

NEBRASKA IN BRIEF

NEWS NOTES OF INTEREST FROM VARIOUS SECTIONS.

ALL SUBJECTS TOUCHED UPON

Religious, Social, Agricultural, Political and Other Matters Given Due Consideration.

The Midwest Life.

In the year 1908 the old line life insurance companies of Nebraska collected premiums from the people of this state amounting to \$842,725, while the outside old line life companies collected \$2,695,954. For every dollar paid to a Nebraska company the outside companies received more than three dollars. This proposition should at least be turned around for the best interests of the people of the state, and The Midwest Life and the other state companies are doing their best to persuade and educate their fellow Nebraskans to do so. What gain or advantage is there to any Nebraskan, individually or collectively, to the people of the state, to have these premiums, or the larger part of them, sent out of Nebraska? One sane and emphatic way to "Stand up for Nebraska" is to buy from Nebraska insurance companies what they have to sell, especially when it is a good article, whether it is life insurance, fire insurance or accident insurance. The premium rates of The Midwest Life of Lincoln are reasonable. Its policies are as good as any on the market today and none are better. The premiums paid it stay in Nebraska.

Lightning struck the home of Martin Saal, two miles northeast of Julian, and wrought great havoc. The fluid passed in from the roof into a room where two small boys were sleeping and struck the iron bed. It then went into another room below, striking a gasoline stove and thence into the cellar. Both rooms were badly wrecked and all of the occupants were badly shocked, but not seriously injured.

Lee M. Johnson and Charles Wallingford of Walker precinct, Lincoln county, have been arrested upon three complaints made by Thomas D. McDermott, J. H. Quinn and E. M. Baird, charging the defendants with stealing some twenty head of cattle. It is charged that these parties have been making a very extensive business along that line.

A forty-five-acre field of corn belonging to J. L. Wilson was consumed by fire in Gage county. Mr. Wilson was trying to clean off a potato patch by burning a lot of rubbish when the cornfield was set afire.

James J. Hill of the Great Northern has accepted the invitation of the Omaha Commercial club to attend a banquet which will be given in his honor on the night he speaks at the National Corn exposition. In a personal letter Mr. Hill says he will be pleased to accept the invitation.

Mrs. S. R. Jolley of Lebanon committed suicide by hanging herself in a smokehouse. Temporary insanity is supposed to have been the cause for the deed. She had been ill for several months.

Henry Ahrens, a farmer of the eastern part of Buffalo county, was arraigned before United States Commissioner Cleary on the charge of destroying a rural mail box, and was bound over to the federal district court under bond, to appear at the next term in Grand Island.

Bert Rankin was arrested in Grand Island on the charge of obtaining money under false pretenses, it being alleged that he has been going about through the country impersonating a deaf mute and obtaining alms for the purpose of undergoing an operation. At a recent meeting of the board of directors of the Hollenbeck Road Grader Manufacturing company at Holdrege, it was decided to offer for sale the remaining \$7,000 of the unsubscribed stock of the concern. This sum will be used for the purchase of new machinery and for equipping a shop and foundry for the more extensive manufacture of the road grader, their principal product.

Frank Alter of Bladen, Neb., has been sued in the district court of Webster county by Delevan Tindall and Edward W. Babcock for \$15,000 damages each. These suits grew out of the fact that Alter had lost several dozen chickens and accused Tindall and Babcock of the theft. Great excitement prevailed in the vicinity at the time, as the Beatrice bloodhounds were procured. Sheriff Hedge was called to the scene and quite a large posse in automobiles followed the dogs in their search.

