressman Richardson made over Congressman Hall's bill into a new one which he reported from his committee February 2, 1853. It proposed to organize the territory of Nebraska—bound on the south by the line of 36 degrees, 30 minutes, on the north by the present northern line of Nebraska, on the east by Missouri and Iowa and on the west by the summit of the Rocky mountains. Again no mention is made of slavery, but the provision in former bills that the laws of Iowa should extend over the new territory until changed by its legislature is left out. The student feels certain, while he does not find the proof of his belief in the documents of the time, that this was done as a concession to southern votes in Congress which would oppose any effort to organize territory where free state laws should govern during the formative period. On February 10, 1853, this bill reaches the stage of debate in the house. To appreciate the exquisite irony, the boundless sarcasm, of this debate,

we must recall the compromise of 1850 which settled the slavery dispute forever;—so said the active politicians of both whig and democratic parties who were trying to keep their respective organizations from going to pieces upon the issue. Both the whig and democratic parties in the presidential campaign of 1852 had declared the act of 1850 the "final settlement" of the subject. The very mention of slavery or slave dispute was taboo in polite political circles. No well-bred congressman, least of all, a southern member, dared discuss the subject. Therefore when the bill to organize the territory of Nebraska, freighted as it was with formidable future results, with the opening of the Platte Valley route for a Pacific railroad, with advantage to northern emigration, and ultimate superiority of free state votes in the national government,—came up there was a wild rush of pro-slavery southern members for a masquerade fighting costume. Indian Rights was the suit. Houston of Alabama, Howard of Texas, Brooks of New York, hotly denounce the bill as a violation of sacred Indian guarantees. The framers of the bill had endeavored to meet this criticism by providing that both the land and the government of the Indians should be left undisturbed. This merely inflamed its opponents the more. They want to know how many white men live in a region where it is proposed to go to the expense of organizing a territorial government. Richardson and Hall are obliged to tell them that the law in force forbids white men settling there at all; but there are, however, between five hundred and twelve hundred whites living in the region and between fifty thousand and sixty thousand emigrants traveling across this territory every year on their way to the Pacific

Ruins of Old Town of Rockport near Site of Fort Lisa

coast beyond. It is interesting to note in the debate some of the touches, both of temper and argument, which appear in recent debates upon the Philippine question. Congressman Howard, of Texas, in particular, boiled over with indignation at this ruthless violation of Indian rights—organizing a territory over their heads without their consent. He was asked how long it was since Texas began to measure her conduct toward Indians by the Golden Rule. Congressman Brooks, of New York, dwelt upon the extravagance of setting up a territorial government for the benefit of the few hundred people. He was answered that there were ten to fifteen thousand people in Missouri ready to move on these lands as soon as they were open to settlement. The more one reads of the debate the plainer the situation is. This was a fight between Chicago and St. Louis, on the one hand, looking forward to the opening of the Platte Valley Pacific railroad; New Orleans and Texas, on the other, trying to block the northern route, until they can push a railroad through on southern paral-

Old Cannon used by Gen. Hamey against Indians and later to drive Sioux from Ponca Agency. Now at Niobrara, Nebraska

lels; and New York City helping the southerners to keep her own hold on the California trade by sea and the Isthmus of Panama.

There is one single reference to slavery during the debate in the house. Giddings, the well-known radical anti-slavery member from Ohio, was a member of the committee on territories which reported the bill. Howe, of Pennsylvania, asked Giddings why the Ordinance of 1787 excluding slavery was not in the bill, adding, "I should like to know whether he or the committee were intimidated on account of the platforms of 1852. (Laughter.) The gentleman pretends to be something of an anti-slavery man, at least I have understood so." Giddings replied by quoting the words of the Missouri Compromise of 1820 and said "The south line of this new proposed territory is 36 degrees, 30 minutes. It is very clear that the territory (in the Louisiana Purchase) north of that line must be forever free, unless the Missouri Compromise be repealed." Hall, of Missouri, in closing his speech in favor of the bill, exclaimed: "Why, everybody is talking about a railroad to the Pacific ocean. In the name of God, how is the railroad to be made if you will never let people live on the lands through which the road passes? Are you going to construct a road through the Indian territory at an expense of $200,000,000 and say no one shall live on the land through which it passes?"

At the end of this debate the bill passed the house by a vote of 98 to 43,—the north and west furnishing the majority while South Carolina and other southern states were solidly opposed. The next day the bill was in the senate and was taken in charge by Senator Douglas, at the head of the senate committee on territories. February 17 he reported it favorably without changing a line. It is not until the crowded hours after midnight of an all-night session of the senate about to die March 4, 1853, that Douglas sees a chance to call up the bill. Texas is instantly in opposition. Senator Rusk, of that state, exclaims: "I hope the bill will not be taken up. It will lead to discussion beyond all question." Senator Atchison, strong pro-slavery democrat from Missouri, tries to break this opposition and pleads with the south to let the bill be taken up, urging that Missouri is more deeply interested than any state in the Union. He at first hints at the real difficulty (slavery) without naming it. Finally he boldly takes that bull by the horns:

"Mr. President: I did not expect opposition to this measure from the quarter whence it comes,—from Texas and from Mississippi. I had objections myself to the bill early in the session. One of them was the Missouri Compromise. But when I came to look into that

question I found there was no prospect, no hope of a repeal of the Missouri Compromise, excluding slavery from that territory. Now, sir I am free to admit that at this moment, at this hour, and for all time to come, I should oppose the organization or the settlement of that territory unless my constituents and the constituents of the whole south, of the slave states of the union, could go into it on the same footing, with equal rights and equal privileges, carrying that species of property with them as other people of this Union. I have always been of the opinion that the first great error in the political history of the country was the ordinance of 1787, rendering the Northwest Territory free territory. The next great error was the Missouri Compromise. But they are both irremediable. We must submit to them. I am prepared to do it. It is evident the Missouri Compromise cannot be repealed. So far as that question is concerned we might as well agree to the admission of this territory now as next year, or five or ten years hence."

"But I must not stop here. The senator from Texas suggested another idea. His objection was that the Indians in the Nebraska Territory would be turned down upon the border of Texas."

(Senator Rusk of Texas: "And scalp the women and children upon the border of Texas.")

Senator Atchison: "Sir, it is the wild Indians of whom we are in danger and the Shawnees, the Delawares and the Kickapoos and others upon your western frontier would be your best guard against the wild Comanches, Pawnees and others."

Senator Sam Houston, of Texas, made perhaps the most effective speech against taking up the bill. He spoke from the standpoint of a man who had spent his life in Indian camps, living the life of an Indian, and made a strong plea against disturbing them in their homes beyond the Missouri. Senator Bell, of Tennessee, also opposed the bill and remarked, "The morning of March 4th is breaking, and only five or six hours of the present congress remain." Then Douglas rose to conclude the argument for his pet measure. Just a few sentences from his speech may show its force.

"The object of this bill is to create a territorial government extending from the western boundary of Missouri and Iowa to Utah and Oregon. In other words, it is to form a line of territorial governments extending from the Mississippi valley to the Pacific ocean, so that we can have continuous settlements from one to the other. We cannot expect, or hope even, to maintain our Pacific possessions unless they can be connected in feeling and interest and communication with the Atlantic states. That can only be done by continuous lines of settlements, and those settlements can only be formed where the laws will furnish protection to those who settle upon and cultivate the soil."

"Sir, what have you done for these Pacific possessions? What have you done to bind them to us? When a proposition was brought forward here to establish a railroad connection it met with determined resistance. The project was crushed and destroyed. When a proposition was made for stockades and military colonization, that also was beaten down. When a proposition was made for a telegraph line you would not permit that to be established. You refused to allow settlers to go there; and when

Old Omaha Mission School, Omaha Reservation, Built 1856

I asked for a territorial government you assign the absence of settlers as a reason for not granting it."

"I have been struck with the zeal of some gentlemen in behalf of the poor Indians. Sir, it is necessary for them to avail themselves of some arguments to resist this bill, and sympathy for the poor Indian is the argument that was resorted to. It is expressly stipulated that the Indians do not come under the jurisdiction of the territory; that they are not embraced within its limits; that they do not come under the operation of its laws and are never to be a part of that territory unless by treaty the Indians shall choose to do so hereafter. It is said by this act, you will drive the Indians all down upon Texas. Does the bill do it in any way? The Indians now occupy that country. The bill leaves them there. Will they be any more likely to go down now than they were before?"

Senator Adams of Mississippi: "I know that my friend from Illinois is a good compromise man and I wish to propose to him a compromise on this subject, and that is, that by common consent it be postponed until the Friday after the first Monday of December next, then we shall have ample time and opportunity to discuss and investigate it and if we think it right we can then pass the bill."

Senator Douglas: "I must remind my friend from Mississippi that eight years ago, when he and I were members of the House of Representatives, I was then pressing the Nebraska bill, and I had ever since been pressing it. I have tried to get it through for eight long years. I would take it as much more kind if my friend should propose that by common consent we take up and pass the bill."

A motion was then made that the Nebraska bill be laid upon the table. Roll call upon this motion resulted.—yeas, 23, nays 17 and so the bill was killed for that session. An analysis of the vote on this motion proves the real nature of the opposition—a combination of commercial rivals with slave jealousy which is determined to prevent a Pacific railroad up the Platte valley. Eighteen out of the twenty-three votes to lay on the table are from the south—both whigs and democrats from that section voting against Douglas' bill. The other five senators are from the commercial states of the northeast. On the other hand, every one of the seventeen senators for the bill are from the north and northwest, excepting the two senators from Missouri. Before another Nebraska bill could be debated in the next congress the southern interests controlling the Pierce administration had rushed the Gadsden treaty from Mexico to Washington where it was ratified,—paying ten million dollars of the people's money for a strip of desert in New

Mexico and Arizona whose only use was to open up a better route for a southern Pacific railroad.

Senator Dodge, of Iowa, introduced the next Nebraska bill on December 14, 1853, when the new congress met. It was practically the same bill which had been laid upon the table March 4. It was referred to the senate committee on territories, Senator Douglas, chairman. January 4, 1854, the Nebraska bill comes back from the committee on territories, but not the Nebraska bill that went to it. New features, never before seen, have been grafted upon the measure in the committee room. It is provided that when Nebraska is admitted into the Union as a state or states it shall be "with or without slavery, as their constitution may prescribe at the time of their admission." Besides this there is the famous section 21--the "stump speech in the belly of the bill"—as Benton called it, declaring that it is the true intent and meaning of the act to carry into practical operation the principles of the compromise of 1850: First, that all questions pertaining to slavery in the territories and the new states formed therefrom are to be left to the decision of the people residing in them: Second, that all questions involving title to slaves or questions of personal freedom are left to local courts with right of appeal to the United States Supreme court. Third, that the Fugitive Slave Law is to be carried into execution in the territories as well as the states.

What was Douglas' motive in proposing thus to make Nebraska a cockpit where slavery and freedom should fight it out? The common republican opinion then and since was that Douglas was conciliating the south to pave his own path to the presidency. The

Early Steamboat Navigation on the Missouri

historians, and especially Rhodes and Schouler, emphasize this proposition. Since Douglas' death this view has generally been adopted, and I have not seen it anywhere disputed in print, viz: that Douglas was an active candidate for president of the United States; that he realized it was impossible to procure the support of the southern democracy unless he gave proof of his disposition to protect their peculiar interests; and that the incorporation of the "Squatter Sovereignty" principle into the new Nebraska bill, was the best means in his power of giving such proof.

Is there not another—and a sufficient reason for Douglas' action without this one? For ten years he had been trying to open this country lying straight in the path of commerce and emigration from his own state. For five years he had seen Pacific railroad and even Pacific telegraph projects blocked by commercial rivals, south and east. He had seen that those interests were strong enough to kill his bill the spring before, even when it was strongly supported by the slave state of Missouri. He knew that a hasty treaty with Mexico was being pushed to prepare the way for a Pacific

railroad along southern parallels that would build up the rivals of both Chicago and St. Louis. No one knew better than he that commerce and migration to the Pacific would follow the route of the first railroad. No one was closer than he to the railroad and commercial interests of Illinois. He had secured the first land grant ever made by the United States to a railroad company—the one to the Illinois Central. The Rock Island, first of all Illinois railroads to reach the Mississippi, had just been completed to the town whose name it now bears. Railroads were destined very soon to be constructed across Iowa. The natural route to the Pacific thence was up the broad valley of the Platte. If this region were open to white settlement the rush of population would carry the railroad on its shoulders and with it the trade not only of the west, but of the world that lay beyond, to Chicago. The price to pay,—ah, there was a price to pay—Douglas had learned that lesson well by ten years of defeat,—the price to pay,—was to satisfy the slave sentimentalists of the south,—the sticklers for states' rights,—the "constitutional" politicians— to offer them, prima facie, an equal opportunity with the north in settling the new territory and bring with them their own peculiar "property," knowing as Douglas knew,—as every shrewd observer of events might know,—that the superior energy and push of the free state migration would win in Nebraska as it already had won in Oregon and California.

Such an offer would cut the ground from beneath the feet of the New Orleans-Texas-Mississippi opponents of the bill. They could no longer unite the south against a measure on the score of pretended sympathy for the Indian. It is significant that Douglas wrote the plan for the new Nebraska bill alone. The south itself was surprised; the north was dumbfounded. Senator Atchison's speech, already quoted, undoubtedly expressed the view of conservative southern men. They did not hope for the repeal of the Missouri Compromise; still less did they expect the proposition for this repeal from a northern political leader. It was like picking up privileges in the road, but, human-like, after the first shock of surprise the southern demand was for "More." Besides this, the southerners were afraid of Douglas. His moves were too shrewd for them and as they did not understand them, they naturally concluded there was some subtle, hidden purpose which they could not fathom. They would be satisfied with nothing less than an absolute, unequivocal repeal of the Missouri Compromise which any southern planter could understand without hiring a lawyer to guess at its meaning. Senator Dixon, of Kentucky, therefore expressed the southern mind when he gave notice on January 16, that he should offer an amendment when the Nebraska bill came up for consideration expressly repealing, in plain words, the obnoxious Missouri Compromise, and clinching the repeal with this sentence: "The citizens of the several states or territories shall be at liberty to take and hold their slaves within any of the territories of the United States or of the States to be formed therefrom, as if the said act (to-wit, the Missouri Compromise) had never been passed." This amendment was certainly a bold slap in the face of the north. Douglas at once went to Senator Dixon's seat and remonstrated against it. Dixon stood his ground firmly, saying that the Missouri Com-

Francisco Salway and Family, Noted Frontiersman

promise had not been repealed by the compromise of 1850, and that the south was determined to have the question settled beyond doubt. On the next day, Tuesday, January 17, 1854, Senator Douglas ordered a carriage and going to the home of Senator Dixon, the two men went out on a long drive. The historian would pay something to know the conversation during that carriage drive. What arguments were used, what motives appealed to, may be surmised. The conclusion only is known. When the drive ended Senator Douglas had adopted the Dixon idea and promised to put it in the bill. But Douglas was too wary a political general to risk so great a change in his plans and so hard a battle at the north as he knew must follow without making sure of carrying the measure. One thing more was needed to insure the passage of the bill in its proposed form—that was the active support of President Pierce's administration, and with that the assistance of every pie-counter patron from Maine to Oregon. Jefferson Davis, then Secretary of War, now plays the important role, the story of which he relates in his own book. Davis was all powerful with President Pierce; they had fought together as fellow soldiers in the Mexican War and to the fraternal ties formed by that experience was added the fact that Davis was the stronger man intellectually. On Sunday, January 22, Davis accompanied Senator Douglas to the White House and secured for him a favor rarely granted by Pierce,—A Sunday audience on a political subject. The situation, the Nebraska bill and the proposed changes were discussed and the visitors carried away from the White House the president's promise to make the bill an administration measure—enough, with the party discipline of that day, to insure its passage.

Monday morning, January 23, Douglas introduced a substitute—no longer the Nebraska bill—but the Nebraska-Kansas bill, providing for two territories with the dividing line where it now stands between the states of Nebraska and Kansas. The bill further declared that the Missouri Compromise "approved March 6, 1820, which was superceded by the principles of the legislation of 1850 commonly called the Compromise measures, is declared inoperative." On the next day the Washington Union newspaper, the official democratic administration organ, declared the amended Nebraska-Kansas bill had the endorsement of the national administration and required the support of all faithful democrats.

But while these politicians' combinations were being formed the north was rising in rebellion. Whig and democrat and abolitionist had now a common cause. On the very day that the Union declared the Nebraska-Kansas bill a test of democratic faith, there appeared in print the "Appeal of the Independent Demo-

An Old French-Canadian Trapper

crats," signed by Salmon P. Chase, Joshua R. Giddings, Charles Sumner, Gerritt Smith, Edward Wade, Alexander DeWitt—a fiery review of the iniquity of the Nebraska-Kansas bill and a stirring call of the free states to action. The free states responded. Mass meetings, newspapers, pulpits, voiced a mighty chorus of protest. The legislatures of five northern states sent solemn resolutions against the bill to Congress. Douglas discovered that he must drive hard, and he drove. From January 30 until March 3 the bill was debated in the senate every day in the intervals of other business, with Douglas urging every day toward a final vote. On the night of March 3, Douglas spoke from midnight until daybreak, closing the debate.

