

# Palatial Estate Created by a St. Louis Nabob in the Wilds of Africa



ZEBRA BROKEN TO HARNESS AND SADDLE.



NATIVES WHO MAKE GOOD HERDSMEN.



AFRICAN CATTLE RUN LARGELY TO HORNS

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**N**AIROBI, Feb. 21.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—British East Africa has an American Aladdin. He comes from St. Louis, and, like his prototype of Baghdad, in the days of Haroun Al Raschid, he has created a great estate in a night. He has rubbed the golden lamp of his fortune, and the genie who served him has chopped down the jungle and fenced in the wilds. A year ago all was a wilderness. Now 20,000 acres are under his pastoral or agricultural control, and many miles of wire fences have gone up about it. He has erected stables for hundreds of horses and ponies, has a dairy supplied by over 100 cows, and a magnificent bungalow home with electric lights, telephoning machines and the other comforts which the nabobs of St. Louis must have. All this is in one of the widest parts of the black continent, where antelope are as thick as sheep in Ohio, where there are more zebras than there are cows in Kentucky, where the game is more numerous than horses in Virginia, and where the lion still roars night after night and the leopard lies in wait for his prey. The estate itself teems with wild animals; and it is one of the great private game preserves of the world.

Mr. MacMillan tells me that he is now making a great deal of butter and that most of it finds a ready market in Nairobi. He speaks confidently of the future of British East Africa as a dairying country, saying that the grass is rich in its butter producing qualities, and prophesying that this colony will some day export butter to India, South Africa and London.

Mr. MacMillan's dairy on the Juja ranch is a wonder to the people here. It is equipped as well as any of the cow houses belonging to our millionaires of the United States. Its fittings are of white enamel; it has a boiler for sterilizing the utensils, a steam separator with white enamel fittings and everything is managed in the most sanitary way. On one side of the dairy is a bacon room containing fitches and hams, and down on a marshy bend of the river nearby are pigeries in which are swine of all sizes, fattened on the refuse milk.

**Stables and Abyssinian Ponies.**

The Juja stables have quarters for 100 horses and ponies with box stalls and all other conveniences. The floors are paved and drained and the loose boxes are netted against mosquitoes, which during the rainy season are death to horses in this part of the world. Outside the stables are chicken runs and not far from them is a large number of farm wagons lately imported from Wisconsin for use on the estate. Among the animals used for draft are Bombay mules and East Indian oxen, both of which seem to thrive here. Mr. MacMillan has recently brought in about 100 ponies and mules from Abyssinia. He has altogether 800 cattle, having just begun to stock the ranch. His cattle have humps on their backs; they are descendants of the sacred bulls of India, but he is now importing Hereford and Guernsey bulls to improve the breed.

**Question of Labor.**

In my talk with Mr. MacMillan I asked him as to the African natives as an available labor supply. He says they do well, and that the wages paid average about \$1.50 a month per man. He has about ten white foremen and something like 70 hundred Hindoos, Somalis, Masai and other native Africans. The Masai are a stock-rearing people and they are valuable upon the ranches, as they know how to care for cattle. They will do nothing in the way of cultivation or other hard labor. The Wakkuys, on the other hand, are fond of farming and can use hoe fairly well. Such men as are working away from their own country have to be fed, but this costs only about 75 cents a month over their pay. Those who are employed from the tribes nearby and are allowed to go home every night feed themselves.

**Domestication of the Zebra.**

There are great droves of zebras running about over the wilder parts of Mr. MacMillan's big farm. He permits no shooting upon it by strangers, and, as a result, these animals are remarkably tame, considering their character and locality.

After the farm is in good running order, an attempt will be made to domesticate the zebra, and experiments in cross breeding will be carried on. Indeed, this has already been attempted here and there throughout the country and especially at the government agricultural farm at Nanyasha lake, between here and Uganda. I have gone through Nanyasha and the wild zebra about there look fine and healthy. It is different with the tame ones on the government farm. The experiment was begun in 1904, when 100 head were brought in from the wilds. They fell off, one by one, being attacked by parasites and disease, and the experiment is now considered a failure. The secretary of agriculture says that he has great hopes from the zebra colts born in captivity, and thinks they may eventually be handled like donkeys and horses. As to the wild zebras, he says it is impossible to take them from the plains and use them for farm animals, and he advises the settlers that oxen and mules are better and cheaper. A wild zebra never becomes docile and the natives can not possibly handle it. The colts, if treated kindly, seem to change their nature.

