

TIMELY REAL ESTATE TALK

Holdings of Late A. J. Hanscom in Omaha Property.

HANSCOM PARK HIS GIFT TO CITY

Nebraska Farm Lands Are Not on Market, According to Report Made by Real Estate Men After Investigating.

A. J. Hanscom, the pioneer of Omaha and Nebraska who died in New York a few days ago, had extensive realty interests in Omaha. This property included in his holdings: Lots and buildings, 1301 to 1317 Harney street; lot and building at 1321 Farnam, occupied by Briggs & Williams; west half of 1316 Douglas, occupied by S. W. Landay; 1315 Douglas, occupied by Dyball; the northeast corner of Eighteenth and Douglas, with three dwellings; the residence and lot at 2024 Douglas street; a tract with 123 feet front between that and the Omaha club; a vacant lot at Fifteenth and Jones streets.

Mr. Hanscom and James G. Meagher gave Hanscom park to the city of Omaha in the fall of 1872. It comprises fifty-seven and one-half acres and was a part of the 400 acres pre-empted by Mr. Hanscom when he came to Nebraska. The only stipulations made in donating the land were that the city should spend at least \$1,000 in the park in 1873, \$4,000 in each of the years 1874, 1875 and 1876, and \$5,000 in each of the years 1877 and 1878; also keep the park forever in good repair. The tract was improved by H. M. S. Cleveland, a landscape gardener from Minneapolis.

In a recent trip through Gage county, J. H. Dumont said he found more than six farms for sale. Other dealers in farm lands complain there is little land for sale in the eastern part of the state. Douglas county farms are priced higher than ever before and the farmers seem to prefer the land to the money. With good crops and good prices the income from the farm is such that the farmer is justified in placing a high value on it.

George G. Walker, who returned recently from a trip through the western counties of the state, where a few years ago there was scarcely a farm but for sale, says he was surprised to find nearly every farmer improving his land with the idea of staying on it all his life. Prices are higher in the western counties than for years.

The forest-like aspect of the tract of land at the southeast corner of Farnam street and the Boulevard has been changed by the removal of the timber of bushes and the big elm trees that have flourished there for thirty years. A. P. Tukey & Son have cleared off the property and have placed it on sale. It was a part of the Lyman Richardson estate and belongs now to the First National bank. For many years it has not been on the market.

Most of the property owners along the line of the northwest boulevard thought the appraisal of lands for boulevard purposes was too low, but many not entirely interested thought it too high. With the latter stands the park commission. The commission reported to the council that the appraisal of lands for the boulevard was too high, that it had rescinded the resolution calling for the acquisition of the land. It requested the council to repeal all orders issued under the resolution, to permit the board to start afresh. The council therefore rejected the report of the appraisers.

It is said that land appraisers, after property holders had petitioned the park board for a boulevard, bought for speculation a number of cheap lots in the path of the proposed improvement. They were sadly disappointed by the action of the council in rejecting the appraisal. It is said the land is worth only about \$20,000, in the eyes of the city authorities, but the appraisal was for \$45,000.

Negotiations for the purchase by the street railway company of ground at the northeast corner of Sixth and Dorcas streets for a car barn site have been finally dropped. Upon survey, the property did not prove as large as it was thought to be and the company does not want it, even though the signatures of the entire twenty-three owners could be secured to the deed. This is the second site the company has given up, the other, near St. Joseph's hospital, being relinquished at the request of the hospital authorities.

There is still a possibility that the company may build on the south side of Dorcas street between Sixth and Eighth streets, where officials of the company have an option on some property. It is said, however, that this is not just what is desired and the company will look further.

Cement blocks, which a few years ago were unknown in Omaha for building houses, are becoming more and more popular all the time. Another cement block residence is to be built in Home Place, J. A. Beebe has let the contract for the erection of a home of this type at Seventeenth and Sahler streets. It will be two stories in height.