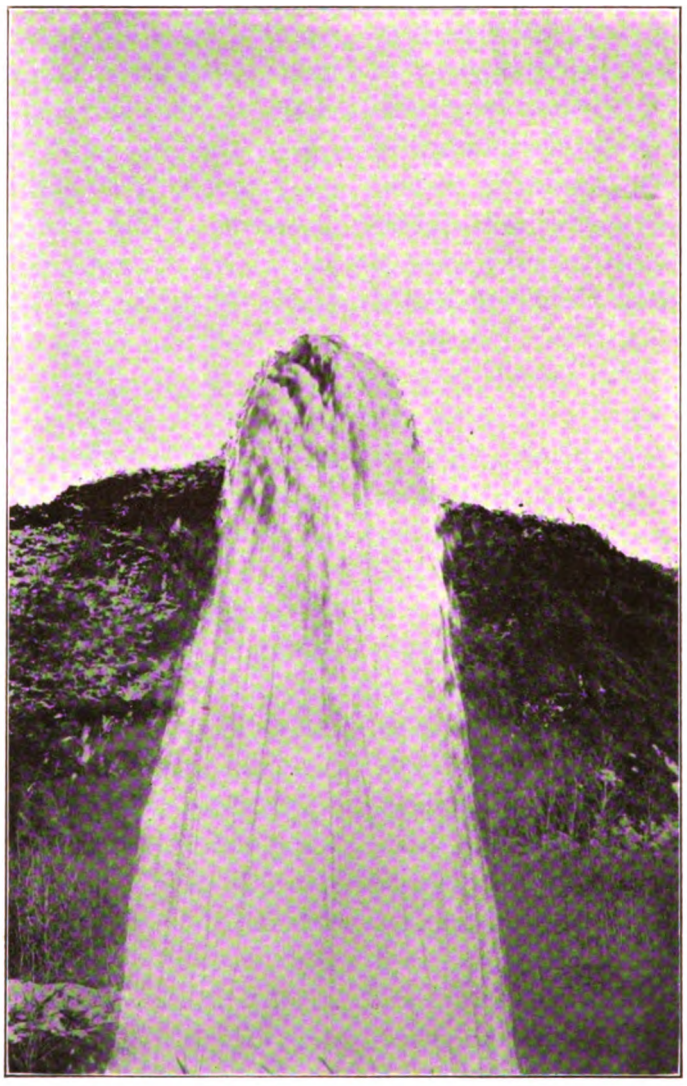
The roll was called and the senate passed the bill by a vote of 37 to 14. Fourteen northern democrats, fourteen southern democrats, and nine southern whigs voted "aye." Four northern democrats, six northern whigs, two free soilers, one southern whig (Bell of Tennessee) and one lone southern democrat (Sam Houston of Texas) voted "nay." One important amendment had been attached to the bill against the wish of its friends. This was called the "Clayton amendment," proposed by Senator Clayton of Delaware. It provided that only citizens of the United States should vote or hold office in the new territories. This was designed to shut foreign immigrants, who had declared their intention of becoming citizens, from settlement in the new region and was fastened to the bill by the close vote of 23 for to 21 against. The Know-Nothing movement was just then in the flood of its rising power and honeycombed both whig and democratic parties with its followers.

The bill now went to the house where Richardson was still at the head of the committee on territories. In order to secure its early consideration he moved, March 21, its reference to that committee. But there were other rocks and rapids in the river besides those raised by northern abolitionists. There was a big democratic quarrel in the all important state of New York as to who should hold the offices. There were two factions, the "Hards" and the "Softs" or as they were more picturesquely called, the "Hunkers" and "Barnburners." The "Hards" were the fellows who always voted the democratic ticket no matter who was nominated or what was in the platform. They naturally felt that their superior democratic virtue entitled them to all the federal offices and were aggrieved just at this juncture because they were not getting them all. They hung out their

democratic family washing on the congressional clothesline to air, and page upon page of the congressional record at this period is filled with the flap of lacerated democratic shirt tails. When Mr. Richardson, acting his appointed part as the lieutenant of Senator Douglas, moved that the Nebraska-Kansas bill be referred to his committee, Mr. Cutting, a "Hunker" democrat from New York, moved to refer it to the committee of the whole, where there were fifty bills ahead of it which must be disposed of before it could be reached. In spite of all that Richardson and Douglas could do the House approved Cutting's proposition by a vote of 110 to 95, and there the Nebraska-Kansas bill lay beneath an avalanche of other legislation. A fist fight between Cutting and a fellow democrat,—Breckenridge of Kentucky, —was one of the features of the occasion.

The opposition of the north grew louder every day. It astonished those who had reckoned on an uprising. Out of 3,800 clergymen of all denominations in New England, three thousand signed a protest which was sent to congress. In the northwest five hundred clergymen signed a similar protest and sent it to Douglas himself to present,—which he did with some caustic remarks upon preachers who meddled in politics. The leading northern newspapers were filled with reports of mass meetings of laborers, farmers and merchants to protest against any further extension of the system of negro slavery. But there was another power in the field,—mightier for the moment than pulpit or press,—the power of the pie-counter. The Pierce administration made it distinctly known that no democrats need apply for office who did not push for the Nebraska-Kansas bill. Important appointments were held back until the bill was passed Every democratic congressman felt the mighty force of the party machine, joined with the pleadings of its personal friends at home for office. The business of getting out of the way those fifty bills on the calendar which had precedence of the Nebraska-Kansas bill was pushed with extraordinary energy, and on May 8, Richardson moved that the House resolve itself into a committee of the whole for the purpose of laying aside, one by one, the eighteen bills which then remained ahead of his own Nebraska bill. This was done,—the minority fighting every inch of the road. Richardson then moved a substitute for his own bill. This substitute was the senate bill with the Clayton amendment cut out. The democrats of the north had found that too heavy a burden to carry. It meant losing their foreign born voters en masse and certain defeat in several northern states.

Debate on the senate bill went on in the house until May 11, when Richardson rose and moved to close debate the next day at twelve o'clock and on that motion demanded the previous question. The opposition implored, denounced and threatened, but Richardson would not yield. Then began a filibuster, similar to the one that marked the repeal of the silver purchasing clause in the summer of 1893. Every known means to prevent a vote was employed by the minority. All day the 11th, all night, all the next day and until midnight was spent in ceaseless roll calls on dilatory motions. Both sides were worn out and adjourned. On Monday, May 15, the fight was renewed. The Pacific railroad bill here appeared again on the scene,—inseparable from the fate of Nebraska. It had been made a spe-



Artesian Well at Lynch, Nebraska

cial order for consideration that week. A two-thirds majority was required to postpone the special order. There was not a two-thirds majority in favor of the Nebraska bill, but there were enough opponents of the Pacific railroad among those voting against the Nebraska measure to give Richardson the two-thirds majority for its postponement. A motion to close debate on the Nebraska bill at the end of the week then prevailed. General debate was thus closed, but there still remained under the rules the privilege of moving amendments and making five minute speeches upon them. How to cut off the flood of amendments and five minute speeches in the committee of the whole was the knotty

problem for the majority. It was solved by Alexander H. Stephens, of Georgia, who moved to strike out the enacting clause. This took precedence over any other motion to amend. Mr. Stephens explained upon the floor that his motion was made for the purpose of getting the bill beyond the reach of amendment or debate and that therefore the friends of the bill should support his motion. They did so. The enacting clause was accordingly stricken out. This was equivalent to rejecting the bill and made it necessary at once for the committee of the whole to rise and report its action to the house. The house voted down the report of the committee of the whole and then had the bill in its own hands where a simple majority could close debate and order a vote whenever it desired. The end so long fought for was reached, and at midnight, May 22, the House roll was called on the passage of the Senate bill, with the Clayton amendment stricken out. The vote was 113 to 100 in favor of the bill. Forty-four northern democrats, fifty-seven southern democrats and twelve southern whigs voted for the bill; forty-five northern whigs, forty-two northern democrats, seven southern whigs and two southern democrats voted against the bill.

One thought—neglected by the average partisan mind—is suggested to the retrospective reader at the close of this long, fierce, sectional fight upon the subject of slave versus free territory: What has become of the rights of the Indian? No better illustration can, perhaps, be found in the annals of American history of the hypocrisy of political discussion than a comparison of the debate upon the Nebraska bill in the winter of 1853 with the debate upon the Nebraska-Kansas bill in 1854. The real issues involved on both occasions are the same, a year's time only intervenes, but the discussion of 1853 turns almost wholly upon Indian rights, and slavery is scarcely mentioned, while the discussion of 1854 turns almost wholly upon the slavery issue and the rights of the Indian are forgotten, except by one or two real friends of the Indian like Senator Sam Houston. The southern statesmen who fought against the Nebraska bill of 1853, because of their high regard for the sacred pledges made in the Indian treaties, in 1854 are ready to fight with their fists as well as their tongues in favor of a bill meaning the same thing for the Indian. If it is true that the dominant motive in Douglas' mind was to widen the commercial and political horizon of his own state and his own city,—to make Chicago what she is today, the metropolis of the Mississippi Valley and the future greatest city in the world,—no better tribute can be found to his own far-sighted political shrewdness than this changed attitude of the south.

On May 25 the senate agreed to the changes made by the house, thus striking out the Clayton amendment, and on May 30, 1854, President Pierce signed the bill and Nebraska Territory was born after the fiercest political fight in the nation's history. The slave sentimentalists of the south had swallowed the Douglas bait. They had secured the "equality" their constituents had clamored for—the right to take their slaves with them into the Nebraska and Kansas territory,—an empty privilege. To get this they had wrought a revolution in the north. They had welded the minds of northern whigs, democrats and abolitionists into one controlling political determination—no more slave territory in the United States.

This determination appeared forthwith in the organization of the republican party,—which owes its origin to, and dates its birth from the summer which witnessed, the enactment of the Nebraska-Kansas bill.

The shortsighted slavery statesmen of the south were the best friends of the republican party from the day of its organization. Their action drove the German immigrants into its ranks. The passage of the Nebraska-Kansas bill opened the northern path to the Pacific for settlement and survey. What use to agitate for a Pacific railroad across the sands of New Mexico and Arizona while the fertile prairies and valleys of Nebraska and Kansas were filling with frontiersmen and the broad emigrant trail up the Platte grew broader every year, its margin dotted with ranches, inviting the advent of the coming iron track binding the east and the west together? Is it any surprise that among the rivals of Chicago and St. Louis, —in New Orleans, in Texas and in Mississippi, —the newspapers of the day report no rejoicing over the passage of the Nebraska bill? There, at least, were southerners smart enough to know they had lost a battle—a battle for commercial supremacy, the foundation for all other supremacy.

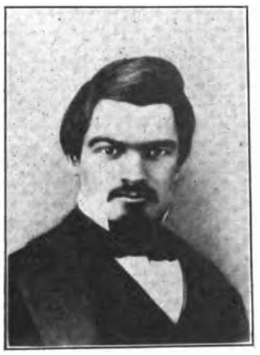
NEBRASKA TERRITORY

CHAPTER VIII

Gov. Francis Burt

The territorial life of Nebraska began with the arrival of Governor Francis Burt, of South Carolina, who arrived at Bellevue October 7, 1854, took his official oath of office October 16, and died October 18. Thomas B. Cuming, of Michigan, had been appointed Secretary of State and became acting governor upon his death. There were a score of pressing public questions at the threshold of the new territory. The governor was given authority by law to take a territorial census, to divide the territory into legislative districts, to call an election for members of the first territorial legislature and to fix the place where they should hold their first session. By treaty with the Omaha and Otoe Indians in April, 1854, while the Nebraska-Kansas bill was yet pending in Congress, the United States had acquired title to Nebraska land fronting on the Missouri river and extending west about one hundred miles. This was not yet surveyed, but was open for white settlement and adventurous spirits swarmed across the river all the way from Rulo to Niobrara, to locate townsites and take their pick of choice tracts of land. Council Bluffs, Iowa, was then a town of about two thousand people, the largest place on the Missouri river opposite the Nebraska shore. Enterprising citizens of Council Bluffs had already driven stakes, in the year 1853, on the Nebraska hillside directly opposite their town. In 1854 the townsite and ferry company began booming the new location as the future capital of Nebraska and the river crossing of the Pacific raliroad. In this work they had of course the active assistance of the entire population of Council Bluffs who planned thereby to make their town the real terminus and departure point for the Pacific coast.

Omaha and Bellevue, then, became immediate rivals for the Nebraska territorial capital. Florence, Plattsmouth and Nebraska City were also candidates. Bellevue had the advantage of possession, the advantage of the better site, the advantage of long historic settlement and association in men's minds as the principal,—nay, the only,—town in eastern Nebraska. It was the site of the Omaha, Otoe



Gov. Thomas B. Cuming

and Pawnee Indian Agency, the site of the Presbyterian mission church and school, the location of the first newspaper,—the Nebraska Palladium, printed on Nebraska soil, the headquarters of the fur trade and the residence of the acting governor and other territorial officers.

Naturally, the citizens of Bellevue felt they had a sure thing and in their case, as so often in human experience, over-confidence ended in defeat. The first step in proceedings was the territorial census, which was taken simultaneously in all districts bordering on the Missouri river, beginning October 31, 1854. The returns showed two thousand, seven hundred and nineteen white settlers and thirteen slaves in Nebraska territory. More than half of these, unquestionably, were actual residents of Iowa and Missouri. Governor Cuming's next step was the division of eastern Nebraska into counties and the apportionment of members of the first territorial legislature among them. In this apportionment it became perfectly plain that Governor Cuming was in favor of Omaha. A majority of the members of both houses was apportioned north of the Platte and Omaha and Bellevue were grouped together in the one county of Douglas. At the election which followed no party lines were drawn, no political parties were in fact organized. In Douglas county the struggle was between an Omaha ticket and a Bellevue ticket for members of the legislature and Omaha won. The ferry between Council Bluffs and Omaha was in good working condition. On December 20, 1854, Governor Cuming issued his proclamation convening the first session of the Nebraska legislature in Omaha January 16, 1855. The citizens of Bellevue might rave and gnash their teeth, denounce the governor as a boodler and demand his removal. They did all these things. But there was no going back on the returns. The governor was master of the situation. Omaha became the capital of Nebraska and Bellevue a quiet village of historic memories and the seat of a Presbyterian college. It required nerve to do all these things, to face the storm they roused, but Cuming had the nerve and to him Omaha owes her place on the map.

Omaha had about one hundred and fifty people and a brick building hastily erected near Ninth and Farnam and donated by the Ferry company was the place where the first territorial legislature met pursuant to the governor's proclamation. The senate (or council as it was then called) was composed of thirteen members,—the house of twenty-six. The leading theme in the message of Acting Governor Cuming was—the Pacific railroad. He urged that the valley of the Platte was the natural route of the road and pictured the commerce of India, China and the Pacific Islands crossing Nebraska. He recommended a memorial to congress for the transcontinental telegraph as the precursor of a railroad, asked liberal provision for education and concluded his reference

to current events in these words: "We stand in the center of this great confederacy. Our fellow citizens are brothers from nearly every state. In our admission geographical lines were erased between the north and the south. Let us institute no line of demarcation within our territorial boundaries, separating communities of embittered feelings. Let mutual concession and conciliation characterize our public acts, so that tranquility and satisfaction may the more speedily prevail over the conflict of local interests."

The leading features of this first session were, a bitter fight to take the capital from Omaha, which failed,—the adoption of the Iowa code of laws, the granting of numerous ferry, bridge and college charters, provision for a public school system—the enactment of a prohibitory liquor law and of a territorial claim club law. This last act was practically an attempt to abrogate the United States statute for the acquisition of land. It has been stated that the Indian title had been extinguished in eastern Nebraska. No surveys were made until 1855 and 1856. All the first settlers were therefore "squatters." When the land was surveyed and the land office opened each would be entitled to a pre-emption not exceeding 160 acres. "Claim clubs" were organizations designed to secure for each pioneer "Squatter" 320 acres instead of the 160 granted by the United States. They were bound together by a secret ritual and oath, to protect each other in this undertaking. The theory was that each pioneer was equitably entitled to 320 acres and should hold the extra quarter section until some tenderfoot came on from the east to whom he might sell his "right" thereby harvesting enough cash to pay Uncle Sam $1.25 per acre for the quarter said uncle permitted him to pre-empt. Claim club members respected each other's claims and if an outsider attempted to "squat" on any tract so claimed he was "visited" by a mass meeting of the club,—generally provided with a rope of convenient length. These claim clubs were the real government of the territory for the first few years in the all-important matter of land titles. Distinguished men like John M. Thayer and A. J. Poppleton were presidents of the Omaha claim club. The first legislature, being composed of members of claim clubs, passed an act legalizing claims of 320 acres and providing penalties for trespassing upon them. The act was never tested in court, its enforcement generally being by the swift and vigorous claim club mass meetings.

One of the first acts the aspiring democratic statesmen of the new territory felt called upon to do was to pass resolutions approving the principle of "popular sovereignty" as embodied in Douglas' bill. This resolution passed the house by a vote of 21 to 4 and the senate by 9 to 4. Douglas was the rising star in the democratic sky at this time and that no doubt influenced the vote. Indicative of the sentiment on the negro question is the fact that a bill to prevent the settlement of free negroes in Nebraska passed the house but was killed in the senate.

The first free public school act in Nebraska was passed March 16, 1855. The state librarian was also state superintendent of schools. The old-fashioned plan of examining teachers by the school board which employed them was in the law. The county superintendent organized school districts upon petition, but levied the school tax himself—not less than three,

nor more than five mills. Two "universities" were incorporated by this first session,—Nebraska University at Fontanelle in Dodge county, and Simpson university at Omaha,—besides the Nebraska City Collegiate and Preparatory Institute. About a dozen other universities and colleges were incorporated in the next two years.

During this first legislative session Mark W. Izard, of Arkansas, who had been appointed governor by President Pierce to fill the vacancy made by the death of Governor Burt, arrived and assumed his duties, making an address before both houses on February 20, 1855.