Shortly after turning them out on pasture they picked up and grew fat once more. One of the chief troubles of keeping the zebra in captivity, is that they become infected with worms and parasites of various kinds. Old settlers, who understand the country, say that the zebra has these same parasites when he runs wild on the plains, but that he knows certain plants and grasses which are antidotes for them and seeks them out and eats them. This keeps him in health, notwithstanding the parasites. When in captivity such wide ranging is not possible, he can not find his medicine and as a result grows sick and dies.

**How to Break the Zebra.**

I have before me the report made by the farmer in charge of the government ranch giving his conclusions as to zebra training. After saying that the animals need a wide range, he tells how he broke five zebra stallions, after they had been haltered and stabled for more than a year. He says that one of these was savage to ferocity and unsafe to approach in the stall or outside. The others he hitched up to an old military wagon, using a set of mule harness reversed, with the breeching acting as the breast collar, and with rope tugs. It took him one whole month before he could run a pair of these zebras together, and six weeks before a good team could be depended upon. After that they went fairly well. He worked them for several weeks hauling brush and wood, and at the end they became thin. They would eat only grass and turned up their noses at bran and corn. They were good pullers and strong.

**Big Farms in Africa.**

The farm of Mr. MacMillan, which I have described, is one of the big estates which are springing up here on the high African plateau. There are a number of the kind, and the papers are filled with warnings to hunters that they must not shoot upon these large properties. The division of the land into big holdings, through favoritism or in other ways, is creating a great deal of comment, and it is denounced by the smaller settlers. Among the big estates are those of Lord Rindill who has over 100,000 acres, the East African syndicate, which has 500,000 square miles, or 320,000 acres, and of Lord Delamare, who has 100,000 acres and more. Lord Delamare's estates lie 7,000 feet above sea level, and the equator runs through it. He has already 1,000 acres under cultivation, and has stocked his pastures with 8,000 native sheep and 60 imported Merinos. He has also imported rams and 200 Ryland-crossed native lambs. He is experimenting in cattle rearing, and has a herd of 17,000 native head, including 800 oxen. He has fourteen Shortborns and a number of Herefords. He has also a model dairy. Other farmers are bringing European stock for breeding purposes. There is a settler not far from Nairobi who has recently imported thirty Merino rams and 100 Merino ewes. This man is also engaged in dairying, and has several fine Guernsey bulls.

**No Place for Poor Americans.**

There is one thing I should like to say about British East Africa. It is no place for poor Americans and the poor Englishman who can do well here is a wonder. The land seems to be good and it can be bought comparatively cheap, but everything is far from the markets and all imports are high. Labor is exceedingly low. A native can often be employed for 6 or 10 cents a day and hundreds work for 3 cents a day. But it is difficult to control them and the conditions are impossible for the ordinary American farmer who has but little money and relies largely on his muscle and brains. The British East African government advises no one to come to the country unless he has at least \$1,000 and it says he should have \$5,000 to do well. The cost of land ranges from 60 cents to \$1.50 an acre, according to whether it is near or far from the railroad. This is for farm lands. Pastures can be bought for as low as 30 cents an acre and homesteads of 400 acres, with the right of pre-empting 400 acres more, can be purchased by instalments, spread over sixteen years. The right of pre-emption lapses at the end of three years if forty-eight acres out of the 160 have not been cultivated. As a general thing the government will not grant more than 5,000 acres to any one man, although 10,000 acres may be acquired by special arrangement. It would take about 3,000 sheep to stock 1,000 acres of good grazing land, and the government estimates that the capital needed to start with 500 sheep and twenty cows would be in the neighborhood of \$1,000.