For the first time in twenty years a real bona fide auction sale of lots was held in Omaha when Reed Bros. sold a number of lots in Creighton Heights and Institute Place, a few blocks north of Clifton Hill.

The first auction sale of which Harry Reed has any record was in 1880, when eighty acres of land, lying between Twentieth and Twenty-fourth and Grace and Locust streets were placed and part of the land auctioned off for the city of Omaha by G. C. Mettall, grandfather of Congressman Hitchcock. Old scrip was taken in payment for some of the lots.

Another auction was in Dwight & Lyman's addition, south of where Hanscom park now is, and Daniel Allen was the auctioneer. The real estate agents took their customers to the ground with a fast

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NEWS OF THE BUSY HOME BUILDERS

OMAHA BUILDS BUT THE BEST

Comparison with Other Cities All in Favor of This.

RECORD OF AUGUST OPERATIONS

Handsome Gain for Omaha as Against a Loss for the Country at Large Shown by the Tables.

Building operations throughout the country for August, according to the figures gathered by the Construction News, shows a falling off from 1906 of 11 per cent. Omaha shows an increase of 30 per cent, which is 31 per cent greater than the average of the country. This is very encouraging. Another feature that must attract some attention is the fact that the permits issued in Omaha average nearly \$3,000, while those issued in other cities are much less. In Los Angeles, for example, the permit average less than \$2,000; in Milwaukee but a little over \$2,000; in Denver, there is a loss of 34 per cent from last year, the permits averaged less than \$2,000; in Minneapolis the permits were just over \$2,000 in average cost, and so it goes through the list. Not only in point of increase is Omaha up with the best, but the character of the buildings being constructed is evidenced by the average price of the permits issued.

ARE SKYSCRAPERS DANGEROUS

Celebrated Expert Says They Are Comparatively Safe and Can Be Made Absolutely So.

WASHINGTON, Sept. 14.—Commenting upon a recent alarm given by George W. Babbs, president of the New York Board of Fire Underwriters, that it was only a matter of time when the skyscraper district of New York would be destroyed by fire, Architect Fitzpatrick, the executive officer of the International Building Inspectors' society, and probably the highest authority on fire-proof construction in the country, says that while such a thing is not beyond the realm of possibility it is highly improbable under present conditions and could, at slight expense, be made an utter impossibility. The skyscraper district of New York cannot be compared to anything there was at Baltimore or in San Francisco. In both conflagrations the tall buildings suffered by reason of the lack of amount of poor buildings there was all about them. Fire found but comparatively little to burn within them, and in a great many cases, though damaged themselves, they served as a bulwark, a protection to adjacent and more combustible buildings. In Baltimore, as a matter of fact, as soon as the fire reached the skyscraper district, small as it was, it burnt itself out in them and they actually saved the city beyond them, stopping the fire much as a dyke does the rush of flood tide.

In New York the downtown district is immeasurably better built generally than is that of any other city. There are more tall buildings, and these, serving almost exclusively as offices, contain the minimum of combustible material. Their tall steel frames, the exterior and enclosed with impervious brick and hollow tile fire-proofing, give a fire in the contents of the building nothing of a structural nature to feed upon and destroy.

No, the skyscraper district of New York is about the safest place from fire in the entire country, and if the owners of the buildings would go to work and put wired glass in metal sash in the windows where they have not already done so, thus making it absolutely impossible for fire to find ingress into the tall buildings from without, the district would be so safe that little or no insurance would need be carried upon the buildings which Mr. Babbs is so much perturbed.

BIGGEST DAY FOR CATHOLICS

Most Notable Dignitaries Will Attend Cathedral Cornerstone Laying.