Sioux Indian Fourth of July Celebration, July 4, 1903

Among the events which marked this year of Nebraska life was the Fontanelle or "Catfish War" as it was called by some of the participants. July 30 a courier arrived at Omaha from Fontanelle with news of a Sioux raid. Two persons had been killed and the community stampeded. Under orders of Governor Izard, John M. Thayer, who had just been appointed a brigadier general of militia, gathered a company of forty men and made a rapid march to Fontanelle. No Indians were seen by the militia and they were probably a hundred miles away when the troops arrived. To protect the outer settlers a company was stationed during the rest of the summer at Elkhorn City and another at Tekamah. The soldiers at these posts beguiled the time by fishing and owing to their remarkable luck in landing big channel cat named the hostilities the "Catfish War." The cost to the territorial treasury was $9,100.

The Fontanelle settlement deserves a word in this place. It was the only colony of these earliest settlement days and was the outgrowth

of the "Quincy Colony" organized at Quincy, Illinois, June 24, 1854. In September, 1854, the advance guard of the colony came to Bellevue and under the guidance of Logan Fontanelle located a tract of land on the east side of the Elkhorn river, about twelve miles northeast of where Fremont now stands. In the early spring of 1855 the colonists came on. Plans for the future were made. Two miles square were laid off for a townsite and grounds for the coming state capitol and university. The university was chartered by the legislature and school was actually opened in 1858, the Congregational association having taken the institution under its patronage. For a number of years the town and school struggled on, but in 1865 the school building burned and the location of the Union Pacific road a few miles away ended the ambitions of Fontanelle, once a prosperous village of five hundred people, now mostly a cornfield, whose site may be seen by the traveler on the Northwestern railroad up the Elkhorn valley.

Early in the spring of 1855 the Pawnee Indians began to make free with the property of settlers in the Elkhorn valley. From their village on the high bluff south of Fremont they saw with jealous eye the steady encroachment of the white man on their hunting grounds. Small parties of young men would slip away and while too prudent to attack the settlers, they were not disposed to miss any good chances at stealing cattle. In answer to frequent complaints Gov. Izard appointed John M. Thayer and O. D. Richardson as representatives of the dignity of the Territory of Nebraska to visit the Pawnees and stop the outrages. May 20 they left Bellevue with a guide and interpreter and arrived at Peta-le-sharu's lodge the second day. The council which followed was the first meeting of official representatives of Nebraska with the aboriginal inhabitants. It was held in the great council lodge on the bluff overlooking Fremont, and was attended by all the principal chiefs of the village. They denied any knowledge of raiding the white people and professed themselves friends of the great father and all the little fathers. General Thayer delivered his "ultimatum"—which was, no more stealing or war on the Pawnees, and returned across the Platte river—where he found that in his absence the Pawnees had

Island in Platte River, opposite Old Pawnee Village, Fremont, Nebraska

stolen all the commissary supplies of the expedition from his wagon and the representatives of the Territory of Nebraska were obliged to go hungry. The original receipt for $86.75 expenses of this expedition—on old style blue paper is among the archives of the historical society.

The second annual census of the territory taken October 15, 1855, disclosed a population of 4,494, near two-thirds of them south of the Platte. The assessed valuation of the territory was $617,822. The territorial treasury was empty and the second session of the territorial legislature—which met in Omaha December 18, 1855,—authorized the treasurer to borrow $4,000 on the credit of the territory, paying not more than fifteen per cent interest. The tax for territorial purposes was two mills on the dollar,—and very little money coming in.

This second session of the Nebraska legislature, lasting from December 18, 1855, until January 26, 1856, may appropriately be named the "Wild Cat Session." The great economic feature was the incorporation of territorial banks of issue, whose paper promises were soon to flood the little frontier fringe of settlements, and swell the rising tide of a great real estate "boom." This first crop of Nebraska wild cats included the following:

	Initial Capital.	Authorized Capital.
Bank of Florence, at Florence	$100,000	$500,000
Bank of Nebraska, at Omaha	100,000	500,000
Platte Valley Bank, at Nebraska City	100,000	500,000
Fontanelle Bank, at Bellevue	100,000	500,000
Nemaha Valley Bank, at Brownville	50,000	500,000

The charters of these concerns is an interesting one for the student of financial experiments. Each bank was authorized to open doors and begin business as soon as half of its initial capital was,—not paid in, but "subscribed." Each bank was authorized to issue its notes and transact a general banking business and "to buy and sell property of all kinds." The charters were to run for twenty-five years and the stockholders were individually liable to redeem the notes issued in gold and silver. In actual practice these acts of incorporation permitted a bank to issue its own paper money notes and to receive deposits without a dollar of capital stock being paid in. The door for unlimited speculation was left open by permitting banks "to buy and sell any kind of property." The stock of the banks was also transferable,—so that the original incorporators might, if they chose, issue the full amount of notes authorized—half a million dollars—and then by transferring the stock to irresponsible parties leave the note holders without recourse.

There were a few men in the territorial legislature who had sense and courage enough to oppose such bare-faced swindling schemes as these acts. Conspicuous among them were Dr. George L. Miller and J. Sterling Morton, but the opposition was walked over like an outclassed football team in the general mad rush for fictitious prosperity. Flush times followed. The year 1856 was the golden era of speculation in infant Nebraska. Townsites sprang up on every hill side along the Missouri river and even the interior as far as the Elkhorn and the headwaters of Salt Creek was dotted over with future county seats and railroad centers. The favorite plan was to issue townsite

Dr. Geo. L. Miller

"stock" with beautiful, lithographed certificates which were freely traded for all kinds of property. Settlers from the east came flocking in to enjoy the wonderful prosperity of the frontier. They, too, were soon infected and engaged in the business of buying town lots, staking out additional townsites and projecting new banks. The census taken in October, 1856 found a population of 10,716—more than double what it had been twelve months before.

The business of starting new universities and colleges prospered proportionately with the increase in new townsites. A large number of ferry and bridge charters were granted by the legislature to afford easy communication between the embryo cities, which included such well-known places as St. John City, California City, Jacksonville, Marietta and Bradford. A Saline company was incorporated to carry on the business of manufacturing salt in the Salt Creek basin with a capital of $50,000. To relieve the legislative mind from the tension of these large speculative projects there was the usual annual fight over the removal of the capital. In this Omaha's shrewdness was again victorious by the narrow majority of two votes.

When the third territorial legislature met in December 1856, there was a large demand for more banks in the territory. As one of the debaters expressed it "having supplied all the towns in the territory with banks, they now proposed to have one at every crossroads." Acts of incorporation were passed for six more banks,—the Clinton Bank, Bank of Columbus, Pacific Bank, Waubeek Bank, of Desoto, Bank of Plattsmouth and Tekamah Bank. All of these bills were vetoed by Governor Izard. The charters for the Bank of Tekamah and Desoto Bank were passed over the Governor's veto, the others failed by a close vote. To make the financial situation still more interesting some of the banks which had failed to get charters from the legislature had on hand a fine stock of nicely lithographed notes which they proceeded to issue without any charter. There were numerous charges of bribery in connection with the passage of these bank bills and assertions that the banks which had been chartered the year before in their selfish desire to monopolize the money business in Nebraska had prevented the incorporation of others. Including two or three insurance companies which had secured charters permitting them to do a banking business there was now a bank for every thousand people and $750 banking capital for every man, woman and child in the territory. The total issue of Wildcat paper notes by these concerns is stated by a newspaper of the day at $480,000. In the autumn of 1857 the crash came. The banks suspended payments. The individual liability of the stockholders vanished like an early October frost and almost every dollar of the entire paper money issue proved a total loss in the hands of the

people. Some of them are now preserved as relics of past folly. At the very same time the price of town lots and paper pictures representing townsite shares sank out of sight. Misery and despair drove out prosperity and speculation. Everybody was insolvent. Efforts to collect debts were ridiculous.An execution issued against the Bank of Tekamah, which had $90,000 in paper notes outstanding, brought a return from the sheriff that the only property he could find was a ten by twelve board shanty, used as the banking house, and furniture consisting of an old table and broken stove. This bitter experience of territorial Nebraska effectually killed wildcat banking.

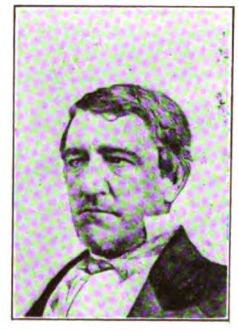
Part of the work of the legislature of 1856-7 was the renewal of the assault upon Omaha by the South Platte members of the legislature who had never forgiven the citizens of that town for their sharp practice in seizing and holding the capital. The South Platte was now strong enough to control things and promptly passed a bill removing the capital to the town of Douglas near the head of Salt Creek, in Lancaster county. Governor Izard as promptly vetoed the bill, assigning, among other reasons that there was not a house in the town of Douglas, that no one knew where it was, and the only evidence of its existence was in the shape of $500 printed stock certificates which were being freely circulated about the legislature. The effort to pass the bill over the governor's veto was almost successful, but here again Omaha's luck did not desert her. Two members from the South Platte country, —Furnas and Finney of Nemaha,—changed their votes and the capital remained at Omaha. Bitter charges were made in connection with these votes and long years afterward they were revived by a libel suit brought by Governor Furnas against the Omaha Herald. The enemies of Omaha were able to accomplish one thing, however. The southern part of Douglas county, including Bellevue, was cut off and erected into Sarpy county, which it has remained ever since.

The election for delegate to congress in the fall of 1857 was a four-sided contest, in which Fenner Ferguson received 1,654 votes, Bird B. Chapman, 1,597, B. F. Rankin, 1,304 and John M. Thayer, 1,288. All of these candidates were democratic, but no party lines being drawn as yet in the territory every man ran independent on his own nomination and organized his own campaign.

On December 9, 1857 the fourth territorial legislature convened—which was to become the most famous in Nebraska's territorial annals. The center of the storm area again was the question of capital removal. Congress had appropriated $50,000 to erect a suitable capital building, which had been begun on the site where now stands the Omaha high school building. Governor Izard had the disbursement of the $50,000 and had handled it so well that it did not finish the first story. The city of Omaha had taken the matter in hand and issued $60,000 in city scrip which circulated as money. Some of the people who held this scrip became anxious about security for the same and the Omaha people had given in a statement of assets which included the ground where the unfinished capitol stood. These transactions led to an investigation by the legislature and the development of a good deal of animosity. An Otoe county member introduced a new capital removal bill. The people of Omaha were by this time very tired of capi-

tal removal bills. The Douglas county members declared that no more bills of any kind should pass the legislature until the capital removal bill was withdrawn and began to kill time with moot discussions to make the threat good. January 7, 1858 the trouble reached its climax in the house. Speaker Decker, when attempting to take the chair was seized by some of the Omaha members, assisted by the Omaha lobby, thrown on the floor and rolled under a table. A free-for-all fracas followed. The next day both the house and the senate passed a resolution adjourning to meet at Florence. Accordingly a majority of both houses met at Florence and proceeded with legislative business until January 16, when the session expired by limitation. During this time numerous bills were passed, one of them removing the capital to the city of Neapolis on the Platte river—a paper town which the imagination may plausibly locate near the present town of Cedar Bluffs. Governor Izard had left the territory October 28, 1857. On January 11, 1858 his successor, W. A. Richardson, of Illinois, arrived,—the same Richardson who as Douglas' lieutenant had charge of the Nebraska-Kansas Bill during the struggle of 1854 in congress. Governor Richardson declined to recognize the Florence legislature on the ground that it was not in session at the seat of government. The legislature replied in a letter reciting the insults and indignities heaped upon their members at Omaha and declaring that it was unsafe to hold its sessions there.

On March 23, Secretary of State Cuming died,—probably the ablest of all the early territorial leaders in Nebraska political life. President Buchannan appointed to succeed



Gov. W. A. Richardson

him J. Sterling Morton, who entered upon his duties July 12.

There were no political parties organized in Nebraska until 1858. Factions and sectional divisions existed, nothing more. All were democrats, of the good old Jacksonian stock. There was great contempt for "black, nigger-loving republicans" as they were generally called, and they had not dared assert themselves in the territory. The first territorial meeting for the organization of republicans that we have any printed account of was on May 27, 1858, in Omaha. The meeting was held with closed doors in order to keep out intruding democrats who were very curious to see what sort of an animal a "black republican" was. Their declaration of principles included the control of the territories by congress, free labor and free speech, homestead act, land grants to the Pacific railroad and opposition to banks of issue whose notes were not secured.

The first democratic territorial convention was held at Plattsmouth June 3, 1858. It declared in favor of "popular sovereignty," a homestead law and that the incorporation of banks was anti-democratic. At a special session of the legislature which met September

21, in order to transact some business which the Florence "rebellion" had left undone, the distinction between democrats and "black republicans" begins to appear more clearly. Marquette of Cass county and Daily of Nemaha county are the leaders of a little group who are stigmatized in various picturesque frontier phrases as "the nigger party." At this session a liquor license law is passed, repealing the prohibitory law of 1855. Mr. Daily is a leading advocate of the bill and it is reported as part of the republican program to get the German vote. On December 5, 1858, Governor Richardson resigns his office and hastens to Illinois where his friend Douglas is making the fight of his life against Abraham Lincoln for the United States senatorship. The Buchanan administration was opposed to Douglas and Richardson was not willing to hold a Buchanan appointment. The debt to the territory was over $15,000. Territorial warrants were receivable for taxes, but sold for forty-five cents on the dollar. It was the era of "special legislation." When anything was to be done it required an act of the legislature—to make a road, building a mill dam—even divorces were granted by the legislature.

The uppermost topic in the Nebraska mind during the summer of 1858 was "land sales." For four years the settlers had been "squatters." Surveying had been going on and the land was now staked and platted as far west as the sixth principal meridian,—which forms now the western boundary of Jefferson, Saline, Seward and Butler counties. On January 26, 1857, the United States land officials at Omaha gave notice that pre-emptors might now come forward, make their proof of settlement, pay $1.25 per acre and secure title to their claims. A great many settlers found it more convenient to hold their claims as squatters than to raise the money to pay the government. In May, 1858, notice was sent from Washington that all lands not entered by September 6 would be offered for sale. This meant,—under the land policy of those days,—that the squatters would be obliged to raise the money to enter their claims before that date or lose their land, with all its improvements, to any speculator who had the money to buy it. There was great excitement in the frontier log cabins. The panic of the previous year had left the people moneyless. To be compelled to purchase their lands now would force them to lose their claims to the "land sharks" or mortgage their property at an enormous rate of interest. Mass meetings were held in nearly every community to protest against the ruin which was impending. The pioneer republican agitators, like S. G. Dailey, did not lose the opportunity of reminding the people that if the republican free homestead bill had been enacted they need not fear the loss of their little homes after enduring the hardships and dangers of the frontier. Delegations of leading citizens,—in which active democratic politicians were prominent,—went to Washington to urge upon the president a revocation of the order. The result of their mission was announced in the Brownville Advertiser of September 2, 1858, (Robert W. Furnos, editor) under the startling headline, "Nebraska Saved," accompanied by a cut of President Buchanan with the stars and stripes floating over his head. The government had ordered the land sales in Nebraska postponed one year.

The year 1859 was full of excitement in

Nebraska. The feud between the North and South Platte section which had raged for several years now reached the white heat of secession. The South Platte people outnumbered the North Platte, but had been outgeneraled in every contest. They now resolved to separate from the northern barbarians and unite with Kansas, which was asking admission as a state. New Years Day, 1859, a mass meeting was held at Nebraska City which declared for Kansas. On January 5th a delegate convention from South Platte counties was held at Brownville at which Richardson, Nemaha, Otoe, Clay, Gage and Johnson counties were represented. A memorial to congress was adopted asking that the boundaries of Kansas be changed so as to include the South Platte. A committee composed of E. S. Dundy, of Richardson, R. W. Furnas, of Nemaha, and J. B. Weston, of Gage, was appointed to prepare an address to the people. The movement grew. On May 2 another convention, held at Nebraska City, called an election in all the counties south of the Platte to choose delegates to represent them in the coming Kansas constitutional convention to be held at Wyandotte. Members were elected in every county, those from Nemaha county being R. W. Furnas, S. A. Chambers, W. W. Keeling and C. E. L. Holmes. In Otoe county 900 voters out of 1,100 signed a petition to be joined to Kansas. On July 5 the Kansas convention met. The delegates from Nebraska were admitted to seats, but not to vote. A strong party among the Kansas delegates favored annexation of the South Platte region, but there were jealousies and rivalries to overcome. When the test vote was taken on the question, by a vote of 29 to 19, the convention refused to ask the extension of their state to the Platte. The South Platte delegates came home and started an agitation for statehood which resulted in the submission of that proposition the next year.

First Temporary Bridge and First Train Crossing the Missouri at Omaha 1866

The territorial election of 1859 was the first squarely joined contest between the demo-

cratic and republican parties in Nebraska. The democrats met in convention at Plattsmouth August 18 and nominated their ticket. A long platform was adopted which may be condensed into these points: The right of territories to exclude slavery by "unfriendly legislation," non-intervention by congress in domestic territorial affairs, the right of Nebraska to enter the union, "and we believe the time is now arrived," opposition to a revival of the African slave trade, protection to all citizens in Nebraska, for free homesteads, for the Pacific railroad up the Platte valley, for congressional appropriations to bridge the Platte, Loup, Nemaha and Niobrara, for "speedy organization as a state," fixed the responsibility for the existence of the African slave trade on President Buchanan's administration and concluded with the following indictment of the democratic party: "We will judge the democratic party by its acts rather than its professions; professing opposition to a system of

Present Railroad Bridge Across Missouri River

both native and naturalized, strict economy, but a liberal school fund, a national railroad to the Pacific and liberal land grants for railroads and internal improvements, appropriations by congress to bridge the Platte, free 160-acre homesteads, and last "we are irreconcilably opposed to incorporation of banks or of banking institutions."