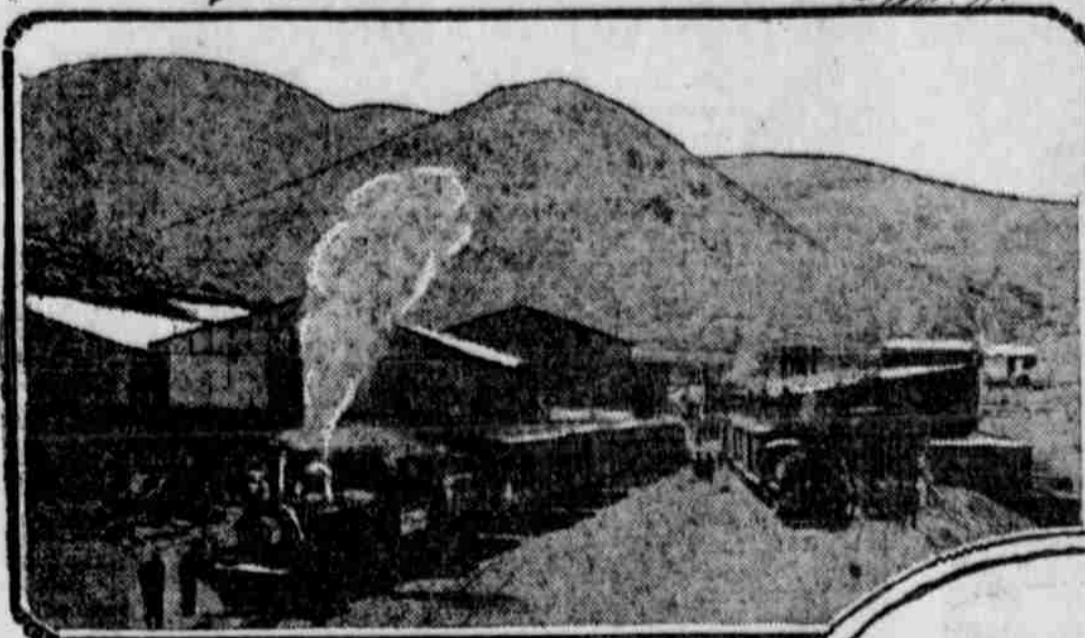
George Reifensberger, a sign painter of Holdrege, while at work on a ladder about twenty-five feet above the ground at Cambridge, fell, striking the ground with great force, but alighting on his feet. He was severely shaken internally and both ankle were broken.

One of the features of the discussion at the sessions of the American Breeders' association at the National Corn show will be the new co-operative plan of breed improvement known as the "circuit breeding scheme." Under this scheme the United States department of agriculture and the Minnesota experiment stations are organizing a circuit for the formation of a strongly milking strain of the Shorthorn breed of cattle.

Nebraska City schools are overcrowded and another room has been secured to relieve the situation.

RAILWAYS IN BOLIVIA

BY DANIEL P. WILES



FREIGHT STATION AT PULACAYO, BOLIVIA

AS A RESULT of having lost its Pacific seaboard province of Antofagasta, following the war with Chile in 1879, Bolivia found itself shut off from the sea and dependent upon its neighbors for an outlet to the great world.

Great as was the blow to national pride, for the Bolivians felt the loss of Antofagasta more keenly than even the French that of the Rhine provinces, and serious as was the loss to the national treasury of the revenues derived from the rich nitrate fields of the lost province, yet the blow was perhaps less heavy than the Bolivians themselves then thought.

It changed entirely the country's economic outlook and pushed it forward into lines of development which in all probability would otherwise have been delayed for many years. Even prior to 1879 the nitrate fields were for the most part owned by foreigners, the Bolivians themselves being engaged in gold and silver mining. But the taxes from nitrate production paid in a large measure the expenses of government and with the loss of this revenue the state was forced into consideration of the economic development of the country in other lines than gold and silver production alone.

The settled part of Bolivia was then and is to a large extent yet, that high table-land, one of the most spacious and elevated plateaus to be found on the globe, which lies between the western and the eastern Andes. This table-land extends from about the Argentine border in the south into Peru on the northwest, and is from 60 to 150 miles in width.

On the Chilean border the western Cordillera is in reality less a mountain range than a line of huge cliffs. The table-land is itself 12,000 to 13,000 feet above sea level and slopes gradually 2,000 or 3,000 feet up to the crest of the western hills and then falls away abruptly nearly three miles down, 15,000 feet, to the desert land lying between the foot of this immense line of cliffs and the Pacific ocean. To the east of the table-land lies the high Andes, the Cordillera Real, rising in Illimpu, Illimani, Ancochuma and Sajama over 21,000 feet. North, east and south from the Cordillera Real the land falls away to the great Amazon and Parana plains. This country, three-fourths of Bolivia in area, is but little settled, but is in natural resources and soil one of the richest parts of the world.

It could easily sustain an agricultural population greater than the whole present population of South America.

The first and most pressing need to Bolivia is railways. This need was recognized to a certain extent prior to the war with Chile. As far back as June, 1863, the national assembly authorized the president to enter into contracts for the building of railways, and in 1868 a concession was granted to a citizen of the United States to build a railway from Cobija to Potosi with a government guaranty of seven per cent on the capital invested. In addition, the concession carried a grant of land one league on each side of the line. A number of other concessions were made in 1869, 1873, 1874, 1877, 1878 and 1879.

In 1904 the Bolivian national office of immigration and statistics issued a volume of nearly 400 pages containing the acts, decrees and concessions in aid of railways, covering the years 1830 to 1904. Every effort was made by the government during this period to induce capital to invest in railway construction in the country. Perhaps nowhere else in the world were such inducements held out by any country to secure the end sought as by Bolivia, following the termination of the war with Chile. These inducements were offers of land, mines, exemption from taxation and customs duties, government guaranties, financial aid and exclusive privileges. But unfortunately for Bolivia the offers were not made in the right quarter. In its eagerness to secure results, concessions were granted to and contracts made with the most irresponsible parties, in many cases mere adventurers without capital or influence. The net result was naturally to retard rather than to help railroad construction.