**Dissatisfied Settlers.**

As it is now the settlers who have taken up small holdings are dissatisfied with the prospects. This country is a world of undeveloped possibilities, and it will soon be a place where there will be a great deal of money to be made. As it is now most of the best tracts along the railroad are in the hands of English nabobs, and the hundreds of comparatively poor men who came here from South Africa at the close of the Boer war have left. Many of those who remained are living in little galvanized iron shacks and are not doing overly well. Nevertheless there is no reason why this should not some day be a white man's country, settled by white men. Everywhere above 5,000 feet the climate is healthy and at 2,000 feet ice is usually seen in the early morning. A great part of the highlands has a good rainfall, and almost any kind of crop common to the temperate zone will grow. Farther down near the coast patches of cotton have been planted and are yielding 300 or 400 pounds of lint to the acre. I have already spoken of the coffee plantations about Nairobi. I am told there are also good coffee lands on the slopes of Mount Kenya. Some tobacco farms have been set out along the Hamati river and vegetables are now being raised here for Mombasa and the other ports farther down the coast. The people here, to raise European vegetables for South Africa, it is their idea that they will eventually export most to that country. The greatest obstacles now in sight are the insect pests and animal diseases, but they will probably be conquered, and these vast plains, which are now supporting thousands upon thousands of antelope, zebra, gnus and other wild animals, will eventually be teeming with cattle and sheep.

**Platte Valley Lodge and the allied organization.**

(Continued on Page Four.)

## North Platte Masons Dedicate Beautiful Temple

**W**ASHINGTON'S birthday was one of the great days in the history of North Platte. The occasion was the dedication of the beautiful Masonic temple, erected at a cost of more than \$20,000, besides thousands more which have been or will yet be spent in furnishing it agreeably to the taste and needs of the several Masonic organizations that have combined in its erection. In addition to the usual patriotic flags many of the business men appropriately decorated their stores and windows in honor of the occasion. The exterior of the temple was brilliantly and beautifully decorated with electrical designs. In attractiveness they have never been surpassed in this city. The square and compass, with the letter G, were displayed the entire length of the Dewey street side of the building, while streamers were suspended in rows the full length of the temple on Fifth street. The interior of the lodge and reception rooms, parlors, corridors and banquet hall of the

brethren from Hastings, Fremont, Beatrice, Imperial, Omaha and other cities, the total number of guests exceeding 150.

The several services and ceremonies were largely attended, and yet of a private nature, the invitations being issued only to Masons and their immediate families. Promptly at 1 o'clock Platte Valley Lodge No. 33 assembled at the hall, marched to the Pacific hotel and escorted the Grand lodge to the new temple, an orchestra meanwhile discoursing sweet strains of music for the entertainment of the ladies and brethren in waiting. The dedicatory exercises were conducted by Grand Master Ornan J. Kinn, assisted by the officers and members of the grand lodge and a large choir of Masons, their wives and daughters. They included the Te Deum and several hymns and solos by North Platte's best vocalists, an oration by the Hon. Past Grand Master of Nebraska, Henry H. Wilson of Lincoln, the grand honors and the patriotic hymn "My Country 'Tis of Thee" by the entire assembly. Following the

all corporate powers, and this craft, whose members are: F. E. Bullard, president; W. H. McDonald, treasurer; George Graham, secretary; F. W. Rincker, E. F. Seeburger, Samuel Goozee, Arthur McNamara, Albert Muldon and Charles E. Higgins, erected the building. The temple is probably the largest and most imposing structure, with the exception of the high school building, erected in the city. A light brown pressed brick and the best material of every kind were used in the construction. The extreme dimensions of the main building are 88 feet on Dewey street by 90 feet on Fifth street, two stories in height, to which is added a warehouse, 20x60, and a boiler room, 12x30. The entire first floor, including the addition, is occupied by the Wilcox department store, making this the largest and finest store room in western Nebraska. From a hall at the Fifth street entrance by a flight of five, easy stairs, the second story is reached and entrance made into a corridor seven feet in width that extends the entire length

of the reception room 20x30 feet, almost identical size of the old lodge room, furnished with elegant Brussels rugs and furniture for club house purposes. From this entrance to the tier's room 16x16 feet, fitted with a set of individual lockers and the preparation room, 40x16 feet. Doors connect these with the lodge room 42x20 feet and having eighteen-foot ceiling. These apartments will all be furnished in keeping with the magnificence of the building, the designs of the several rooms and the esthetic ideas of Masonry. Four Wilton velvet rugs of delicate design cover the body of the federal court at Omaha, was present as a dignitary master pro tempore.