The republican territorial convention met at Bellevue August 24. Its platform declared for free soil and free labor, for the right of the territorial legislature to prohibit slavery credit it has burdened the treasury with an enormous debt; professing opposition to banks the national democracy has flooded the nation with treasury notes and the Nebraska democracy has burdened our people with worthless banks; professing to favor a national railroad to the Pacific it has expended millions to establish an impracticable southern route and has not even surveyed the central route in Nebraska; professing to favor emigration to the territory it has defeated in congress the homestead bill, compelled the settlers to pay for their land

at a time of great commercial depression and thrown open vast tracts to the grasp of speculators."

At the election which followed October 11th the principal contest was over delegate to congress. There was great contrast between the candidates. Estabrook was a scholarly polished lawyer. Daily, to whom more than to anyone else belongs the distinction of being the founder of the republican party in Nebraska, was a typical agitator,—restless, untiring, strategic. He was unlettered and the opposition were never weary of ridiculing his grammar. They nicknamed him "Skisms" Daily, because of his pronunciation of "schism," but he had the knack of getting next to the people which served him well in the stormy campaigns of the early days. The official returns elected the entire democratic ticket, including a majority of the legislature. The vote for Estabrook was 3,100, for Daily 2,800 and the returning board gave Estabrook the certificate of election. Daily contested the seat on the ground that the vote of several counties was fraudulent, and cited in particular Buffalo county where 292 votes were returned for his oponent and none for him, most of this vote coming from Fort Kearney. The house had a republican majority and gave Daily the seat.

Some events outside of political controversies claim our attention before passing into the new decade. The first territorial fair was held on September 21 at Nebraska City. The orator for the occasion was J. Sterling Morton and his address at that time will remain a classic in Nebraska history, descriptive of society in the early territorial days. The fair was a wonderful exhibit of Nebraska's fertility.

The pioneer religious denominations in Nebraska, as already noted, were the Baptist and Presbyterian,—represented by missionaries to the Indians. Father P. J. DeSmet, the famous Catholic missionary, was contemporary with them, taking charge af the mission to the Pottawotamie Indians at Council Bluffs, Iowa, in 1838 and from that time on frequently engaged in mission work in Nebraska. The Methodist church came next, the first regular church work beginning at Nebraska City in October, 1854, in charge of Rev.W.D. Gage, Congregationalism in Nebraska dates from Christmas Day, 1855, when Rev. Reuben Gaylord and wife crossed the Missouri at Omaha and organized the First Congregational church there during the year which followed.

On December 6, 1859, the first Nebraska press association was organized at the Herndon Hotel, Omaha, with six newspapers represented. The Nebraska Board of Agriculture dates from October 14, 1858, when a bill for its incorporation, introduced by Robert W. Furnas, became law. The first woman suffrage movement began earlier. On the 8th of January, 1856, Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, then living at Council Bluffs, Iowa, and author of the "bloomer" costume, appeared by invitation before the Nebraska legislature and made an address in favor of suffrage for her sex.

The year 1859 was the year of "Old John Brown's" raid on Harper's Ferry ending in his trial and execution. Brown was a familiar figure in southeast Nebraska for several years, crossing from Iowa into Kansas by way of the Nemaha valley. An "underground railroad" route for the escape of slaves ran across the same tract to Tabor, Iowa.

The "Pawnee Indian war" of 1859 began on the 21st of June when seven or eight hundred Pawnees stole a hundred head of cattle on the Elkhorn near Fontanelle. The next day near West Point they took an ox. The settlers surrounded a party of them in a house and ordered them to surrender. The Indians fired wounding J. H. Peters in the shoulder. The settlers replied with a volley killing four Pawnees. A courier with this intelligence arrived in Omaha July 1st. General Thayer set out at once for the seat of war with the Omaha light artillery. Companies of militia from Fremont, Fontanelle and Columbus and a detachment of United States dragoons joined the command as it moved up the Elkhorn in pursuit of the Pawnees. Governor Black overtook the army on the 8th. It numbered then two hundred men with one six-pounder cannon. The trail led past Norfolk up the valley. The expedition made a forced march the night of July 12th and at daybreak the next morning came upon the Pawnee camp stretched along the banks of a small stream about ten miles above the forks of the Elkhorn. The order to charge was given when Chief Peta-le-sharu with a United States flag wrapped around him made a rush for General Thayer shouting "Good Indian." The command halted. The Pawnees turned over six of their young men as the guilty men, signed an agreement that pay for the property destroyed should be taken out of their annuities and the army marched across country to Columbus where the militia was mustered out. The little stream was named "Battle Creek"—presumably because there was no battle there. Today the prosperous town of Battle Creek, Madison county, is located a few hundred yards east of where the Pawnee camp was in 1859.

The sixth session of the Nebraska territorial legislature met at Omaha, December 5, 1859. Its organization was marked by a struggle between the Douglas and Buchanan democrats in which the Douglas faction won. Governor Samuel W. Black (who had been promoted from the position of territorial judge by President Buchanan) delivered a message full of interest. First of all he demolished the scientific reports which had declared Nebraska unfit for cultivation by referring to the visible proofs to the contrary He then declared that with the advent of man upon the plains there had been a great increase of rainfall which he ascribed to Divine preparation for civilization. He voiced, no doubt, the popular sentiment when he declared that there were "hundreds of thousands of acres of the best land in Nebraska held by individuals who have never broken a single foot of sod with spade or plow," and urged that taxes should be chiefly levied upon real estate, and that a certain number of live stock belonging to each person should be wholly exempt from taxes. He recommended an indirect bounty for tree planting by exemption from taxes of the land where they were planted, and also a homestead exemption law securing a man's home from creditors. As a remedy for the extravagant rates of interest on money in the territory he urged the passage of "stringent usury laws"—a piece of economic folly which has been perpetuated upon our statute book unto this day. The territory was in debt $31,068. A long argument is given for the admission of Nebraska as a state. An area of 8,851,758 acres had been surveyed by the United States surveyors—about one-sixth of the present state. The school advantages of the time may be judged

from the fact that out of a total of 4,767 children of school age reported only 1,310 attended any school in the year and seven counties with considerable population reported no schools in the county.

Slavery was the exciting theme before the legislature as it was in the nation. A bill prohibiting slavery in the territory passed the council by a vote of 7 to 3 and the house by 19 to 17, after a spirited debate. Governor Black vetoed it, assigning as his reason the clause in the Louisiana Purchase treaty which guarantees to the inhabitants of Louisiana the free enjoyment of their liberty and property during the period prior to their admission as states. An act exempting a homestead of 160 acres, or in lieu thereof, a dwelling and two town lots from execution for debt was passed—the first in the history of the territory; also an act giving one year's stay in forced sales of mortgaged premises. In these acts is seen clearly the aftermath of the panic of 1857. Congress was memorialized to grant 20,000 acres of land to J. P. Latta, of Cass county, as a bonus for establishment of a line of steamboats on the Platte.

The United States census of 1860—the first in which Nebraska found a place—returned 28,841 people and real and personal property of the value of $9,131,056 in the territory. Immigration had been checked by the hard times, there had been a rush from the Missouri river settlements to the gold diggings about Pike's Peak, which was then part of Nebraska, but on the whole there was a steady, solid growth of actual settlers.

The political campaign of 1860 in Nebraska was characterized by the same consuming interest that it was elsewhere in the Union. The real leaders of the respective parties,—S. G. Daily and J. Sterling Morton,—were opposing candidates for delegate to congress. The platforms were not much different in spirit from those of 1859,—both parties were in favor of a free homestead law and Pacific railroad,—the republicans, however, pointed to the veto of the free homestead law by President Buchanan and the veto of the act prohibiting slavery by Governor Black, while the democrats could only promise to make Nebraska free state when admitted. The democratic party went into the campaign with a serious handicap. In order to hold itself together it tried to be for Buchanan and for Douglas in the same breath. Then Morton was a Buchanan appointee and continued to hold his position as secretary of the territory while he made his canvass. At the opening of the campaign R. W. Furnas, of the Brownville Advertiser, changed from the democratic to the republican party and fought Morton with a cordial vehemence which is astonishing to those who knew them in later life as intimate friends. Joint debates were held by the two candidates over the territory. Morton was much better educated than Daily and was master of a more biting wit. Daily spoke the dialect of the common people and knew how to drive home a telling point so that the dullest grasped its full meaning. Perhaps the most telling of these points was the veto of the free homestead bill by a democratic president after its passage by a republican congress,—with its attendant results in Nebraska. The failure of the free homestead bill had forced the settlers to borrow money in order to buy their claims from the government and save their homes. Figures were given showing that in the three counties of Richardson, Pawnee and

Nemaha, alone, the results of the land sales had been to place a debt of $85,199.11, secured by trust deeds, on settlers' claims. The rate of interest paid on this debt is given as an average of fifty per cent per annum—which was certainly stiff interest on real estate loans. The democratic reply was that Douglas had supported the free homestead bill, while seven republicans had voted against it; that the republican party was a sectional party and a "nigger" party,—and that Abraham Lincoln had made a speech in congress against the Mexican war, which speech translated into Spanish had been circulated in Mexico, thus giving aid and comfort to the enemy whom our brave soldiers were fighting in the field.

Both sides claimed the election as the returns came in. It was soon clear that the republicans had secured the legislature. Daily had about 100 majority with all the counties in except L' eau qui Court which included the settlements at the mouth of the Niobrara river. The return from this county was long delayed, but finally arrived with 127 majority for Morton, electing him by fourteen votes. The returning board composed of Governor Black and the other democratic territorial officials gave Morton his certificate of election, while Daily promptly gave notice of contest on the ground of fraudulent vote in L'eau qui Court, —far exceeding the total number of settlers in that county.

The first electric telegraph reached Nebraska soil August 29, crossing the river at Brownville. Messages were exchanged with the rest of the world and a celebration held at night. When the legislature met again on December 4th it found the territorial debt grown to $52,000 and warrants selling at fifty cents on the dollar. Out of $19,615 territorial taxes assessed against the counties for 1859 only $4,813 had been paid. The new legislature was strongly republican and promptly passed and sent to the governor a new bill prohibiting slavery in the territory. January 1, 1861, Governor Black sent in his veto message, holding that under the Dred Scott decision and the Louisiana treaty the territorial legislature had no power to pass the act. Besides this he asserted that it was bad policy, tending to shut off trade with slave states. On this point the message written in 1861 reads like a prophecy today. He wrote:

"Look at the map and you will see that the future of Nebraska is linked with Texas. Our road to market is through that great and growing state. From Galveston Bay to the mouth of the Platte is less than eight hundred miles. A railroad is already surveyed and partially completed toward the northern line of Texas. By that road our rich harvests are eventually to reach their best market."

The bill was passed over the veto by a vote of 35 to 2 in the house and 10 to 3 in the council. In the discussion it appeared that Alexander Majors and S. F. Nuckolls, of Nebraska City, and a few others had slaves. Two of Nuckolls' slaves ran away by the Tabor route to freedom. One of the fugitives, Eliza, was arrested by the United States marshall in Chicago under the fugitive slave act and the Nebraska City News of November 17, 1860, states that a "mob of black republicans" in that city took her from the marshal's hands. Six of Majors' slaves ran away about this time and thus closes the chapter of negro slavery in Nebraska.

Freighting across the plains had been a

growing Nebraska industry for a number of years. With the development of the Colorado mines it now leaped to giant proportions. Omaha, Bellevue, Plattsmouth, Nebraska City, and Brownville each claimed the "shortest and best route." But when Nebraska City laid out the Kearney Cut-off in 1861, passing by the head of Salt creek to the forks of the Big Blue and West Blue in Seward county, thence over easy grades across what is now York, Hamilton and Hall counties to Fort Kearney, it was not long before the bulk of the business was going by that route and Nebraska City of those days was larger than Omaha.

Abraham Lincoln became president March 4, 1861, and on May 11th the new republican officials,—Alvin Saunders, governor and A. S. Paddock, secretary of state, assumed their duties. On May 18th Gov. Saunders called for volunteers. On July 30th the First Nebraska under Col. John M. Thayer left Omaha by steamboat for the front, taking part in the battles of Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Corinth, Cape Giradeau and a multitude of lesser engagements.

In July of 1861 congress met in extra session to provide means for carrying on the war. When Mr. Morton arrived in Washington to take his seat as delegate from Nebraska he was astonished to find that another certificate of election had been issued by Governor Black to Mr. Daily and that Col. Forney, chief clerk of the house, had placed Daily's name on the roll as member from this territory. It was even so. Daily's certificate was dated April 29, 1861, and was accompanied by a statement from Governor Black that on reconsideration of the vote from L'eau qui Court county he felt compelled to regard it as fraudulent, and had thrown it out, giving Daily a majority and the certificate. The details of the contest which followed cannot be given here. Leading democratic members, like Voorhees, of Indiana, made a fight for Morton, but a republican congress called to find means for putting down a giant rebellion had little time to seat democrats. Morton was granted the privilege of presenting his own case on the floor and made his first and last speech in congress, a fiery phillippic denouncing the men who had betrayed his confidence. He showed by documents that Governor Black owed him several hundred dollars, money loaned, at the very time he secretly issued the certificate to Daily, and discussed other features of the case with pungent oratory, but the house laid the matter on the table and Daily kept his seat. Black, meanwhile, had gone into the army as colonel of the 62nd Pennsylvania and was killed at the head of his regiment at the battle of Gaines Mill, June 27, 1862, fighting for the freedom of the slaves of the entire south, when he had refused to free a handful in Nebraska with a stroke of his pen.

While the Nebraska First Regiment was marching on under southern skies to battle and victory, the problems of government and development were being met at home. The eighth territorial legislature met December 2, 1861. Governor Saunders reported that the telegraph line to the Pacific was already staked out along the Platte valley and the Pacific railroad must soon follow. Free schools was one of the things urged upon the attention of the legislature. Under decision of the new secretary of the interior the school lands in the territory were made subject to lease for the benefit of the fund. The territory owed $16,-

000 in bonds and $34,000 in warrants and its credit was 50% to 60% below par. So poor was the revenue system and so urgent the need of securing funds for local expenses that some counties had resorted to the practice of issuing county warrants for three or four times the debt to be discharged in order to cover the depreciation of their paper,—a practice which the Governor said could not be "too strongly reprehended." The legislature promptly passed a resolution approving the war and pledging its support to the national government and memorialized congress to confiscate the property of the state of Georgia and Alabama and of sundry individuals in those states, —in the territory of Nebraska,—amounting to upwards of two hundred thousand acres of choice land,—and to devote the money arising from the sale of such confiscated rebel property to the payment of Nebraska's share of the Federal direct tax and to internal improvements within the territory. The writer has found no record showing that congress acted on this petition.

Early in 1862 bands of "jayhawkers" raided into Richardson and Nemaha counties, stealing and destroying property. Governor Saunders issued a proclamation against them on January 2. The people of Nemaha county captured several of them, killed two and thrust their bodies under the ice in the Missouri river. Anti-jayhawker associations were a common social feature in this part of Nebraska during the rest of the war. In August, 1862, occurred the great Sioux outbreak in Minnesota. Immediate action was taken by Nebraska to protect her northern border, and the Second Nebraska Cavalry was organized during the fall, with Robert W. Furnas as colonel. In April, 1863, the regiment was ordered to Sioux City, and joined the army under General Sully to march against the Dakota Indians. It was a hard summer's campaign across the uninhabited plains, skirmishing with the elusive enemy. On the 3rd of September, General Sully's army surprised the Sioux camp two hundred miles above Pierre and the battle of White Stone Hills ensued. The Indians were completely whipped, losing one hundred and fifty killed, three hundred wounded, and nearly all their ponies and tepees. The Second Nebraska lost seven killed and fourteen wounded. The regiment returned home and was mustered out at Omaha, November 30, 1863.

Delegate Daily's home was at Peru, Nemaha county, but in the legislation for the incorporation of the Union Pacific railroad company by congress he had drawn a bill providing that the eastern terminus of the road should be near the mouth of the Platte river and naming two leading citizens of Omaha as incorporators while the South Platte country had none. These and other circumstances convinced the South Platte citizens that Daily had, in their phrase, "sold out to Omaha," and they started after his scalp. A bitter fight followed in the republican territorial convention. Daily again secured the nomination. A number of prominent republicans south of the Platte, including Judge O. P. Mason, bolted Daily's nomination. The democrats named Judge Kinney, of Nebraska City, and confidently looked forward to an overwhelming victory. Daily was once more too shrewd for the opposition. Although he ran behind in his own country south of the Platte the North Platte people more than made good the loss and elected him by 136 majority.

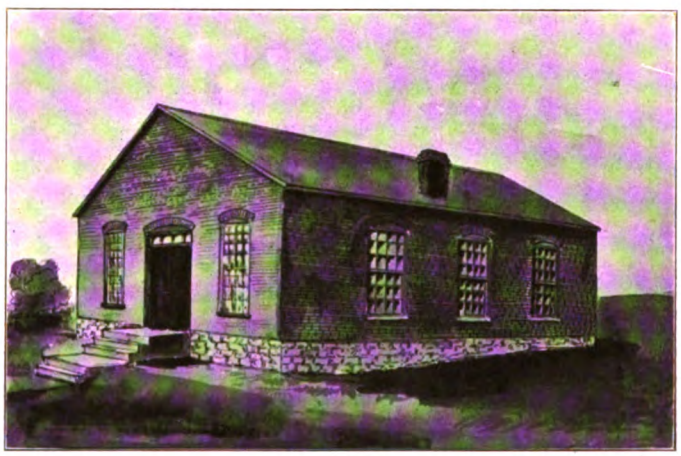
Nebraska's share of the direct war tax was $19,312. This was a large sum for a territory, already $50,000 in debt and running further behind. The proposition was made to congress that it should retain at Washington the $20,000 which had been appropriated by the federal government every year to pay the expenses of the Nebraska legislature and the territory would get along without a legislature for another year. This proposition was accepted.