Sunday, October 6, when the cornerstone of the splendid new cathedral of St. Cecilia will be laid will be the greatest day in the history of Omaha Catholicism. Three archbishops, twenty bishops and a great number of priests are to be here. The committee on invitations, of which C. J. Sumner, in chairman, has received assurances from surrounding parishes that they will be represented by delegations varying in number from forty to 300 each. A grand parade and ecclesiastical pageant is to precede the services of laying the cornerstone. J. A. C. Kennedy will have charge of the parade as grand marshal and will be assisted by twenty aides, who will be appointed from the several parishes. Preparations are being made for 15,000 marchers. The formation will take place down town and thence the line of march will be along the principal streets to the cathedral site at Fortieth and Burt streets. The ceremonies there will be marked by all the outward "pomp and circumstance" which is usual at such ceremonies. High prelates and dignitaries of the church will be here from far and near to assist in the solemn ceremonies which the church ritual prescribes for the blessing and placing in position of the cornerstone.

The sermon will be preached by Archbishop Ireland of St. Paul. Another distinguished speaker on the program will be Senator Norris Brown. There will be other eminent speakers, who have not yet been selected by the committee.

Rev. E. M. Gleason, who is in charge of the musical part of the program, has assembled a chorus of about 100 voices which will render the "Veni Creator" and "Te Deum."

The parades of Omaha will be represented by large delegations in the parade, each parish forming a section headed by its own pastor. The Knights of Columbus, Ancient Order of Hibernians, Catholic Foresters, Catholic Mutual Benefit association, Catholic Knights, several German societies and the Polish and Bohemian societies of Omaha and South Omaha will have prominent places assigned them in the parade.

STREET IS OPENED AT LAST

Passage Secured from Farnam to Harney at Thirty-Fifth After Long Fight.

After a five-years' fight in the city council and the courts among residents of the neighborhood, a thoroughfare is about to be opened at Thirty-fifth street from Harney to Farnam. A deed to the city from Harry Hart of a strip of ground two feet wide and a block long has just been placed on record and a deed of a six-foot strip was recorded some time ago. So F. J. Creedon, contractor, will lay a concrete sidewalk on the next few days. For five years the property holders on Harney street and Dewey avenue have been endeavoring to get that opening to Farnam street, but have been beaten at every turn. The property was condemned once, but the action of the council was not sustained by the courts. The owners whose ground was needed were Dr. Lord of Omaha and Harry Hart of the eastern clothing house of Hart, Shafer & Marx. Mr. Hart wanted an exorbitant price for his ground and Dr. Lord didn't wish to give his up at all.

There are other places where the realty men say passages will have to be opened eventually. There is now no opening from Farnam to Harney or from Farnam to Douglas or from Douglas to Dodge street between Twentieth and Twenty-fourth streets.

NEWS OF THE BUSY HOME BUILDERS

Building Record for August

Building in forty-two of the principal cities for August shows an increase of forty-eight buildings and a decrease of \$5,923,869, or 11 per cent. Of the forty-two cities, there were increases in twenty-two up to as high as 34 per cent and losses in twenty up to as high, in one instance, of 69 per cent. It will be observed that the losses are confined to the larger cities and also to localities in which building has been conspicuously active. The figures in detail are as follows:

Table with columns: City, 1907, 1906, Gain, Loss. Lists cities like New York, Manhattan and Bronx, Brooklyn, Chicago, Philadelphia, etc.

The tide was all one way in the larger cities. The decrease in New York was 16 per cent, Brooklyn, 2; Philadelphia, 6; Chicago, 17; St. Louis, 2; Cleveland, 8; Pittsburgh was a notable exception. It shows a gain of 111 per cent. In the foregoing building has been extremely active for many years, but it is not believed that the prevailing high rentals it will suffer much of a decrease or that there will be any depression which will last for any length of time from the present aspect of affairs. Conditions in all the cities mentioned are upon a basis so satisfactory to permit a long continued period of inactivity in building. In another class

of cities which have not been conspicuous as active building centers there are material decreases, including Salt Lake City, 69 per cent; Mobile, 36; Louisville, 37; Pueblo, 26; Denver, 34; Washington, 18. In the northwest building is very active. St. Paul had an increase of 63 per cent, Minneapolis 9 and Milwaukee 9. Construction continues active in the north Pacific coast cities, Portland leading, with an increase of 24 per cent, and Spokane 4. San Francisco and Los Angeles are not doing so well, the former suffering a loss of 49 per cent and the latter 9 per cent. The interior cities are prospering. A large number show a handsome gain over the corresponding period a year ago.