The erection of a building for the lodge was at once considered which resulted in the construction of the one that has just been replaced by the new temple. The cost was \$2,000 and the funds was secured by issuing stock at \$50 per share. This building is historic also because of the lower story having been leased by Lincoln county for county offices preceding the erection of a court house. The letters from members now scattered all over the country testify to many of the delightful gatherings spent within this building during the passing years and for the products of that hall have gone forth many influences looking to the joy and happiness of its constituency.

Platte Valley lodge, successful in the past, has never been more prosperous than at the present time. The roster contains the names of 150 members in good standing, presided over by John G. McVittay, first officer, and because of that hall have gone forth many influences looking to the joy and happiness of its constituency.

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Besides the blue lodge, North Platte has the Chapter, the commandery and the Order of the Eastern Star.

Euphrates chapter No. 15 was organized in 1876 and now numbers seventy members. Its officers are: William J. Stuart, high priest; Fred W. Rincker, king; James B. McDonald, scribe; Charles McDonald, treasurer, and Frank E. Bullard, secretary.

The Order of the Eastern Star is likewise in a most flourishing condition. The membership is over 150. The presiding officers are: Mrs. M. H. Douglas, worthy matron; Robert Armstrong, worthy patron; Mrs. George W. Finn, secretary, and Mrs. F. H. Thompson, treasurer.



BEAUTIFUL NEW HOME OF THE MASONIC FRATERNITY AT NORTH PLATTE—DEDICATED SATURDAY WITH APPROPRIATE CEREMONY.

temple were resplendent with beauty, wagonload of bunting of national colors having been used in effecting the several artistic creations of the decorating committee, with Lester W. Walker as chairman.

Early in the day the reception and entertainment committees, headed by Hon. M. Grimes, judge of the district court; W. H. C. Woodward, receiver at the United States land office; E. F. Seeburger of the First National bank, Samuel Goozee of the McDonald State bank, and a number of the foremost business men, were busy meeting the incoming trains from the east and west, welcoming and providing for the convenience of the guests of the lodge. The lodges at Sidney, Chappell, Ogallala, Gothenburg, Cozad, Lexington, Gandy, Elm Creek, Kearney, Gibbon, Shelton, Wood River and Grand Island, had been invited as bodies, and all sent delegations, from six to thirty members being present from each place. The officers of the grand lodge of Nebraska were present as follows: Grand Master Ornan W. King of Lincoln, Deputy Grand Master William A. De Bord of Omaha, Grand Senior Warden Michael Dowling of Omaha, Grand Junior Warden Harry A. Cheney of Creighton, Grand Treasurer James B. Dinmore of Sutton, Grand Secretary Francis E. White of Omaha, Grand Chaplain Very Rev. George Allen Beecher of Omaha, Grand Lecturer Robert E. French of Kearney, Grand Marshal Henry Gibbon of Kearney, Grand Senior Deacon John R. Cain of Falls City, Grand Junior Deacon Alpha Morgan of Broken Bow, Grand Tyler Jacob King of South Omaha and special grand orator of the day, the Hon. Henry H. Wilson of Lincoln, past grand master. Besides these, there were present visiting

ceremonies a social hour was most pleasantly spent, during which light refreshments were served and every lady was presented with a souvenir by the executive committee.

At 7 o'clock the great banquet hall was opened, the members and guests entering and being seated with orchestral accompaniment. The banquet, which was exclusively Masonic, none but Masons participating, was a great social success. Covers were laid for 300. The dinner, served in a half dozen courses by the Order of the Eastern Star, and the menu of the very best. Following the serving came the flow of wit and humor, as the several praiseworthy speeches were given at the direction of the toastmaster, Past Grand Master Frank E. Bullard. Among the after-dinner speakers were Grand Master King, John Hastings, esq., of North Platte, Deputy Grand Master De Bord, Grand Chaplain Beecher and Rev. John F. Seibert of North Platte.