The ninth session of the Nebraska territorial legislature, therefore, did not meet until January 7, 1864. Before that time arrived many important events had taken place. The free homestead law,—so long fought for, so often defeated,—was upon the statute book and on January 1, 1863, the first homestead in the United States under that act was taken by Daniel Freeman on Cub Creek, in Gage county. The summer of 1863 was marked the whole length of Nebraska's frontier by the blood of men, women and children killed by the Indians. The Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahoes and Kiowas were all on the warpath. In the valley of the Little Blue their attacks were especially severe. Ranches were burned, freighting outfits destroyed, and only large companies well armed could travel the overland trail. Governor Saunders' message recounted some of these events. The territorial debt had grown to $59,893. There were delinquent taxes amounting to $41,829, but territorial warrants had gone up and were now worth eighty to ninety cents on the dollar. The legislature passed the first comprehensive revenue law in our history providing a complete system for the assessments and collection of taxes. It passed a marriage and divorce law, an act making ten hours a legal day's work, a general incorporation law,—doing away with the need of a special act for every new corporation,—a new legislative apportionment bill, which gave the South Platte seven members out of thirteen in the council and twenty-three out of thirty-nine members in the house.

When the political campaign of 1864 rolled around it found a transformation in Nebraska. The republican territorial committee met on February 12 and voted to disband the republican party in order to go into the "Union" party,—whose single test of membership was the support of President Lincoln. This was a shrewd move to hold the war democrats who believed in the preservation of the Union but hated the name republican,—coupled as it generally had been with the adjective "black." Accordingly a "Union" territorial convention was held August 17 at Nebraska City, wherein P. W. Hitchcock was named as candidate for territorial delegate in congress. The democratic convention met September 14, at Plattsmouth, nominated Dr. George L. Miller for congress and adopted a platform which opposed statehood and declared for peace. The election resulted in Hitchcock's election by a majority of 1,087,—the largest anti-democratic vote thus far cast in the territory. The war sentiment and inability of the democrats to successfully meet the charge that they were rebel sympathizers,—a charge made on every stump by the "Union" orators,—was the main cause of their defeat.

The legislature which met January 5, 1865, was the first one greeted by a reduction in the territorial debt and improvement in the general financial condition. A general herd law was recommended by Governor Saunders. He

also recommended that the people of Nebraska should assist in providing labor and honest opportunities for the freed negroes of the south,—a suggestion which raised a storm of clamorous remonstrance from some of the democratic newspapers. The republican territorial convention, held September 19, 1866, quietly dropped the name "Union" and resumed its old title. The democratic convention met two days later and adopted a platform written by J. Sterling Morton whose

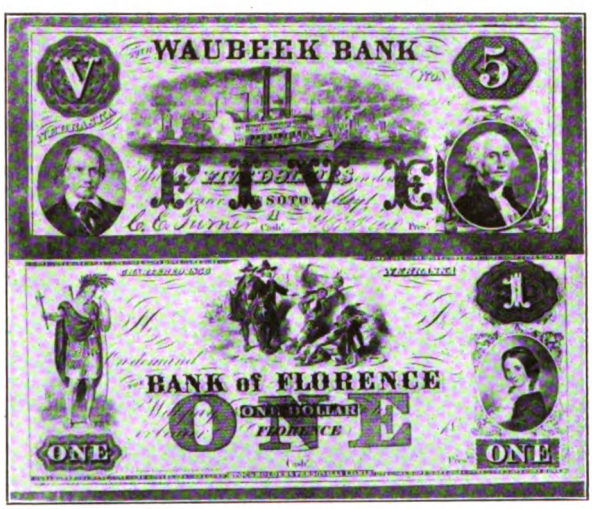


First Methodist Church Built in Nebraska at Nebraska City in 1855

most conspicuous plank was one declaring that "negroes were not entitled to vote or hold office in Nebraska."

The quarrel between President Johnson and the republican congress at Washington had now reached an acute stage and one that acted powerfully on the political situation in Nebraska. The democratic party had the republicans in the same box which the democrats had occupied in 1860. The democrats were united while the republicans were badly divided. It is already remarked that for the first four years of her organized existence Nebraska was wholly democratic. Many democrats had joined the republican party in opposition to slavery and to put down secession. Conservative men of this class now began to balk at the radical program of republican leaders in congress and supported President Johnson. As a rule, the federal office holders and those who hoped to be federal office holders, during Johnson's administration, were on his side of the cotnroversy. So there was a division in the republican party of Nebraska growing wider each day. The democrats rejoiced in a new hope. Their newspapers and orators burned with praises of the President. The Johnson republicans, meanwhile, found that they could not control their own party organization in Nebraska. This condition of affairs brought about the first case of "fusion politics" in our history. The democratic territorial convention and Johnson republican territorial convention met on the same day in the same building and arranged for a division of the offices. The democrats got three candidates: Morton for delegate to congress, Mur-

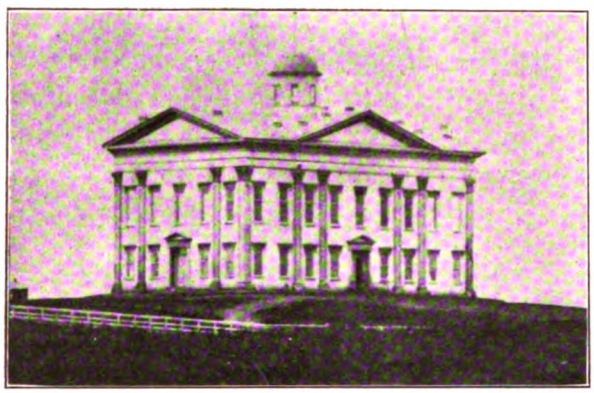
phy for territorial auditor, and Dellone for treasurer. The Johnson republicans were given A. S. Paddock for representative in congress and J. C. Jordan for territorial librarian. George Francis Train, who was very active in democratic politics in Nebraska at this time, was disappointed at this result and nominated himself as independent democratic candidate for congress. After a great deal of difficulty he was induced to withdraw. The republicans nominated John Taffe for delegate to congress and T. M. Marquett for representative. The republican papers of the day uniformly style the fusion opposition as the "copperhead party." The reply was to call the republicans the party of "taxation and niggerization," as J. Sterling Morton named them in the Nebraska City News. A vigorous campaign was made by both sides, Paddock and Morton especially, stumping all parts of the territory, but election day demonstrated the mass of the republicans refused to follow President Johnson. The majority for the republican ticket was near 800. The fourteenth amendment entire was in the platform, and thus had the endorsement of a majority of the voters.



Nebraska Wildcat Paper Currency

THE STRUGGLE TO MAKE A STATE

CHAPTER IX



Old State Capitol Building, Omaha

Almost as soon as the territory of Nebraska was born eager minds within her borders were looking forward to the time when she should stand an equal in the sisterhood of states. In 1858 the movement for immediate statehood began. The Omaha Times of May 13, 1858, asks for an expression of opinion on the question. On June 24 of the same year in an editorial, "The State of Nebraska," its editor, W. W. Wyman, discussed the objections to state organization and advocated the election of a legislature pledged to submit the proposition to the people. The next year both democratic and republican parties in their territorial conventions declared for immediate statehood. Governor Black in his message to the legislature which met December 9, 1859, advocated state organization, saying that Nebraska had about 50,000 population—which statement a census at that time would not have verified. On January 11, 1860, the legislature passed the act submitting to the voters at a special election, March 5, the question of calling a convention to frame a state constitution. The newspapers of both sides seemed afraid to discuss the subject; the politicians were the same. It was on the eve of the momentous election of 1860 and there were signs of the breaking of old party ties everywhere. When the votes were counted there were 2,094 for a convention and 2,732 against. The South Platte region gave a good majority in favor, but in Douglas and Sarpy there were overwhelming majorities against. The possible removal of the capitol was undoubtedly a factor in the result.

The civil war came on and the great tide of migration westward was arrested. The energies of the west as well as the east were concentrated upon military instead of political af-

Scene Near Weeping Water, Nebraska.

fairs. It was not until April 19, 1864, that congress took the matter in hand and passed an enabling act to permit Nebraska to form a state constitution. As has frequently happened in politics there was a change of party attitude. The democratic party which had been the pioneer in demanding statehood in 1858 now opposed the movement as premature and calculated to impose burdens on the frontier population which it was not prepared to undertake. The republican party, which had taken on, temporarily, the convenient name of "Union" in order more easily to secure the support of the war democrats, resolved strongly in favor of immediate statehood.

The enabling act, April 19, 1864, authorized the governor of Nebraska to call a special election on June 6th at which the people should vote on the proposition of immediate statehood and at the same time elect delegates to a constitutional convention. Two arguments were immediately and powerfully urged against the proposed change,—one that it meant more expense and taxes; the other that "if we have a state, we'll have a draft,"—riots and opposition were marking the progress of the draft in some parts of the union. The result was the defeat of the proposition. The delegates elected, however, met in Omaha on July 4, 1864, and adjourned sine die by a vote of 35 to 7.

It was not until 1866 that the legislature again submitted to a popular vote the question of statehood. The two opposing political parties lined up against each other and the hottest political battle thus far witnessed in the new territory followed. The republicans nominated David Butler for governor and declared in favor of statehood. The democrats

Gov. Crounse's First Residence and Law Office at Rulo 1864. Photo Taken in 1901

named J. Sterling Morton for governor and resolved against statehood. The chief reasons offered for and against the organization of a state were those of economy,—the democrats maintaining that it was better to maintain a territorial government which was largely supported by appropriations from congress, until the population became greater,—the republicans contending that a state government would be no more expense than a territorial one to the people, when the advantages of income from congressional land grants was taken into account, and that it was better for the people to govern themselves anyway than to be ruled from Washington. The real difference was, however, one of politics. The republicans wanted another state in the Union to help carry out their reconstruction program and overcome the opposition of President Andrew

Johnson, while the democrats wanted to gain time and take advantage of the split in the republican party. The campaign was fierce and every settlement in the territory was thoroughly canvassed. The election took place June 2, 1866 and the result was a vote of 3,938 in favor of the constitution and 3,838 opposed. The republican state ticket was elected by a majority of about 100 with exception of one candidate for judge who was beaten by his democratic opponent.

There was another and fiercer fight when the legislature met. The republican county clerk of Cass county had thrown out Rock Bluff precinct, which gave a democratic majority of fifty-eight, in canvassing the vote. There was no charge of fraudulent voting in the precinct, but it appeared that the election board had adjourned to eat dinner, locking the ballot box and taking it with them. It did not even appear that anyone was deprived of opportunity to vote, but the technical violation of the law was made the ground for rejecting the precinct's vote. It happened that with Rock Bluff precinct the democratic candidates for the legislature were elected in Cass county; without it the republican candidates were elected. It happened farther that with democratic members from Cass the democrats had a majority in the legislature, and conversely with republican members from Cass the republicans had a majority. So the whole question whether two democrats or two republicans should represent Nebraska in the senate at Washington was, in final analysis, whether having the Rock Bluff ballot box at the dinner

City of Omaha in 1861. Copyrighted by A. Hospe, Omaha

table vitiated the votes in it. The fight was hot and bitter, but the republican members from Cass had certificates of election; their votes gave the republicans the organization of the legislature; the legislature elected General Thayer and Chaplain Tipton to the United States senate instead of J. Sterling Morton and A. J. Poppleton, the democratic nominees. The report of Representative C. H. Gere, of Pawnee county, who was chairman of the house committee to which the Cass county contest was referred, makes the foregoing facts clear and is one of the rarely interesting documents on a turning point in Nebraska history. The "election dinner in Rock Bluff precinct,"—insignificant in itself,—becomes in its result one of the most important events in the record of our state.

The battle for statehood was only begun. Just as Nebraska territory was a storm center in congress so was the state destined to be. The newly elected senators hurried to Washington. It was near the close of the long session of congress. A bill was passed admitting the new state and sent to President Johnson. The president put the bill in his pocket where it died and Nebraska was left out on the doorstep. When congress met again the next winter a new cloud had arisen. The Nebraska constitution had restricted suffrage to "white males" as did many of the northern states before the war. The question of how to protect the newly freed slaves was one of the uppermost ones before the nation. Here was a new state fresh from the soil which had been consecrated to freedom by the contest over the Nebraska-Kansas bill proposing to exclude free negroes from the polls. The radical republican members and especially the great leader, Charles Sumner, of Massachusetts, would not listen to the admission of another state which did not grant the same political equality which they were trying to secure in the older states. Besides this there was already in the east a revival of jealous sentiment against the rapidly growing political power of the west. A prolonged debate was precipitated on the question whether congress could impose any conditions on the admission of a state. The republican party itself was divided. The fate of Nebraska was again in doubt when Congressman Shellabarger, of Ohio, one of the most eloquent and convincing speakers in the house, took up the championship of our cause and won the day. The bill which passed provided that Nebraska should become a state on the fundamental condition that its legislature should agree by solemn public act that "within the state of Nebraska there shall be no denial of the elective franchise, or of any other right to any other person, by reason of race or color (excepting Indians not taxed)." President Johnson at once vetoed the bill. Congress passed it over the veto.

The battle ground now shifted from Washington back to Omaha. Governor Saunders convened the legislature in special session on February 20, 1867, to act upon the condition which congress had annexed to admission.

THE STATE OF NEBRASKA.

CHAPTER X

Falls of Arikaree in Cherry County

There was no delay by the ruling interests in the new state to act upon the situation. Governor David Butler issued his proclamation convening the legislature to meet at Omaha in extra session May 16, 1867. Some forty different subjects were enumerated by him for the legislature to consider. In brief they were to construct a new system of law and administration for the state. Now was the opportunity of the South Platte to assume control of affairs and visit long delayed vengeance on the city of Omaha. With a South Platte governor and a majority of both houses from the same region the task was not hard. A bill to re-locate the seat of government was quickly passed,—in the senate by a vote of 8 to 5, in the house by 25 to 14. Three commissioners,—Governor David Butler, Secretary of State Thomas P. Kennard, and Auditor John Gillespie,—were appointed with power to locate the capital, the state university and the state penitentiary, somewhere in Lancaster, Seward, or the southern half of Butler and Saunders counties. They were empowered to acquire title, survey and sell lots in the new capital city and with the proceeds erect the necessary state buildings. On July 29, 1867, the three commissioners unanimously chose the present site, whose name by the terms of the act was to be Lincoln. It was a bold enterprise to lay off a capital city on a naked prairie, miles west of any compact settlement and expect to sell enough lots to erect expensive and permanent public buildings. The commissioners were equal to the emergency. Auction sale of lots began September 17 at Lincoln. The first day's auction was a failure. The commissioners, determined to succeed, "arranged" for bids the following day. It may well be doubted, however, whether the experiment would have proven a success if it had not been for the active support of the people of Nebraska

Site of Peter A. Sarpy Trading Post Near Bellevue

City. Nebraska City votes in the legislature had passed the act and now Nebraska City capital came to the front for the purchase of Lincoln lots,—after the three commissioners, to prevent an impending failure in the sales, had risked their own capital by becoming bidders.

Work on the new state house,—costing $68,000,—was begun in December, 1867, and it was far enough advanced for occupation the December following. The commissioners were required by law to deposit the funds received with the state treasurer—to be drawn out by warrant in payment for building contracts. It became noised about that the enemies of Lincoln intended to enjoin the treasurer from paying out the funds. The commissioners thereupon disobeyed the law and kept the funds in their own hands. Altogether the state realized about $300,000 from its sales of Lincoln real estate, of which $76,715 was received the first year.

Other events in 1867 were the location of a state normal school at Peru, a visitation by grasshoppers in June which did considerable damage, the beginning of a geological survey by F. V. Hayden in the employ of the United States government, the enactment of a registration law requiring all voters to register and the enactments of a new common school law which made some radical changes, giving to the people in each school district the taxing power for the support of their own school. The Sioux and Cheyenne Indian war which had ravaged the plains in 1864 and 1865 broke out again. A party of Indians supposed to be Cheyennes threw a Union Pacific freight train from the track at Plum Creek, killed the engineer, fireman and five other men, burned the train and escaped without punishment.

The year 1868 was presidential election year. The republican party declared itself in favor of the reconstruction measures and the pending Fifteenth amendment, while the demo-

crats in their platform asserted that this was "a white man's government." Temperance agitation was already active in the new state. Lodges of Good Templars were being organized in many counties. Their agitation had alarmed the German voters who had very largely been republicans in the struggle against slavery. A plank was adopted by the republican state convention which opposed all prohibitory laws. Before the convention adjourned it was reconsidered and stricken out. The democratic state convention held later adopted the identical plank thus stricken out. This incident indicated the policy of the two parties upon the liquor question for the next thirty years,—the republican party, with a large and aggressive temperance element in its ranks which persistently agitated the subject, trying to avoid any definite declaration or action in order to retain both the liquor votes and the temperance votes; while the democratic party uniformly opposed temperance agitation and anti-liquor laws, thereby especially aiming to unite to their organization the foreign born citizens. The election returns simply clinched the fact that Nebraska had become reliably republican, the republican candidate for governor—David Butler—having 8,514 votes while the democratic candidate, J. R. Porter, had 6,349.

The Union Pacific railroad was completed across the continent May 10, 1869,—thus realizing visions of a long line of Nebraska editors, orators and commonwealth-builders. The road had been incorporated by act of congress July 1, 1862. On December 2, 1863, ground was broken at Omaha upon receipt of a telegram from President Lincoln designating the "western boundary of Iowa, opposite Omaha" as the eastern terminus. This was the end of a long fight by rival points on the Missouri river. On March 13, 1866, the first completed section of the road,—from Omaha to North Bend,—was opened to traffic. That fall it was completed to Grand Island and the next year beyond the western boundary of the state. In 1876 the Omaha and Republican Valley branch was in process of construction, and between 1870 and 1879 the St. Joseph & Grand Island track completed between those two cities,—and became a part of the Union Pacific system.

