

Sketch of Railroad Career of Horace G. Burt

As befits a man who is at the head of a business which represents an investment of an hundred odd millions, and in whose operation some thousands of men are employed, Horace G. Burt keeps very much to himself. His reticence has won for him the name of being a hard man to interview. In reality he is one of the easiest, for he invariably tells the reporter he has nothing to say, and the interview is over, so far as Mr. Burt is concerned. On such matters as the public is, in his opinion, entitled to be informed Mr. Burt talks briefly, but plainly, but he never takes the reporter into his confidence concerning his plans or the plans of his employers in the management of the great railroad of which he is the executive head. He is probably the hardest worker on the Union Pacific pay roll, and finds very little time from his duties to devote to a discussion of the affairs of the road for the edification of outsiders.

Horace G. Burt began his railroad career as a member of a surveying party which was running a line for a branch of the Chicago & Northwestern road over in Iowa. He soon left the pioneer party to become superintendent of the construction work. Advance was rapid and steady, and he was successively made assistant superintendent and superintendent of the northern Iowa lines of the Chicago & Northwestern, and then chief engineer for

from a receivership which had lasted four years and had suffered greatly from the physical and moral—if that word may be used—deterioration incident to the fact that it had been that long in the hands of the court. To reorganize the service, rehabilitate the equipment of the line and place the property on a paying basis Mr. Burt was sent to Omaha. With characteristic energy and determination he set about the undertaking. How well he has succeeded is told by the quotations for the stock. At the very outset he gave the force of his own example to the men under him. He retained in the service of the company the old executive officers, who had made up the staff for years and who were familiar with the Union Pacific, its territory and its patrons. One of these—the chief engineer—soon after resigned and was replaced by the present incumbent, a man who had been with the president during other days on the Elkhorn. It was the change in methods that brought about the improved condition in the affairs of the line. For instance, a sleepy gatekeeper at the shops was startled out of his rest for weeks by the appearance of the "old man" at the gate at 7 o'clock one morning. Others besides the gatekeeper were surprised that morning, but the visit bore fruit in the prompt arrival ever since of shopmen. Laxity in all departments met similar rebukes, and it wasn't many days after



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CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY ORATORICAL ASSOCIATION TEAM—DEBATES WITH DELIAN DEBATING CLUB OF UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, AT LINCOLN, IN APRIL.



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degree of M. E., which he would have won had he been regularly graduated.

Against Marriage

There is a Widows' Protective league at South St. Louis, with a rather odd purpose—the prevention of marriages. The fact that the members have all had experience in matrimony might lead one to infer that they had found the dual existence an unpleasant one, but such is not the case, for a majority testify—and those who know them well bear them out—that their former partners in life were congenial. The purpose of the society is to promote good-fellowship among widows and to form a mutual benefit insurance company from its membership. Organized less than a month ago, it now numbers upward of fifty members.

The project was first conceived by Mrs. Caroline Reuss, who is known on the south side as the "universal secretary." Mrs. Reuss is a club woman in the broadest sense of the word. Her life is given up to the societies, clubs, associations, bands and vereinen of which she is secretary.

On the first of January Mrs. Reuss called in her bosom friends, all of whom are members of societies, and consulted with them as to how it would be possible to form an association of women as a sororal insurance company without any possibility of their having to pay assessments on the death of men. The South St. Louis Widows' Protective league was the result of this conference.

Just at present the society is in a formative state. The chapter will not close until the membership has reached 100. When their plans are so far matured the members will incorporate. Then on the death of any member of the society \$50 will be paid out of the treasury toward funeral expenses, and, during sickness, \$3 will be allowed each week. But this allowance will not be extended to any member on a second or third illness within one year.

Under present conditions, the members not yet having incorporated, there is only an understanding that in case of the death

Beauty Contest For Unmarried Women

Kentucky has had a beauty contest, Kentucky—where woman has been more than queen since the dark and bloody ground was only a big county of Virginia; where even the Indian squaws of the period antedating, because of their comeliness, were shown more respect by the warriors of the tribes than in any other section of the great American wilderness; where the name woman has been a synonym for beauty from the time when the blue grass star was added to the firmament of Old Glory.