The long gently sloping stairway goes up from the room, curves in a balcony above the fire place and then ascends to the second story. On the balcony stands a grandfather's clock. Some of the other rooms of the house are finished in the more modern style. There are enough rooms to supply various tastes and to please various moods. It is, on the whole a most charming model of a comfortable and tasty and unique home.

Something unique and thoroughly up-to-date in electric stand lamps has just arrived in Omaha. The American Electric company have a very attractive display of all kinds of electrical fixtures and report a very satisfactory business so far this month.

Houses built of cement blocks are becoming rather common in the architectural ensemble of Omaha. The house of this type must be carefully planned to make it look graceful. The cement block does not lend itself readily to the low house. It is apt to look "squat." The house, says an architect, should be of ample height for its intended use. The lower story may be of cement blocks of good quality, but the upper stories should be of blocks of smaller size or of smooth solid cement. If the latter it can be painted to look very attractive in some soft green tint or some other color suitable to the general plan of the house.

A large roof, with gable windows and broad overhanging eaves, will make the house of this type look graceful. Plenty of porch room can be put on it without having it seem to overbalance.

Will Baumer, North Thirty-ninth street, has just placed an order with the American Electric company for wiring of his house.

"Don't be led astray by some cheap bid for putting down a cement walk," says a man who has laid walks for many years. "A cement walk can be laid down very cheaply. When it is new it will look about as well as a more expensive walk. But in the long run it is going to show the differ-

ence in its construction. The contractor can make a fair walk by using one part cement to six parts of sand, but any builder knows that such a walk will not last. He can slight the excavating and filling and this will leave the ground underneath to be washed away and to sink, causing the interior quality of cement to crack and break. It pays to have a good walk laid, and this can't be done at an inferior price."

Dr. Libbie L. Miller's handsome home on North Twenty-third street is being equipped with round mission fixtures. The work is being done by the American Electric company.

"Now is the time to trim up the trees on the place," said a gardener. "As soon as the sap has ceased to flow, the householder should direct attention to the progress being made by the trees. Some of them will have grown more on one side than on the other during the summer. This is to be corrected by pruning. But care must be taken not to prune too much. Indiscriminate cutting and butchering of trees only does harm. It injures the growth of the tree, and it makes it a monstrosity instead of an ornament and a comfort. The tree should be pruned only enough to make it shapely and make all sides balance."

"It seems odd to me that in this land of hot suns and wind your home builders do not make more use of the protected garden seats and arbors," said a visitor from the east. "An arbor is such a simple thing to build and is at the same time both an ornament and a thing of use. Build the arbor in the back yard and plant grape vines to trail over it. This is provided a shade in the summer, a protection in the winter and a bushel of luscious grapes in their season. Nebraska is a climate in which the grape flourishes when properly planted and cared for. Such arbors can be paved with brick and then they afford a pleasant place to do washing or ironing if it is desired. Portions of it can be en-

closed with mosquito netting and used for outdoor sleeping quarters. There are so many uses to which the arbor can be put that it is surprising that people do not have them."

The Partridge flats at Twenty-second and Davenport have just been wired for lights by the American Electric company.

The recent statement by a leading lumber man that the price of lumber will advance 5 per cent within a year has lived into action some home builders who have watched for an easing in the lumber market before building. As long as the present great activity in building keeps up the lumber market will keep advancing.

Famous Belle. One of the most cherished possessions of the family of General W. B. Curtis, who commanded a brigade in the Army of West Virginia, is a handsome pipe, made out of a limb which was wrenched from the famous apple tree at Appomattox beneath which General Lee surrendered the forces of the Confederacy to Grant. The pipe was carved by a Pennsylvanian of General Curtis' command.