In 1904 all that Bolivia had to show in railways as a result of 40 years' legislation and innumerable contracts were the Guacui and the Antofagasta roads. The former gave an outlet from La Paz to Lake Titicaca, whence passengers and freight were transported across the lake by boat to the Peruvian port of Puno and thence by the Peruvian railway to Nollendo on the Pacific. The total length of the road from Alto de La Paz to Guacui on Lake Titicaca was 87 kilometers (54 miles). The gauge was one meter (39.37 inches) and the rails weighed 18 kilograms per meter—about 12 pounds per foot.

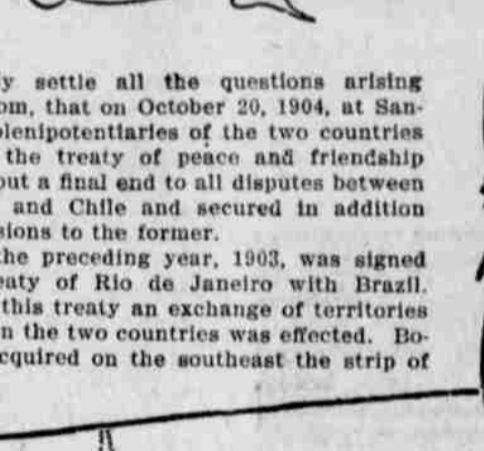
The Antofagasta, Bolivia's first railway, had a total mileage of 925 kilometers (573 miles), a gauge of 75 centimeters (29.53 inches) and rails weighing 17.40 kilograms per meter, or about 11 pounds per foot.

It was not until 25 years after the outbreak of the war with Chile and 20 years after the signing of the agreement of April 4, 1884, which marked the close of that war, although it did not con-

clusively settle all the questions arising therefrom, that on October 20, 1904, at Santiago, plenipotentiaries of the two countries signed the treaty of peace and friendship which put a final end to all disputes between Bolivia and Chile and secured in addition concessions to the former.

In the preceding year, 1903, was signed the treaty of Rio de Janeiro with Brazil. Under this treaty an exchange of territories between the two countries was effected. Bolivia acquired on the southeast the strip of

TRACK LAYING NEAR URURU



LAKE TITICACA AT GUACUI

territory lying between its boundary and the Paraguay river, and Brazil acquired Bolivia's claim to the Acre region on the northeast. The latter territory being considered the more valuable, Brazil stipulated to pay a cash indemnity of £2,000,000 sterling.

These two treaties were of immense consequence to Bolivia: first, in relieving her from the old railway and mining entanglements; second, in securing the construction of the Arica-La Paz railway; third, through the loan of Chilean credit in internal railway construction; and, fourth, in providing a cash fund of £2,300,000 with which to guarantee or to begin the actual construction of the trunk lines.

Following the ratification of the treaties negotiations were opened with prominent European and American capitalists and on May 19, 1906, a contract was signed with the National City bank and Speyer & Co., of New York. The contract was signed in La Paz by a representative of the concessionaires and additional stipulations were made on May 22.

Under article III of the contract the concessionaires obligate themselves within a period of 10 years to construct the following railway systems:

- (a) From Oruro to Viacha, with a branch to the river Desaguadero, connecting with the Arica line.
- (b) From Oruro to Cochabamba.
- (c) From Oruro to Potosi.
- (d) From Potosi to Tupiza, by Calsa and Cata-gaita.
- (e) From Uyuni to Potosi.
- (f) From La Paz to Puerto Pando.

All of these roads are to be one-meter gauge except the last two mentioned, which, in the discretion of the concessionaires, may be of 75 centimeters gauge.

The cost of the railways is estimated at £5,500,000 sterling, including £1,200,000 allowed for the La Paz-Puerto Pando line.

The concessionaires are authorized to issue two classes of bonds—first mortgage and second mortgage, or income bonds. The first mortgage bonds, which are a first lien, are authorized to the amount of £3,700,000 sterling, bear five per cent interest and are payable in 20 years. The interest for 20 years is guaranteed by the government of Bolivia.

A further issue of additional first mortgage bonds to the amount of £2,000,000 sterling is authorized in case the sum of £5,500,000 proves insufficient to build the lines. These bonds will

UNLOADING RAILS AT GUACUI, BOLIVIA

bear six per cent interest and the interest will not be guaranteed by the government. The second mortgage of income bonds run for 25 years, bear five per cent interest and are a second lien on the roads.