It was a contest worthy the name, a contest deserving the while of even Kentucky, the commonwealth that gave to the United States in the only great internal contest of its history the two leaders—Lincoln and Davis; the commonwealth that has had within its borders political contests than which none warmer nor more disastrous were ever waged. The latest contest, however, was not in the least sanguinary. Indeed, it might have been called "a battle of the roses," for bouquets supplanted bullets. Certain it is that a pretty bunch of buds is the outcome.

Indirectly the holding of the twenty-eighth triennial convolve of Knights Templar of America in Louisville next August is responsible for this contest, writes a correspondent of the Chicago Chronicle. When at Pittsburg in 1898 the grand encampment of the order accepted an invitation to come to the Falls City during the first year of the twentieth century, the committee of Kentuckians then present promised those who would attend the gathering an introduction, among other things, to the state's three graces—fast horses, fine whisky and fair women.

As the greatest of these is fair women, their part in the meeting was first considered, in consequence of which the Louisville knights hit upon the happy idea of having sponsors represent the several command-

which is to say that the contest was between debutantes and their younger sisters. Kentucky has no old maids. Out of school means into matrimony. It is never a death, but rather a deluge, of suitors (Sallie Ward was married four times). The predicament of the Kentucky knights may be imagined. Naturally chivalrous, such demands on them made of each a more gallant southron.

It would have been a pleasant task to have named all the pretty women of the state sponsors—the entire feminine population would have been included—but to make twenty-five selections from such an array of beauty as has the state which gave England its present dowager duchess of Marlborough and keep the many thousands not honored in blissful ignorance of the fact that they too had entered into the contest was a problem that Solomon himself would have hesitated in the solving. The wisdom of this king of Israel, in the building of whose temples was laid the foundation of Masonry, of which Templarism is the York branch, really did enter into the settlement of the difficulty they faced.

Their salvation lay in secrecy. As the keystone had been the sphinx to the workmen on Solomon's temple, it now exercised its influence in sealing the lips of those who held it sacred as an emblem. The knights found relief in seclusion. Behind closed doors the conflict was carried on. In the hallowed precincts of their asylums they named the ones all delight to honor and the world is none the wiser as to those who were not chosen.

The contest, from the day the first commandery announced its representative, has created much interest. There's a charm in mystery and it made itself deeply felt in this case. In some instances there were four or five adjournments before the sponsor was named. One Louisville commandery to arrive at a conclusion finally resolved to leave the matter to a committee of twelve, thereby decreasing the number of young women championed proportionately with the accredited voters. At Bowling Green the commandery surmounted an obstacle by naming a sponsor and an alternate. Practically every commandery had its troubles.

The list complete includes many of the most attractive young women in Kentucky. Pretty of face and figure, vivacious and winning, bright and witty, they will sustain the state's reputation for beauty and grace in the position they have been called upon to fill. There are some whom Gibson could study with profit to his sketches; others who would be the admiration of Parisian modistes, so perfect are they in form; a half score or more who would have been the envy of Mme. Recamier had they lived in France during the last days of the empire, because of that faultless complexion Kentucky zephyrs and Kentucky skies give to her daughters.

They represent the old southern families of which the state is proud. A few are yet in the best schools of the land; the others are graduates of the country's most noted colleges for women. Foreign travel during vacations, added to a home training distinctly Kentuckian, has made brilliant conversationalists of them.

Over the Road

Detroit Journal: The Leghorn Cockerel knew another.

"Why does a hen go over the road?" he asked.

"Perhaps," observed the Plymouth Rock, whose notions of propriety were naturally puritanical, "she has stolen a nest!"

At this the Leghorn Cockerel propounded his enigma anew, specifying that he had reference to going over the road in the literal rather than the figurative or penal sense.



VIEW OF RUINS AFTER RECENT FIRE AT UNIVERSITY OF IOWA.

the whole system. It was while acting in this latter capacity that he first came into general notice as a railroad man. He laid out the great Northwestern switchyards in Chicago, an achievement which attracted a great deal of attention in the railroad world. The problem of terminal facilities for the Northwestern in Chicago was of many and apparently insuperable difficulties, but the solution arrived at by Mr. Burt was of the most practical sort and evinced railroad ability of the highest order.

His First Position in Omaha.