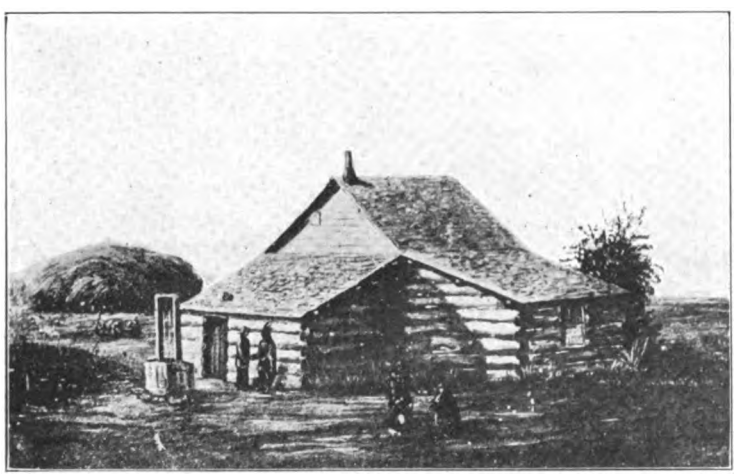
The Burlington road was opened to Council Bluffs January 17, 1870. In 1871 the track from Plattsmouth to Lincoln was completed and September 15, 1872, the main line was finished to Kearney. The Midland Pacific, from Nebraska City to Lincoln, was built in 1871. In 1874 it was extended to Seward. Hard times came on, the road was sold under mortgage, acquired by the Burlington and constructed to Columbus and Central City in 1880.

The Northwestern line had its beginnings in these days. In 1871 the Sioux City & Pacific was built from Blair to Fremont and in 1881, under the name of the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valey, extended to Long Pine and Creighton. The Omaha & Northwestern, from Omaha to DeSoto, was constructed by an Omaha company in 1870, sold under mortgage in 1878, and absorbed by the present Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha.

From the close of the war and especially from the time of her admission as a state a deep, strong tide of immigration had set in to Nebraska. For near ten years there was an unbroken line of white topped ships of the prairie crossing the Missouri river to cast anchor on some quarter section of Nebraska

land. When the census of 1870 was taken, although her territory had been reduced nearly one-half since 1860 her population had increased from 28,841 to 122,933 and her wealth from $9,000,000 to more than $69,000,000. The location of the state capital at Lincoln had greatly stimulated settlement in southern Nebraska and by 1870 the fertile valley lands of the Blue river system of streams had largely been taken up and later comers were venturing out upon the "divides" away from the rivers. Log houses were the rule for the early settlers in the valleys, but the scant fringe of trees along the water courses would not furnish timber for such structures upon the prairie and for the next decade the typical home was a sod house or a dugout; often a combination of dugout and sod house served as a home for the family while a similar one a few yards away sheltered the stock from the winter winds. The district school houses were generally of sod, built in a single day by the united labor of the district and sometimes dedicated by a dance which raised enough money to furnish the window glass and stove, leaving the district free from debt. The space protected by these root-bound walls and dirt roof was the religious, social and political, as well as educational, center of the community. The lyceum, the preaching service and, later, the grange meetings were held here and influences set in action which directed the future destiny of the state.

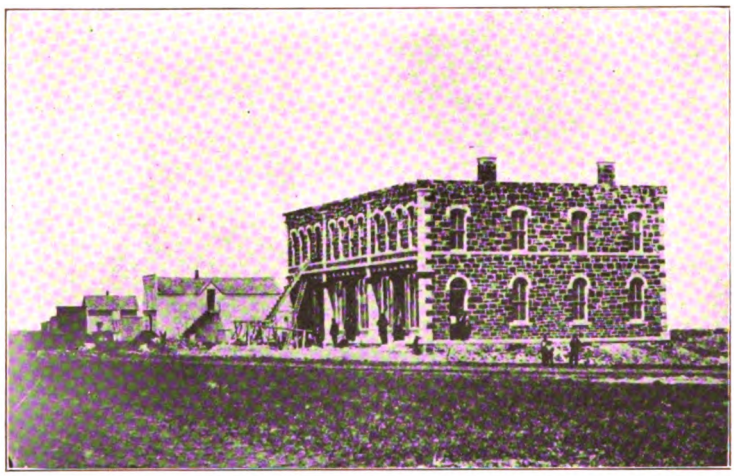
The spirit of speculation was strong in the souls of the swarms of new settlers who came and saw, as in prophetic vision, the unmeasured possibilities of the rich prairie soil ready for the breaking plow. This spirit ruled the legislatures as well as the cross-roads conversation of the next few years. Everywhere the public mind was feasted upon prospects of new railroads, county seat towns, manufacturing schemes. The legislature of 1869, in sympathy with this sentiment passed an act permitting towns, precincts and counties to vote bonds to the amount of ten per cent of their assessed valuation in aid of railroad and other projects. Five hundred thousand acres



First Dwelling in Lincoln. Homestead of Judge Lavender, 15th and O Street, 1867

of land had been given to the state by the federal government for internal improvements. An act was passed offering to any railroad that should build track in Nebraska, during the next five years, 20,000 acres of land for each ten miles of road built and equipped, not more than 100,000 acres to be acquired by any one road. A new revenue law was passed with a number of changes from the old territorial one. The University of Nebraska was set in motion by the act of February 15, 1869. In those early days when any new arrival from the east skeptically inquired what there was at Lincoln to make a city he was taken down to the salt basin and shown the white crust which covered the top of the soil there during dry weather. Then he was bidden to take a lead pencil and figure how many million barrels of salt would be required every year to salt the population that was filling the prairies. In harmony with all this the legislature of 1869 passed an act providing for the lease of the salt basin to A. C. Tichenor and others, on condition that they immediately invest not less than $5,000 in a salt manufacturing plant and pay the state a royalty of two cents upon every bushel of salt made. The enormous state revenue that would soon accrue from this salt proposition was one of the gilded pictures of those early days.

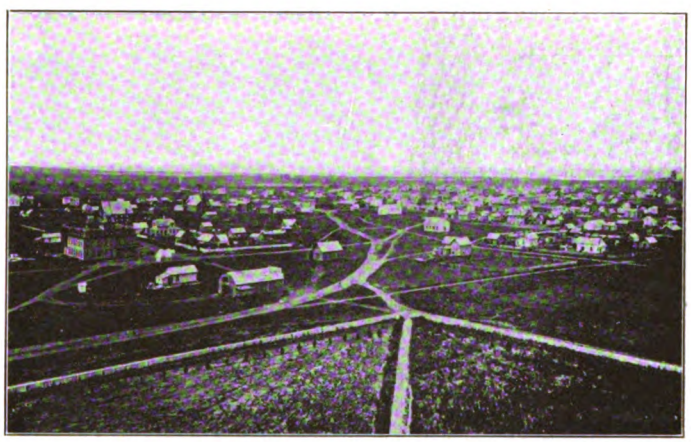
How to farm and raise stock at the same time and in the same neighborhood upon the rich, treeless prairies presented a problem that was solved March 4, 1870, by the enactment of the first general herd law for the state. This act made every stock owner responsible for damage done by his animals and left the homesteader free to plant his crop with no other fence than the skyline. The same legislature, not satisfied with the continual stream of new Nebraskans pouring into the state, set out to seek for them in the east and across the seas by providing for a board of immigration with an appropriation of money to print and send abroad in as many foreign languages as was thought advisable, circulars describing the advantages of Nebraska and inviting foreign born people to come here to better their condi-



First Business Block in Lincoln. Built 1868,
Corner 10th and O Streets.

tion. Congress was memorialized, so early as this, to provide the people of the United States with a postal telegraph system, an act was passed giving married women the right to carry on their own business, hold property, sue and be sued, independent of their husbands. The fifteenth amendment was ratified and a bounty of fifteen cents per head was offered for pocket gophers. Some of the small boys of that time, barefooted and freckled, who had never been the owners of fifteen cents in the whole course of their mortal lives, retain to this day vivid recollections of what mines of wealth were visible to their eyes in every gopher mound, after the passage of this beneficent act. The Nebraska senators and representatives in congress were instructed to vote against any more appropriations of money for improvements at Washington—in the full expectation, as the resolution recited, that the capital of the United States would very soon be moved west into the Mississippi valley. Indeed there were not lacking those who freely prophesied that it would be located at Lincoln, in order to be near the immense supplies of salt shortly to be manufactured at the salt basin. This instruction, it may be remarked, has never been repealed by any subsequent legislature.

The great political event which shook the fabric of Nebraska society in 1871 was the impeachment of Governor Butler. As one of the commissioners who had located the capital and provided the first state buildings, Governor Butler had occasion more than once to act outside the law in order to attain the object sought. In fact, the theory which in these early days, governed the action of officials to a large degree was, when anything seemed desirable, to go ahead and do it and look around for legal authority for the action afterward. In time this was bound to bring trouble, and so in February, 1871, the Nebraska house of representatives presented articles of impeachment to the senate against Governor Butler and Auditor Gillespie. There was a long list of charges against the governor, alleging that he had demanded boodle money from several contractors upon public buildings for the state, but the charge-in-chief was that he had taken over $16,000 from the state five per cent fund paid by the federal government and converted



Lincoln in 1870

it to his own use. The governor's answer denied the charges of boodling, but admitted the taking of the $16,000, for which he claimed he had executed to the state mortgages upon some three thousand acres of land owned by him. The impeachment trial lasted through March, April and May, ending June 4. By a vote of nine to three the state senate found him guilty of unlawfully taking the $16,000 and removed him from office,—he being acquitted upon the other charges. Governor Butler had many friends as well as enemies and the trial heated the social atmosphere to a degree that has probably never been exceeded since.

Mormons Crossing the Plains to Salt Lake 1856

Pursuant to an act passed March 28, 1871, there met in Lincoln in June, of that year, a convention of fifty-two members, charged with the duty of framing a new state constitution. The document was submitted to the people on September 19, and defeated by a vote of 7,986 for, to 8,627 against. The principal objections to the constitution were a clause which provided that church or benevolent property above the value of $5,000 belonging to any single association should be taxed; another clause which provided that railroad right of way should be paid for without reference to any supposed benefits the owner of the land might derive from the construction of the road. Douglas county alone,—the center of the religious and corporation influences,—gave nearly nine hundred majority against the constitution. The western counties generally returned large majorities in its favor,—some of them twenty and thirty to one in its favor.

Secretary of State James became acting governor upon the impeachment of Governor Butler. The impeachment trial had set everything on edge and quarrels followed between James and the legislature. The senate and house fell into a dispute on the subject of adjournment and the acting governor declared them both adjourned. In defiance of this the senate met and transacted business, finally adjourning. A few days later Governor James, having gone outside the state, Senator Isaac S. Hascall, presiding officer of the senate, called the legislature to meet in extra session. The governor returned in haste and issued a proclamation vetoing the extra session. Members of the legislature gathered at Lincoln and joined in the controversy. Governor James styled them the "rump" legislature. Anarchy

Part of Business Portion of Lincoln, 1904.

was on hand for a few days. The matter was taken before the supreme court and by a vote of two to one,—Judges Lake and Crounse against Chief Justice O. P. Mason,—the court held that the legislature was not legally in session.

The political campaign of 1872 brought for a second time a "fusion" ticket into the field,—the liberal or Greeley republicans uniting with the democrats on a national and state ticket. Robert W. Furnas was the republican nominee for governor and H. C. Lett the Fusion nominee. Furnas received 16,543 votes and Lett 11,227. During the campaign, Dr. George L. Miller, editor of the Omaha Herald, printed charges of corruption against the republican nominee in connection with the attempt to remove the capital from Omaha in 1856. This led to a libel suit by Governor Furnas against the Herald, which after a long trial resulted in a disagreement of the jury.

The prosperous times and high hopes which animated the people during the first five years of statehood received a rude blow in the year 1873, which manifested itself in various forms of popular discontent. The grange organization had already some foothold in Nebraska, but it grew with great rapidity during 1873. What had been chiefly a social organization became very soon under the pressure of hard

Part of Residence District of Lincoln, 1904

times an economic and then a political one. The gist of the farmers' complaint was summed up in one sentence which asserted that "the farmers worked harder and more hours than the artisans, had poorer food and clothing and fewer privileges,—while the men who handled the farmers' products were better off than either farmers or mechanics and were rapidly getting rich." August 15, 1873, there were two hundred and sixty-five granges in Nebraska, and the order was growing fast. and the result of their influence was to bind inseparably the influence of the home with that of the grange.

The grangers did not lack for grievances. One of them was the refusal of the Union Pacific and Burlington railroads to pay taxes on their land grant lands.

The railroads claimed that until the United States issued patents for their lands to the company the title had not passed and taxes could not be levied. The settlers replied that

The Oldest Apple-tree in Nebraska. Planted in 1856.
Ft. Calhoun

An illustration of their aims is found in the resolutions adopted by Peru Grange, Thomas J. Majors, Secretary, in the autumn of 1873. The resolutions "request the State Grange to effect a plan by which the price of grain and stock can be regulated all over the United States so that we may live whilst employed in agricultural pursuits, and that we buy no goods from merchants who denounce our order." Women took an active part in the work and discussions of the grange. No grange could be organized without a certain number of women the companies were selling the lands every day, guaranteeing the title and as soon as a settler bought a tract it was at once taxed in his hands. They further alleged that the companies had mortgaged some of these very lands and that if they had title enough to mortgage they had title enough to tax. A meeting of county commissioners was held at Lincoln, August 7, 1873, at which York, Clay, Hamilton, Fillmore, Gage, Kearney, Adams, Lancaster, Saline, Seward, and Butler Counties were represented. It was resolved to engage coun-

sel to fight these land tax cases. Meanwhile the United States Supreme court in a similar case in Kansas had held that the land was not subject to tax for two reasons: First, because the company had not paid the fees and received their patents; Second, because if the land was sold for taxes and the title acquired by a tax purchaser it might defeat the provision of the land grant act which provided that under certain conditions the land should revert back to the public for settlement. The editor of The Lincoln State Journal dared to pronounce this decision in the United States Supreme Court: "Sheer nonsense which would defeat any tax ever being collected on the land." Many of the counties had issued bonds and warrants based on calculations including the taxes on these lands. They now found themselves unable to meet their obligations and their paper greatly depreciated.

The revenue system of the state was a failure. The Omaha Herald of August 22, 1873, declared that for four years one-third of all the property owners in the state had refused to pay taxes. More than half the Otoe county real estate was delinquent for taxes prior to 1873. Single individuals owed from $2,000 to $3,000 for taxes. The county and municipal bonds which had been so lavishly voted to aid railroad and other schemes were now an intolerable burden.

When the legislature met in 1873 Governor Furnas told them that there were $300,000 taxes delinquent and more than that of local taxes, that there was great stringency in money and a meagre price for farm products. The legislature was advised to authorize a constitutional convention. There were two factions in the Legislature. One of them wanted to comply with the constitution then in force which provided a plan for making a new constitution,—requiring two years time. The other faction from the western counties of the state were determined not to wait that long. They proposed framing a constitution immediately and submitting it at once to the people regardless of what the old constitution said. They pointed out that while some counties in the eastern part of the state had three or four members to the Legislature the same population further west had only part of one. The radical party prevailed and passed a bill for a hurry-up constitution, which Governor Furnas vetoed. A new bill was passed which provided for the submission to the people of the question whether a convention should be called to frame a new constitution. This could not be voted upon—under the old constitution—until the fall election of 1874, when it carried by a vote of 18,067 in favor to 3,880 against.

Another cloud appeared upon the horizon,—a cloud of grasshoppers. In July 1874, the air was suddenly filled with uncounted millions of the flying insects. Corn fields disappeared from sight and in their stead stood a dreary waste of little sticks. The gardens were devoured, fruit trees destroyed and even railroad trains stopped by this avalanche of locusts. The sod corn which was the settlers main reliance in the western part of the state was a complete loss. There was real destitution in the sod houses and dug-outs along the border.

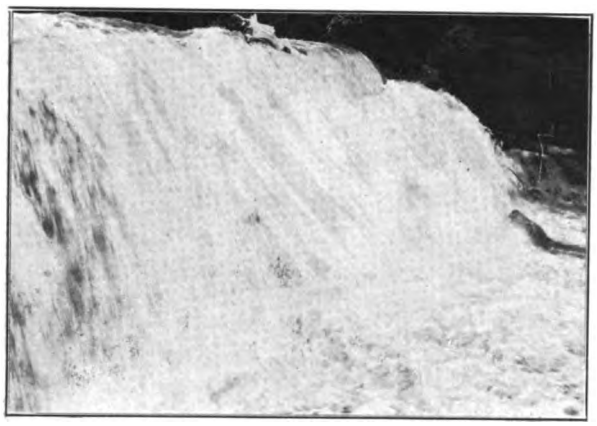
The Nebraska Relief and Aid Society was organized, with Alvin Saunders as treasurer, and disbursed over $68,000 in relief. Congress appropriated $130,000 for relief and seed which was distributed by United States army officers. Bills were passed permitting homesteaders to leave their claims without losing them. With

all these forms of organized aid the memory of "grasshopper days" will always be associated in the minds of those who lived through them as the hardest times in Nebraska history. The state was newer in development than it was twenty years later when it passed through a similar hard times experience, there was far less accumulated capital, railroads were more remote and the normal conditions of life more severe than they have been since.

These hard times years were also marked by the appearance of that remarkable social manifestation,—the "Woman's Crusade"—in Nebraska. Beginning in Hillsdale, Ohio, it spread like an autumnal prairie fire and soon bands of praying and singing women were visiting Nebraska saloons, pleading with the proprietors and customers to abandon their practices. The incidents of that movement might alone make an interesting volume. When the bands of praying women disappeared from the saloon corners their place was taken by the "Red Ribbon" revival meetings which stirred every Nebraska community. In the years 1877 and 1878 the leader of the Red Ribbon work in Nebraska,—John B. Finch, one of the most gifted public speakers ever heard on any platform,—received 50,000 signatures to the temperance pledge and raised $20,000 to found public reading rooms as a counter attraction to the saloon. From this time there was an organized political prohibition movement in the state.