If you have anything to trade advertise it in the For Exchange columns of The Bee Want Ad pages.

Underground garbage receivers are coming into extensive use among Omaha householders. Generally these are built of brick and vary in size according to the needs of the family. The tops come level with the ground and generally there is an iron cover like that of a manhole in a sidewalk. The top should fit tight so as to prevent the escape of noxious odors and poisonous gases. Inside of the brick garbage receiver, of course, is a galvanized iron bucket provided with a bale so that it can be easily removed by the garbage collector.

"Next spring is going to see a greater building boom in Omaha homes than any previous year," said a real estate man. "I know just what the people are planning to do. I know that my business is bigger than it has ever been and most of those to whom I have sold building sites during the last month say they intend to begin building next spring. There is already enough work on hand to keep the builders busy all winter again, just as they were

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Ornamental Tiling in the Up-to-Date Hallway

By Charles James Fox, Ph. D.

Much of the traffic to and from the house is concentrated in the front hallway. Many visitors never enter beyond this part of the house, because the hallway is being used more and more as an informal waiting and reception room. The floors and walls of the hallway are constantly subjected to much wear and abuse. Street dirt is unavoidably carried into the hall on the shoes and clothing of members of the family and of visitors. The greatest part of the wear is concentrated in spots, such as in front of the doorway, directly at the bottom of the stairs, in front of the fireplace and elsewhere, soon causes the carpet or the wooden floor to show signs of wear. As the front stairway is usually broader than that at the rear of the house, nearly all the larger pieces of furniture and baggage which are carried in or out have to be taken through the front hall, and frequently the marks and scars caused by them are very conspicuous on the walls and wainscoting of hall and stairway.

As one's first and often only impression of the interior of a house is gained from the scrutiny of the front hall, the decoration and neat appearance of this part of the home cannot be over estimated. Every good housekeeper has an ambition to create a favorable impression on her visitors, and one of the methods of doing this is to have the front hall, which serves as a reception room decorated with taste and always neat and attractive in appearance.

From the standpoint of both decoration and durability, tiling is the most appropriate covering for the floor and wainscoting of the front hall. As the clay tile can be baked in a great variety of colors, shades and tints, and as the plastic clay can be moulded in almost any form, the baked clay product lends itself to any decorative scheme of color or design which the artist or decorator may imagine. As the tile is baked so that it becomes harder than marble or other natural stones, its durability is the greatest of any known floor or wall covering. The baked

clay product is so hard that it cannot be scratched even by a steel blade. For flooring material this is a very important consideration, because the most destructive agent of all floors is the steel nail of the shoe. In the case of tile, the shoe is concentrated the shoe nails soon wear out carpets or rugs; in a short time they cause the hardest wooden floors to look shabby and will even wear indentations in marble and other material. However, they make no impression upon the hard surface of either the vitrified or ordinary glazed floor tile.

Owing to its nonporous character, the tile floor cannot absorb dirt or septic matter of any kind, and as all foreign matter deposited upon it has to remain on the surface, it is easily removed by simply washing. The facility with which it may be cleaned, and the fact that it never looks shabby, combined with its decorative qualities, always give the tile floor a substantial and attractive appearance, which is perhaps more appropriate at the entrance of the house than anywhere else.

In another important point to be considered in this connection is that the hard-wood floor, which is necessarily oiled and polished, is very slippery. Everyone has experienced the disagreeable sensation of insecurity caused by stepping upon a rug which slides along the polished floor. Such a rug is always placed at the bottom of the stairs, and its slipping on the hard-wood floor is often responsible for serious accidents, especially to children. Many physicians have commented upon the number of children whose hips have been broken as the result of slipping on polished hard-wood floors. The tiled floor, on the contrary, gives a firm and agreeable foothold and rugs which are thrown upon it are held in place.