It was not a great while until Mr. Burt was again transferred from the construction to the operating department, and he was made general superintendent of the Iowa lines of the Northwestern, with headquarters at Boone. From there he came to Omaha to be general manager of the Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley road, serving for five years in this capacity. From here he was sent to St. Paul to be general manager of the Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha road. He had hardly assumed this position before he was made assistant to the president—Marvin Hughitt—and third vice president of the Chicago & Northwestern. This is briefly the railroad career of Mr. Burt prior to his return to Omaha to assume his present position. Such a hasty outline can give no adequate idea of the work he performed or the results he secured, more than will be gained from the fact that his upward course never halted. It will be accepted as proven that he must have shown both ability and capacity, or he could not have attained the confidence of the managers of the great system of railroads with which he was connected, for mere pull does not win recognition and advancement in the railroad service.

On Monday, December 27, 1897, it was officially announced from New York that Horace G. Burt had been selected to be president of the Union Pacific. He was in Chicago at the time, and when a newspaper reporter called on him with the news Mr. Burt said: "I have not been notified and I do not believe I care to talk until I am officially notified of the appointment." If loquacity on the topic of his appointment is to be taken as an evidence of his notification, he hasn't heard from the directory yet, for he hasn't talked about it any.

On the day Mr. Burt was chosen to be president of the road Union Pacific sold for 26 1/2 in New York. It is now, a little more than three years afterward, selling around 91.

Undertaking Not a Sincere.

It was certainly a herculean task set before Mr. Burt. The road had just emerged

Year's, 1898, until it was thoroughly understood that "snaps on the Union Pacific were a thing of the past. His example was infectious, and President Burt soon had the satisfaction of seeing his assistants working with as much energy as himself to bring his plans to success. The effort has been all he could have expected. When he came to Omaha, it is told, he said to a friend that he would probably need five years to bring about a proper readjustment of the road and its service. He has two years to spare, if outward indications are any criterion.

... as) to be Able.

Mr. Burt's reputation for austerity arises from his unwillingness to discuss his business affairs generally with outsiders. His time is well taken up with matters pertaining to his position, and his habit of giving his personal attention to much of the detail work connected with the operation of the line absolutely precludes sociability during office hours. His aversion to newspaper interviews is known to every city editor and railroad reporter between San Francisco and New York, and when a reporter comes into the office with an authoritative interview from the president of the Union Pacific he announces it almost as a triumph. Often Mr. Burt has carried this feature of his daily program to denying or refusing to affirm knowledge of things that had actually transpired, or which came to pass within a very short time after. Those who are intimate with him say that when he does have a rare minute for rest or relaxation he is as genial and companionable a man as one would wish to meet. He takes a keen personal interest in the affairs of the world outside of railroad circles, but goes in little for society, because he has not time (and it is also said he has not the inclination). When in Omaha he is at his desk by 8 o'clock in the morning and he rarely leaves the headquarters building before the closing hour in the evening. His trips over the line have been frequent, owing to the unusually extensive undertakings in the way of reconstruction which have been set on foot since his advent, and to which he has given very much of his own skill as a railroad builder. In a word, he has devoted himself entirely to the accomplishment of the work he was given when he came to Omaha in the winter of 1897.

Horace G. Burt was born in January, 1849, at Terre Haute, Ind. His education was received in the common schools and a short attendance at the University of Michigan. He left the latter institution without having taken his degree and entered into the practice of what has proven to be his lifetime work. About a year ago the university conferred on Mr. Burt the



RUINS OF MEDICAL BUILDING AFTER RECENT FIRE AT UNIVERSITY OF IOWA.

of any member a general assessment of 50 cents each will be levied toward defraying funeral expenses. There will be no sick money before the membership reaches 100. At present the maximum age limit is 55 years, but this is to be lowered to 50 years after incorporation.

No men will be permitted to participate in even the smallest of the league's receptions. And any member of the league who so far recants as to marry again will have her name stricken from the rolls and be excluded from future fellowship, even should she once more become eligible.

les of Kentucky. Each Templar organization was asked to appoint from its realm the most beautiful girl there to be found. This was six months ago. In some sections of the country such a length of time would not be necessary. In Kentucky, where no woman is ugly, where all possess at least one attractive feature—some resemblance to Sallie Ward, that blue grass woman who, though long since dead, occupies a prominent place in a current monthly in a series of articles on famous American beauties—it is different.

Every woman unmarried was eligible.