Scene at Milford, Nebraska

When the legislature of 1875 met it faced these conditions: The state's floating debt reached $432,000. Delinquent taxes due the state were $599,000. The previous legislature had appropriated $600,000, and if all the taxes had been paid there would have been only $400,000 to meet the appropriation. The local debts of the state were estimated at $4,500,000. The incoming governor, Silas Garber, insisted upon rigid economy. Bills to remove the capital were again numerous. The legislative ses-



Snake River Falls,—Twenty Feet Fall

sion was marked by acrimonious debate and a bitter fight over the United States senatorship resulting in the selection of A. S. Paddock by a combination of democratic and republican votes. A resolution to expunge the impeachment record standing against Governor Butler was carried after a heated controversy. The governor had turned over 3,400 acres of land to the state in settlement of the $16,000 state money which he had used. The land sold for enough to discharge the entire debt with interest. A new revenue bill providing, among other things, that the railroads of the state should not be assessed for less than $10,000 per mile, was vetoed by Governor Garber, and failed to pass over the veto. New stay and exemption laws were passed, more liberal to the debtors. And, finally, an act was passed providing for a constitutional convention, consisting of 69 members, who should be elected by the people on the first Tuesday in April, and meet upon the second Tuesday in May.

It was in a frontier society, in a state without adequate revenue, with uncollected taxes, with matured and unpaid debts, among a people visited by Pharaoh's locust plague, with distress in their homes and discontent in public gatherings that the convention met at Lincoln on May 12th, 1875, to frame the present constitution of Nebraska,—sometimes denominated the "Grasshopper Constitution."

The making of the constitution has been treated by the writer of this sketch in a separate monograph soon to be published.

The main points of controversy in the convention were salaries of public officials, taxation—and particularly taxation of corporations,—the liability of stock-holders, the location of the state capital at Lincoln, the question of a preference vote by the people for United States senators, and of limiting state and municipal debt. The results of the convention's struggles and controversies are embodied in our present organic document, which it is likely will remain as such for years to come. The constitutional convention adjourned June 12, 1875, and the constitution was submitted to the people at the election held October 12th. It was adopted by vote of 30,202 for, and 5,474 against. The specially submitted proposition relating to United States senators was carried by 25,059 for, and 6,270 against; The proposition locating the capital at Lincoln, until removed by vote of the people, prevailed by 20,042 for, and 12,517 against.

The years 1878 and 1879 were marked in Nebraska, as elsewhere in the Union, by slow, painful recovery from the effects of the panic of 1873. It was a period of foreclosures, and what the financial world politely styles "liquidation." The voice of the tax collector was heard in the land. The ruling rates for short time loans in the farming districts were from 2 to 4 per cent a month. The foundation laid by the granges for independent political action

rose upward in the superstructure of the greenback party, which elected a great many local officers, and carried some counties in the state. At the election of 1878 Albinus Nance, republican, received 29,469 votes, W. H. Webster, democrat, 13,473, and Levi G. Todd, greenbacker, 9,475. Both the democratic and republican platforms denounced the demonetization of silver and demanded the restoration of its free coinage, the democratic platform going a step farther and standing for an additional issue of legal tender greenbacks by the government to replace the national bank notes. The legislature of 1879 passed the first Nebraska act defining a tramp and prescribing a punishment for him. It established the state reform school at Kearney, and began the rebuilding of the capitol by an appropriation of $75,000 for the west wing.

The decade of Nebraska life which began with 1880 marks the restoration of hopeful and prosperous conditions in the state. The country as a whole was emerging from a long nightmare of depression, which followed the panic of 1873. In Nebraska the people were struggling out of the dugout and sod house stage of existence into frame houses. The unfortunates who had been closed out during the hard times had generally moved on toward the setting sun to begin over again, while their old homesteads were eagerly purchased at the prevailing prices by enterprising emigrants from the middle west who at once began an era of improvement. The federal census showed the population had increased from 122,983 in 1870 to 452,022 in 1880. Wealth increased from $69,000,000 to $385,000,000. An era of railroad building, the most active the state had seen, began and continued through the decade. The great feature of Nebraska life for the ten years

Cowboys Branding Cattle.

which followed 1880, was the settlement of her western plains. For twenty-five years, by common consent, the western third of the state had been regarded as unfit for any agriculture. Isolated ranches had located in some of the beautiful valleys where free range gave the ranchmen unlimited opportunities for grazing. Very early in the decade the last bunch of buffalo disappeared from Nebraska soil, and the last bands of wandering Indians who had subsisted upon them were glad to seek the shelter of the United States Indian Agency and eat government beef. For ten years the government lands in the eastern half of the state had been culled over by the later immigrants who were compelled to take the rougher and poorer tracts remaining. No one had thought, apparently, of venturing on the high table lands of the west to farm. Suddenly, as if by a common impulse, the line of homesteaders and pre-empters broke through into the cattle country. In the remote valleys, among the sandhills, on the edge of canyons along the Niobrara, and even upon the mountainous table lands of Sioux and Kimball counties appeared as if by magic, the settler's sod house

and strip of breaking. This was not accomplished without conflict nor even without bloodshed between the cattlemen and the homesteaders. The settlers were everywhere told by the cattlemen that the country dried up in July and that it was impossible to raise a crop without irrigation. To the intense disgust and astonishment of the same cattlemen a cycle of rainy years arrived with the homesteaders. Crops grew famously everywhere, wheat yielding thirty bushels to the acre, corn thirty to forty, and all kinds of vegetables enormously, whether upon the gumbo lands of the White River valley, or the high table lands of Box Butte and Perkins. Along with this rush of homesteaders went the extension of the Northwestern railroad to the Black Hills, the completion of the Burlington to Denver and the Big Horn country, and the driving of helds of elk and deer and antelope, with the great cattle outfits, before the advancing line of farmers and town-builders. When the decade ended Nebraska was settled to her farthest borders. At the same time with the extension of farming over western Nebraska, came a great development of manufacturing in the eastern part of the state. The great packing and stockyard center at South Omaha was developed. The first beet sugar factory was erected at Grand Island. The production of multitudes of different manufactured articles, which had formerly been imported from the east, was begun in Nebraska.

Nebraska's third speculative fever and real estate boom accompanied this new material progress. It was a period of borrowing. The supply of eastern money to be had on real estate security was unlimited. Loan agents flourished in every hamlet, and, not content with ordinary routine business, drove from farm to farm trying to persuade the owner to "take out a loan." The main feature of the real estate boom of the fifties was laying out paper towns which had no existence, and selling lots therein. The boomers of the eighties had a different system. Their plan was to lay

Nebraska Elk on Farm of John Gilbert, Friend, Nebraska.

out "additions" to the various centers of population already established until these additions to rival cities met in corn fields half way between. Lots were sold at good prices in "additions" to Lincoln and Omaha where, at this day, the peaceful market gardener pursues his vocation and the long rows of Nebraska corn rustle in the summer wind.

The political history of this period was very much like its economic development,—all one way. The state had become solidly republican, and the party managers acted upon the theory that it never could be anything else. The strength of the democratic party was confined to about a dozen counties along the Missouri and Platte rivers. At the election of 1880 Governor Albinus Nance received 55,237 votes, while his opponent, ex-Senator Tipton, who had now become a democrat, had 28,167. In the legislature which met in the winter of 1881, Charles H. Van Wyck was elected United States senator to succeed Paddock. One hundred thousand dollars was appropriated to build another wing to the capitol. Agitation for temperance laws and woman suffrage had become so strong that the Slocumb high license law was passed and woman suffrage submitted to the people in the form of a constitutional amendment. This amendment was defeated by the people,—25,756 votes for and 50,693 against. Another state institution,—the Home for the Friendless,—was established. In 1882 a strike of laborers in Omaha resulted in riots and the calling out of the militia by Governor Nance. The expense to the state was $11,050. At the election in 1882 James W. Dawes, the republican candidate for governor was elected, having 43,495 votes, while J. Sterling Morton, democrat, received 28,562, and E. P. Ingersoll, greenback, 16,691. This result,—showing the republican party in a minority, although on a light vote,—brought about two years later the third fusion ticket in state politics—democrats and greenbackers uniting on a mixed ticket for electors and state officers. The popular vote for governor was,

A Pioneer Home on the Plains. (Photo by Kimberly)

J. W. Dawes, republican, 72,835; J. Sterling Morton, democrat and greenbacker, 57,634; J. G. Miller, prohibitionist, 3,075. The legislature in 1883, passed a township orgainzation law, a mutual insurance law and an appropriation for the main part of the new capitol building, to cost $450,000. The greenback party disappeared from Nebraska politics. The republican party was divided into two wings,—the anti-monopoly, and the railroad or machine. The controversies between these two factions was for some years the most interesting feature of our political life. Eventually the anti-monopoly faction disappeared. The legislature of 1885 to quiet anti-monopoly agitation passed the first act providing for a board of railroad commissioners with three secretaries who were to adjust any complaints against railroad companies. Another important act was one providing for the sinking of a test well at the salt basin in Lincoln to determine the presence of coal, salt or other minerals beneath Nebraska soil. The well was sunk 2,463 feet, and the result confirmed the already expressed opinion of geologists, that coal in paying quantities would not be found in Nebraska. A new state institution was added—the Institution for Feeble Minded, at Beatrice.

In 1886 the vote for governor was, John M. Thayer, republican, 75,956; J. E. North, democrat, 52,656; H. W. Hardy, prohibitionist, 8,175; J. Burrows, nationalist, 1,422. The legislative session of 1887 resulted in the defeat of Senator C. H. Van Wyck for re-election and the selection of A. S. Paddock. This was a triumph of the "regulars" over the anti-monopoly or mugwump republicans. Three new state institutions were created by this session,—the Insane Asylum at Hastings, the Soldiers' and Sailors' Home at Grand Island, and the Woman's Industrial Home at Milford. Two new bureaus of state administration were made,—the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Oil Inspector's office. The legislature made a recount of the vote upon a constitutional amendment, lengthening the legislative session to sixty days, and declared the same carried. An act reapportioning the state into legislative districts was passed, which remains

A Sunday School Gathering on the Plains. (Photo by Kimberly.)

unchanged on the statute book to this day. An act was passed forbidding pooling by grain dealers in Nebraska, and another prohibiting non-resident aliens from acquiring lands in the state.

For governor in 1888, John M. Thayer received 104,282 votes, John A. McShane, democrat, 83,820; George E. Bigelow, prohibitionist, 9,715, and David Butler, the first governor of the state, who now appeared as the labor candidate,—3,631.

The decade beginning 1890, came in, apparently, for Nebraska on a flood tide of harmony and prosperity. The previous ten years had witnessed the greatest material growth in the state's history. The census figures indicated a population of 1,058,510 against 450,022 in 1880. It is now known and admitted, however, that the federal census of that year was padded by the officers in charge from 50,000 to 100,000 names. Wealth, by the same census, had grown from $385,000,000 to $1,275,000,000, indicating that while population had doubled wealth had trebled. Whether these figures, also, were padded or not, much of this vast increase in wealth was fictitious—speculative values and the conversion of cattle ranges into 160-acre farms, and cornfields into town lots. But there were the figures, and an active army of real estate boomers hailed them with delight and proceeded to lay off more additions. The political sky was likewise almost cloudless. The factional fight in the republican party had almost disappeared and everything seemed to promise a long continuance of existing conditions. It is true there was some discontent among farmers over low prices for grain, and a rapid organization during the year 1889 of Farmer's Alliances,—a new agricultural organization,—but nothing so far to indicate the great role it was to play in the near future.

Eagle Creek Mill-Dam, Turner, Holt County, Nebraska

With the summer of 1890 the season changed from the wet to the dry cycle of years. Week after week of hot dry weather prevailed. Over more than half of the state there was no corn to husk, and a very light crop elsewhere. The brilliant soap bubble of speculation burst. Cornfield town lots found no purchasers. The era of borrowing was at an end. Pay day was at hand, and nothing to pay with.

The political campaign of 1890 in Nebraska

A Typical Nebraska Residence Built by Ex-Governor Nance

was a never-to-be-forgotten one. A constitutional amendment prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor was to be voted upon by the people. The interests involved were thoroughly aroused, and a campaign of great energy was maintained upon that issue. The republican party nominated L. D. Richards, of Fremont, for governor, and tried to avoid committing itself on the liquor question. The democrats nominated J. E. Boyd, of Omaha, as an outspoken opponent of all prohibitory laws, and forced the fighting on that issue. The Farmers' Alliance organization entered the field for the first time with a ticket headed by John H. Powers, and challenged both the old parties to a combat on economic questions. On July 1, 1890, there were 1,500 alliances in the state with 50,000 members. The feature of the campaign was the enormous farmers picnics and processions addressed by the orators of their organization. There were no crops to gather so the people gathered in numbers never seen before or since, out in the groves away from the towns. Farmers' Alliance parades seven and eight miles long were among the sights of the campaign, and the enthusiasm of the monster meetings defied description. Every where there was a breaking away from former political affiliation, and the chorus "Good bye old party, Good bye" was chanted with religious fervor by thousands of throats. The Hon. Church Howe of Nemaha county, one of the republican leaders, expressed the situation when he said "the old ship is leaking." When the returns of the November election were canvassed it was clearly seen that a political revolution had taken place. The new peoples independent party had elected a majority of

the legislature, and two out of three congressmen. The vote, as canvassed, for governor was J. E. Boyd, 71,331, J. H. Powers, 70,187, L. D. Richards 68,878. Charges of fraud in connection with the Douglas county vote were immediately made. The intense interest taken in the contest over the prohibitory amendment in the city of Omaha had resulted in the total vote of Douglas county reaching the phenomenal total figure of 26,167. Mr. Boyd as the candidate of the anti-prohibition element had received the benefit of this large increase. It was noted on election night that no returns could be secured from Douglas county and the charge was freely made that the vote there was being held back in order to ascertain what majority was needed to defeat the prohibitory amendment.

On the face of the returns the democratic governor and the rest of the republican state ticket were elected. Contest was filed against all of these by the candidates of the peoples' independent party. When the legislature met stormy times ensued. There was a conflict of authority between the legislature and the supreme court on the question of canvassing the returns, at times approaching civil war. The action of the Alliance candidates forced the democrats and the republicans into a combination for the purpose of seating their respective state officers. Eventually the contest failed and Governor Boyd and the republican candidates who had certificates of election gained possession of their offices. All parties in the legislature united in appropriating $200,000 for the relief of the drouth-stricken parts of the state. The railroads gave free transportation for all supplies and seeds. The reports to the governor's office showed that there were 6,000 families in the western part of the state lacking the necessities of life, and 10,000 families lacking seed for another crop. Among the important acts of this session were the passage of the first Australian ballot law, the law for

Poetry of the Farm

the district ownership of school text books, the law requiring public funds to be deposited at interest for the benefit of the public treasury, the law repealing the bounty on beet sugar passed by the legislature of 1889. The great struggle of the session was over the passage of an act regulating railroad freight rates, which was vetoed by Governor Boyd, and failed to pass over the veto.

The general social unrest of the time reached the Sioux Indians on the borders of northwest Nebraska resulting in the Sioux outbreak of 1890-91, the battle of Wounded Knee on December 29th, 1890, where 32 soldiers and 200 Indians were killed. The Nebraska state militia under General Colby was ordered to protect the northern border and remained there in service for some weeks, at a total cost to the state of $38,000. After the failure of the contest against the incoming state officers, an action was instituted by ex-Governor Thayer against Governor Boyd for the possession of his office, on the ground that Boyd had not been legally naturalized prior to his election. The supreme court of Nebraska rendered judgment, Justice Maxwell dissenting, in Thayer's favor, and gave him possession of the office in May, 1891. On appeal to the supreme court of the United States, a decision was rendered in Boyd's favor, and he resumed possession of the office February 1st, 1892.

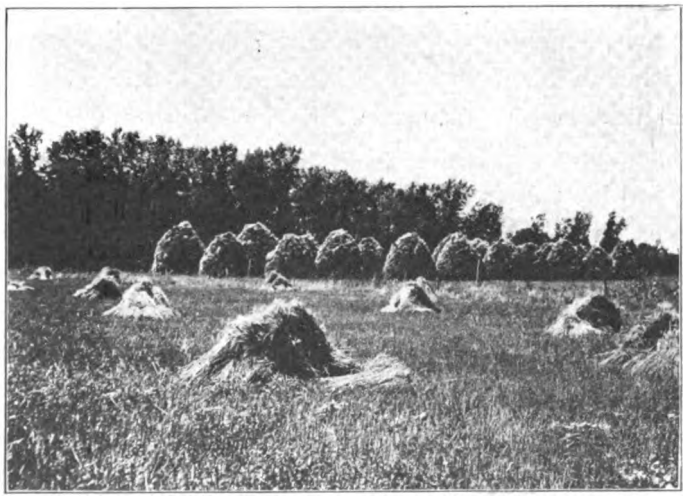
In the race for governor in 1892, Lorenzo Crounse, republican received 78,426 votes, C. H. VanWyck, peoples independent, 68,617, J. Sterling Morton, democrat, 44,195, C. E. Bentley, prohibitionist, 6,235. The principal feature of the campaign was a series of joint debates between Crounse and Van Wyck, principally personal attacks upon each other. The legislature elected at the same time was nearly equally balanced between the republicans and independent party, with the democrats holding the balance of power in both houses. A long struggle ensued over the election of United States senator, ending in the choice of Judge William V. Allen of Madison who received the votes of the independent and democratic members. Impeachment proceedings were brought against the republican state officers, members of the board of Public Lands and Buildings, for misuse of public funds. Up-

The Old Burlington Beach, Lincoln

Corn Husking Season

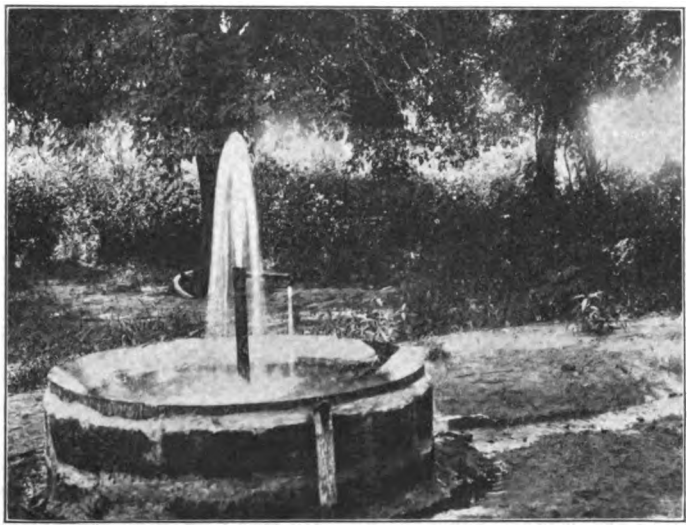
on trial of the impeachment before the supreme court, Judges Norval and Post rendered decision in favor of the officials, with Judge Maxwell again dissenting. A large part of the session was consumed in another struggle over the passage of a maximum railroad rate bill. The act as passed was signed by Governor Crounse and immediately taken into the federal courts by the companies interested.