Under an agreement made in London in 1907 by the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway Company, which is a British corporation, and Speyer & Co., the Antofagasta Railway Company agreed to guarantee the interest on the line from Oruro to Viacha and in addition to make a payment to the concessionaires for a majority of the line's stock. This agreement made necessary the law, mentioned above, signed by President Montes on December 1, 1908. The purpose of this agreement is to make the new lines serve as feeders to the Antofagasta line instead of playing the part of competing lines, as would have been the case had the original program of construction been carried out.

The Oruro to Potosi line of the original plan would partly parallel the Antofagasta line. It is very probable that a complete merger of the interests of the Antofagasta and Bolivia Railway Company and the American concessionaires will be made.

A STOUT THING

Miss Burden was not devoid of good sense, but she had brooded over her neighbor's treatment of her until it seemed both intolerable and lawless. It involved a question of shares in the privileges of a certain spring of water and of rights in a certain path, and disagreement over these had led to other differences, small and large, until the main issue seemed hopelessly confused.

Finally Miss Burden resolved to consult a lawyer, to ascertain if there might not be comforting relief for her feelings in a lawsuit. When a woman's exasperation reaches the point where she is ready to resort to the law, she is to be dreaded, and Miss Burden went to Lawyer Fairman's office with a long and spirited story of her wrongs.

Unfortunately for her plan, these wrongs were rather of word than of deed, and rather of fancy than of record. What the neighbor wanted to do and talked about doing, and even what he meant to do at some future time, did not greatly impress Mr. Fairman. He gently suggested to the angry client that her mood was unjustified by what had actually happened and concluded his advice with some words which she never forgot.

"Don't go to law, my dear lady, until you have some facts to take with you. Law by itself is a poor friend; but a fact's a stout thing—a fact's a stout thing!"

The country lawyer's wisdom is sound philosophy for every day in the year. Fancy gives birth to a long train of children, good and bad, and they all have legs and arms of characteristic slenderness and a grasp on life too gentle to be controlling. Set them in line of battle and Master Fact will scatter them all like dry leaves—for in deed and in truth a fact is a stout thing!—Youth's Companion.

MRS. TAFT'S AIDE TO WED

Miss Alice M. Blech, Says Washington Rumor, Is to Be Richard Wainwright's Bride.

Washington.—Once again Washington official society is on the qui vive for the very latest rumor is that Miss Alice M. Blech, secretary to Mrs. Taft, will soon resign her position to assume that of the wife of Richard Wainwright, the son of Admiral Wainwright. Ever since last winter gossip has been busy in prophesying Miss Blech's engagement. The couple have been almost constantly together.

Perhaps never before has the secretary to the wife of the president been as averse to public notice as has been Miss Blech. When it was discovered that Mrs. Taft, following Mrs. Roosevelt's example, had chosen her amanuensis from the state depart-



Miss Alice M. Blech

ment, there was a great hue and cry for the favored one's picture. But not until now has it been possible to secure one.

Somehow the impression has gone forth that Mrs. Taft's secretary is unattractive and of middle age. On the contrary, Miss Blech is most attractive looking and is in the early twenties. She has smooth brown hair and always wears neutral shades or white, which throws it into a beautiful contrast.

Miss Blech has mastered seven languages. Probably the one thing which attracted Mrs. Taft to her was the fact that she was told that the young woman was a thorough pianist, having won much applause in the local musical circles.

Miss Blech has filled a difficult role most successfully and has made herself a favorite, not only at the White House, but in official circles generally, by her efficiency, tact and diplomacy.

Tall, slender, quiet and reserved, Miss Blech has a charming manner, and a delightful personality, which have won for her a host of friends. She is well known to Mrs. Roosevelt and Mrs. William S. Cowles, both of whom have shown an interest in her. She has lived much of her time on the continent, and at Alexandria, Egypt, and has the poise and reserve of the traveled woman of culture. She does not appear in society, and lives quietly with her mother in an uptown apartment.

Miss Blech usually arrives at the White House at nine o'clock in the morning, and with Mrs. Taft goes over the correspondence, takes dictation and receives such instructions as the wife of the president may have for her. Her duties are not heavy, and the afternoon usually find the day's work done.

BICYCLE WITHOUT FORKS.

Paris.—A novel bicycle built without forks, so that if a tire bursts or is punctured during a race or a long ride it can be speedily changed, has been introduced in this city. It will be noticed in the illustration that in place of the usual fork to keep each



wheel in position there is a single stay on alternate sides on the front and back wheel. They give a somewhat insecure appearance to the machine, but are said to have stood the tests well.

The Final Test.

"Doctor," asked the patient, whose eyes had been undergoing treatment for a period of six months or more, "do you think they're all right now?"

"Yes," said the oculist; "I think I can assure you, Mr. Pinchnickel, that your eyes are cured. But there is one more test I should like to apply. See if you can read that at a distance of 12 or 14 inches without blinking."

Whereupon he laid the bill before him.