For several years Platte Valley Lodge No. 33 has had under consideration the erection of a building more in keeping with the progressive spirit of the city. After due consideration, by a strong vote the lodge decided to erect a temple purely for Masonic purposes, and plans were drawn and adopted. The unexpectedly great demand for increased rooms for mercantile pursuits caused by rapid expansion of the city, together with the fact that the Masonic property was located on one of the most valuable business corners, caused a reconsideration of the subject and the present handsome building shown in the cut is the result. By order of the bodies participating the trustees of the several societies perfected an organization called the Temple craft with

the first lodge of emergency was called January 12, 1876, to attend the funeral of Richard Ormby of North Platte and was attended by eighteen brothers of the order, among the number being Mr. McDonald, Dr. Dick, Major Woodhurst, James H. Babbit, who, with the exception of Dr. Dick are yet members of this lodge.

To publish some of the proceedings of the lodge during the time of its location at Fort McPherson would make decidedly spy reading, but would hardly be advisable. Suffice it to say, the records of the lodge as well as the testimony of the members of that period, reveal wonderfully

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PIONEER STRUCTURE IN WHICH THE FIRST MASONIC LODGE AT NORTH PLATTE WAS CONSTITUTED

**Pike County Millionaire.**

The man I refer to is Mr. William N. MacMillan of Missouri. I have called him a Pike county millionaire, although I am not sure that he comes from Pike. Like all Missourians he usually registers from St. Louis. He is about 32 years old, is dark complexioned, tall, straight and fine looking, and he weighs, I judge, about 170 pounds. He is a man of culture as well as a man of muscle and enterprise, and he is also evidently a man of great wealth. He has already spent a fortune on his African estate, and I am told that he is now putting out from \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year in improvements. He is supposed by the citizens here to be worth some \$1,000,000 and to have an income running into the hundreds of thousands a year.

As to these things, however, I know only from hearsay. Mr. MacMillan is a modest man, and when I took tea with him at his city home here in Nairobi the other day I did not feel at liberty to ask him personal questions. Indeed, a large part of the information which I give in this letter concerning his farm and its operations comes from other sources, either the considerable cropped out in our chat about farming, land holding and big game hunting on this great African plateau.

**The Juja Ranch.**

The name of Mr. MacMillan's big ranch is the Juja farm. I see a posting notice concerning it in the Nairobi Globe Trotter of this week, stating that its boundaries are unimpaired, that trespassers will be prosecuted. The farm lies right in the heart of the big game country. It is on the Athi plains, more than a mile above the sea, in a region which is high and healthy.

The Juja ranch is bounded by three rivers and is now surrounded by a wire fence. Inside the fence are thousands of antelope, great droves of zebra and a large number of gnus, or wilde beasts, which are a combination between a horse and a cow and are of the antelope species. There are also rhinos and hippos unnumbered. The hippopotamuses infest the lands along the rivers and these streams are also inhabited by crocodiles. The other day Mrs. MacMillan's favorite terrier attempted to swim a creek not far from the house, and was gobbled up by a crocodile. A day or two before that a rhinoceros attacked one of the negroes who was hoeing the lettuce in the garden and damaged him considerably, and every now and then a hippopotamus from the swamps of the Athi river breaks in and has a meal of the peanuts or sweet potatoes. The amount that these animals eat is not so great, but they tramp over the garden, crushing the vegetables into mush with their giant feet and they are apt to wallow in the flowers.

**A Palace in the Wilderness.**

I don't suppose I ought to call Mr. MacMillan's country home a palace. It would not be one in London, Paris, Washington or Berlin, but it is certainly palatial in this land, where, until within a dozen years ago, there was nothing but mud huts thatched with straw, and where the natives are still conspicuous by their nudity.

The home is a low bungalow, painted a cool green and white, with wide halls, spacious verandas and long, easy chairs, all whispering comfort to the saddle tired hunter who may have just come in, chased by a lion, or from a long hunt on the plains. The house itself was imported from England in sections, the material being brought thirty miles by oxen over flooded rivers through almost impassable swamps and through a country filled with wild beasts. This is so also of the furniture, the wall papers and the beautiful engravings and books, and also of the modern farm implements of various kinds which are now used on the estate.

The same is true of the machinery of the pumping station and electric light plant, which are down near the river and carry light and water to all the buildings on the homestead. The structures include an engine house and rooms for dynamo, storage cells and an ice chamber.

**Dairy and Its Hundred Cows.**

In talking with me Mr. MacMillan said he had now 100 milk cows in his dairy. Each gives only a gallon of milk a day, but the milk is almost pure cream, and far richer than that of our American cows.

FRANK G. CARPENTER