The summer of 1894 witnessed a far more severe and general drouth in Nebraska than any which had previously occurred in her history. The corn crop was almost a complete failure, and destitution again appeared in the central and western counties. A political contest of most strenuous intensity was waged over the election of governor. The people's independent party nominated Judge Silas A. Holcomb of Broken Bow. After a very bitter contest a majority in the democratic state convention, led by W. J. Bryan, endorsed Judge Holcomb,—the Cleveland democrats bolting and nominating a separate ticket. The republican state convention nominated Thomas J. Majors of Peru,—followed by a bolt of Edward Rosewater, editor of the Omaha Bee, who supported Judge Holcomb with great energy. The democrats nominated W. J. Bryan as their candidate for United States senator. The leading republican candidate was John M. Thurston and a series of joint debates between these two able speakers



Wheat Stacks and Fields at Overton, Nebraska

was another feature of the campaign. Judge Holcomb received 97,815 votes, Majors 94,613, Sturdevant, Cleveland democrat, 6,985 and Gerrard, prohibitionist, 4,439. The republicans secured the legislature by a large majority and elected John M. Thurston to the United States senate. The legislature appropriated $250,000 for seed and food to drouth sufferers, besides $28,000 received in donations. It re-enacted the law giving a bounty of one cent per pound upon the production of beet sugar and added a bounty on the production of chicory. It established a state banking board and an additional soldiers home at Milford, passed a general irrigation act, an act to protect the butter producers, submitted twelve amendments to the state constitution and enacted that the Golden Rod should be the floral emblem of the state.



An Artesian Well

In the presidential campaign of the year 1896 Nebraska became a central figure in the nation's politics. The triumph of the free silver wing in the national democratic convention, followed by the nomination of William J. Bryan for president, and his subsequent nomination by the peoples party at St. Louis brought about a complete fusion between the peoples independent and democratic parties in the state of Nebraska resulting in the election of an entire state ticket, a majority of both houses of the legislature, and four out of six members of congress. Investigation by the incoming officers disclosed that the outgoing republican state treasurer, J. S. Bartley, was defaulter in the sum of $553,074.61, and the outgoing auditor, Eugene Moore, had collected $28,000 of fees which he had failed to turn into the state treasury. Prosecution of both of these officials resulted in Moore's acquittal on a technicality, and Bartley's conviction and sentence to imprisonment for twenty years in the penitentiary. Some of the more important measures passed by this legislature were an act to regulate charges in the South Omaha stockyards, an act to prohibit corporations from contributing money to election campaigns, a stringent anti-trust act, an act to prevent the adulteration of food, an act providing for the initiative and referendum, an act forbidding further sale of school lands.

Before another legislature assembled in the spring of 1898 war began between the United States and Spain. Three regiments of Nebraska soldiers, in all nearly 4,000 men, were furnished. The First regiment sailed to the Philippines, took part in the capture of Manila from the Spaniards, fired the first shot in the subsequent war with the Filipinos, took part in half a dozen battles losing its commander, Colonel Stotsenberg, and returned after a year's absence. The Second regiment was sent to the great military camp at Chattanooga, where it remained in camp until the close of the war. The Third regiment crossed to Cuba and had part in the military occupation of the

Farm and Alfalfa Field

A Typical Old Settlers Meeting. Pioneers of 1854. Dawson and Richardson County, 1901

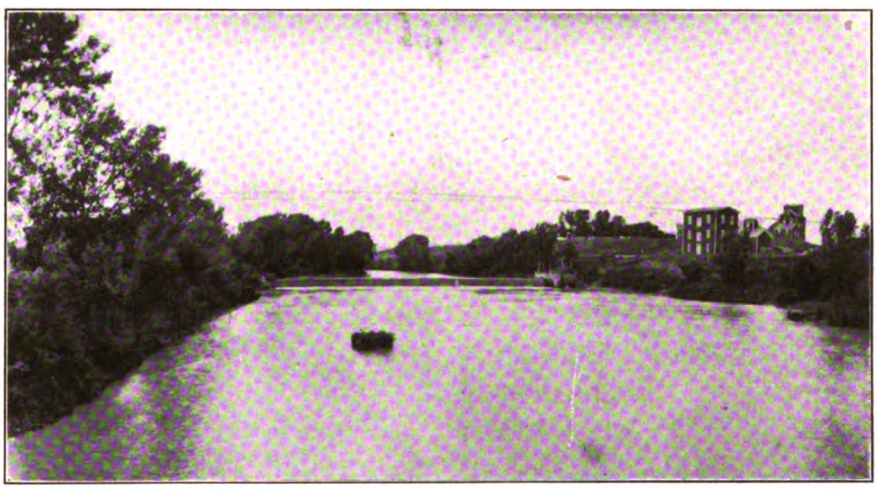
island. In March, 1898, the United States supreme Court, rendered decision in the maximum rate case involving the act passed by the legislature in 1893. The court held that the legislature had the right to fix reasonable maximum charges for transportation within the state, but that the rates fixed by the act were too low, and therefore void. The election of 1898 disclosed a falling off in fusion strength,—W. A. Poynter, nominee of the people's independent and democratic parties, receiving 95,703 votes, M. L. Hayward, republican, 92,982, and R. V. Muir, prohibitionist, 1,724. The republicans secured the legislature and chose M. L. Hayward United States senator. Among the bills passed was a corrupt practice act, limiting election expenses, an act to prevent child labor, an act appropriating $25,000 for the purchase of the governor's mansion, and acts creating a marks and brands commission, a barbers' examining board, a state insurance bureau, and a state embalming board.

The presidential election of 1900 witnessed the return to power of the republican party in the state of Nebraska. The chief cause for this change is yet matter of dispute between those interested in political affairs. Among the causes which affected the situation may be enumerated:—the natural inclination of the human mind to swing from one side of the pendulum's arc to the other, dissatisfaction among fusionists over the failure of their officials to accomplish any regulation of railroad rates, dissatisfaction of populists with the rejection of their nominee for vice president by the national democratic convention, which again nominated W. J. Bryan for the presidency, and general improvement in the industrial condition of the country under republican national administration, manifesting itself in better prices for the products of Nebraska

farms and ranches. Whichever of these causes was the dominant one, the result was the election of the entire republican state and electoral tickets by a plurality of about 8,000. For governor W. A. Poynter, fusion, received 113,018 votes, C. H. Dietrich, republican, 113,879, L. O. Jones, prohibition, 4,315, Taylor Flick, mid-road populist, 1,095. The legislature again was republican. By the death of Senator Hayward there were two United States senators to be chosen at this session, and an intensely bitter factional struggle in the republican party ensued ending only on the last day of the session by the withdrawal of the two leading republican candidates, D. E. Thompson of Lincoln, and Edward Rosewater, of Omaha, and the selection of Governor C. H. Dietrich, of Hastings and J. H. Millard of Omaha, as senators. This legislature abolished the state board of transportation,—thus ending a twenty-five years' struggle to regulate railway freight rates in the state by an abandonment of the issue.

It enacted an inheritance tax law, an act for the relief of settlers upon Boyd county school land, and it created a state game warden, a state library commission, and a state board of charities and corrections.

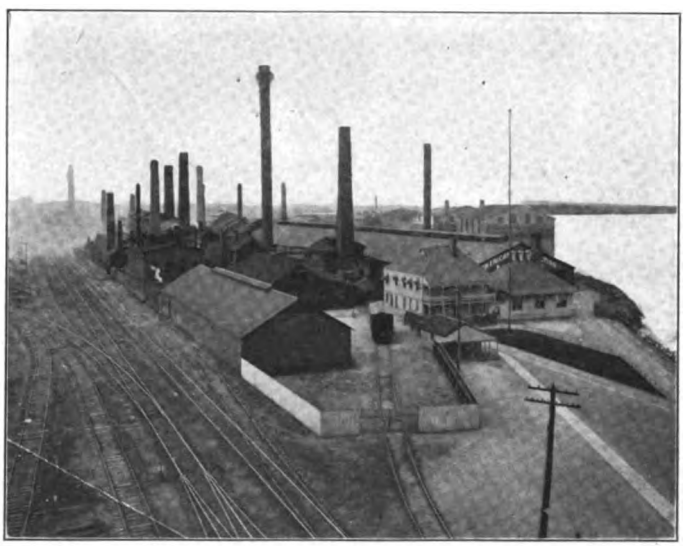
Lieutenant Governor Savage became governor upon the election of Governor Deitrich to the office of United States Senator. His action in pardoning ex-State Treasurer Bartley from the penitentiary awakened a storm of protest in his own party as well as elsewhere, and virtually forced him out of the race as a candidate before his party's convention in 1902. After a very animated contest the republicans nominated John H. Mickey, of Polk county, as their candidate. The democratic and the peoples independent state conventions met at the same time in the city of Grand Island, and were deadlocked all night upon the question of which should name the candidate for governor. At daylight the populist convention accepted W. H. Thompson, of Grand Island, the democratic nominee. The campaign turned



Mill and Dam Across Republican River at Orleans. (Photo. by G. E. Condra, Department of Geology, U. of N.)

chiefly upon the question of railroad influence in state politics and the personality of the nominees for governor. J. H. Mickey received 96,471, W. H. Thompson 91,110, S. T. Davies, prohibitionist, 3,397, G. E. Bigelow, socialist, 3,157. The republicans elected a three-fourths majority of both houses of the legislature. The all-consuming question before the legislature was the framing of a new revenue law. The many interests involved made this a difficult problem. The bill which finally became law made a number of radical changes, among them the substitution of a county assessor with a force of deputies for each county, instead of the old precinct assessor system, a more rigid and searching form of schedule and oath to secure the assessment of personal property, the listing of property at its full cash value, and its assessment for taxation at one-fifth thereof, and the granting of additional power to county and state boards of equalization. A new state institution was established,—an additional normal school which was located at Kearney. A branch experimental state farm was located at North Platte. A system of junior or summer state normal schools was established, an act requiring railroads to give elevator firms or associations equal shipping privileges, and an act to compel the destruction of prairie dogs by the owners of the land where the dog towns were located.

The changes in the physical map of Nebraska deserve a paragraph. The original territory of Nebraska was bounded on the north by the British Possessions, on the west by the Rocky mountains, on the south by the 40th degree of latitude, and on the east by the Missouri and White Earth rivers, including a large part of what is now the states of North and South Dakota, Montana, Wyoming and Colorado. By the act of March 2, 1860, the Territory of Dakota was created, including the region north of the 43rd degrees of latitude, the Keya Paha and Niobrara rivers. The same act added to Nebraska a tract of country west of the Rocky mountains which had been part



American Smelting and Refining Company's Buildings, Omaha

of Utah and Washington. By the act of February 28, 1861, Colorado was organized, cutting out a part of the southwest corner of Nebraska. Idaho was organized in March, 1863, taking that part of Nebraska west of the 104th degree of longitude,—our present western limit. In 1882 the triangular tract between the Niobrara, the Keya Paha, the Missouri, and the 43rd degree of latitude was added to Nebraska and became subsequently Boyd county. Since then the only changes in Nebraska's boundaries have been slight ones along the Missouri river, the result of changes in its channel and negotiations with Iowa, Missouri and South Dakota.

St. Paul's Church, Lincoln, Nebraska, 1904

Art and literature are the final blossoms of every civilization. Nebraska with her meagre half-century of organized existence, has hardly reached the age to possess a distinctive art and literature of her own. A brief reference to beginnings is all that can here be made. The earliest art association we have record of is a "sketch class" started by Mrs. Charles F. Catlin, at Omaha in 1877. In 1879, the first art loan exhibition was held in Omaha. In 1888 Mr. Lininger of Omaha began the erection of his private gallery, which is now opened to the public each week, and contains some $200,000 worth of original paintings—many of them masterpieces of European as well as American art. In 1890 the Omaha art exhibition association was formed, which is carrying on its work today. The beginnings of art instruction at the state university were in the year 1880, when room was granted for the use of an art teacher who received private pupils. In 1888 the Hayden Art Association was formed at Lincoln to be succeeded ten years later by the Art Association, which holds annual exhibitions of noted pictures in the University Art Gallery.

The literature of Nebraska has existed

chiefly in its newspaper form. Some of the ornaments of Nebraska newspaper life in the use of clear, epigramatic English have been J. D. Calhoun, formerly of the Lincoln Journal, now of Tampa, Florida; Fred Nye, formerly of the Omaha Republican; Ed Howe, now of the Atchison Globe; Edward Rosewater of the Omaha Bee, C. H. Gere of the Lincoln Journal, R. L. Metcalfe of the Omaha World-Herald, Ross Hammond of the Fremont Tribune, Ernest Bross, now managing editor of the Portland Oregonian; Walter Wellman, now of the Chicago Record-Herald. Among Nebraska poets and essayists, may be noted Prof. O. C. Dake, author of Nebraska Legends—the first book of Nebraska poetry known to have been printed; N. K. Griggs of Lincoln; Mrs. Peattie, formerly of Omaha, A. L. Bixby of the Lincoln Journal; Walt Mason of the Beatrice Summary; J. A. Edgerton, now of New York City; Kate M. Cleary, formerly of Hubbell, a writer of stories of Nebraska life; W. R. Lighton, of Omaha, a magazine writer on Nebraska themes. Some additional Nebraska newspaper men who have written literature are John A. MacMurphy, for a long time writer on the Omaha Herald; Allen May, of Falls City; Adam Breed, of Hastings, and Edgar Howard of Columbus.

Fifty years ago there were less than a thousand white people in Nebraska territory, today more than a million. The total wealth then was probably not $100,000, now between one and two billions. Then there was not a single cultivated farm—today there are 125,000, with crops worth $162,000,000. Then not a factory or mile of railroad. Today 5,414 manufacturing establishments, with a product worth $144,000,000 each year, and 5,700 miles of railroad. Fifty years ago this summer a single newspaper, the Palladium, at Bellevue. Today 600 newspapers and magazines. Fifty years ago not a school in active operation. Today 6,000 common schools and higher ones by the hundred. Fifty years ago an unfenced buffalo pasture, with no rank in civilized society. Today—in the union

First Church Built in Lincoln, 1868

of forty-five sister states, which forms the strongest nation in the world—her rank is tenth in total value of farm products, eighth in the production of wheat, fourth in the production of corn, fourth in number of cattle and swine, third in manufacture of meat products, and first of all in education qualification of her people. In fifty years Nebraska has given the world its central battle ground for the settlement of the most pressing world problems, from slavery to monopoly; she has given national leadership to both sides in these struggles; she has given the nation twice a leading candidate for president, she has given the world an Arbor day. Highest of all, her broad prairies and lofty table lands, have given birth to a race of clear visioned, independent minded, progressive men and women. Unfettered by the dogmatism of the past in politics, in religion, in economics, in human sympathy and aspiration, may Nebraska never fail in her leadership.

Nor heed the sceptic's punny hands,
While near her school the church spire stands;
Nor fear the blinded bigot's rule,
While near her church spire stands the school.

A. E. SHELDON.

The following is a list of principal original sources of information on Nebraska history. Many more might be added, but this brief list will furnish most of the facts necessary for any student who desires to make original investigation:

Early Spanish history—14th Report U. S. Ethnological Bureau, giving an account of Coronado's journey; H. H. Bancroft's History of New Mexico.

Indian history—14th and 18th Reports U. S. Ethnological Bureau.

Nebraska Geology—Hayden's U. S. Geological Survey of Nebraska, 1872; E. H. Barbour, Nebraska Geological Report, 1903.

Early French—Margry, Decouvertes et Etablissements (in French), La Hontan, Voyage (in French), Charlevoix, Travels in North America.

Early American—Lewis & Clark Travels, 1804; Washington Irving, Astoria and Captain Bonneville; Long's Expedition, 1819; John Irving, Indian Sketches; Maximilian, Travels; George Catlin, North American Indians; Townsend's Travels; Fremont's Explorations; Larpenteur, Forty Years Fur Trade; H. M. Chittenden, History of the Missouri Fur Trade, Steamboating on the Missouri; Parkman, Oregon Trail; Nebraska State Historical Society Reports,—ten volumes, files of Nebraska newspapers in State Historical Library, H. W. Caldwell, Education in Nebraska, published by U. S. Bureau of Education, Nebraska Legislative Journals, Session Laws, Nebraska Official Reports.