

PROGRESSIVE PLATTE

Though Ranking Among the Elders, she is Young in Energy and Resources.

EQUAL TO ANY, SURPASSED BY NONE

Thirty-five Years Demonstrates Platte County's Inexhaustible Fertility.

BUTTERED WITH ADAMANTINE FACTS

Leaves From the Experience of Her Energetic and Thrifty Sons.

COMPETENCE AND CONTENT GARNERED

Timber Fringed Crystal Streams Ripple Through Sylvan Valleys, Past Smiling Uplands, While "Shallow Waters" Murmurs at Her Feet.

Platte county is one of the oldest counties in the state, having been first organized in 1854, and in 1857 the present boundaries were defined. It gets its name from the great Platte river which washes the southern portion of the county. Platte county is also one of the largest of the eastern counties, having an area of 684 square miles, or 437,796 acres. Of this there are at the present time 54,000 acres improved, and 177,100 unimproved. The county is bounded on the north by Madison and Stanton counties, east by Colfax county, south by Polk and Butler, and west by Nemadji and Boone. The upland prairies, suitable for agriculture, have soil of deep vegetable mold and inexhaustible fertility. The valleys and river bottoms are the best lands in the prairie states. The entire county is a succession of valleys and streams and table lands, making it one of the best watered portions of the state. The great Platte river washes about twenty miles of the southern border of the county and forms a valley noted for its beauty and fertility. The Loup river, another beautiful stream, borders by a wide and fertile valley the eastern side of the county from west to east a few miles north of the Platte, emptying into the latter about four miles east of the city of Columbus. The combined valleys of the two rivers at the mouth of the Loup, form a wide expanse of valley land beyond which is a belt of low undulating table lands intersected by the winding valleys of small creeks which run through the county diagonally from northwest to southeast. Union creek and Tracy creek water the northern part, Lost creek the eastern and the Looking Glass creek, a beautiful stream, the western part, emptying into the Loup near Oonoon. There are in the county ninety-seven miles of railroad, including the main line of the Union Pacific running through Columbus, the county seat. All parts of the county are provided with depots and shipping facilities, conveniently located for the transportation of the vast stock and grain products of the county. There were returned by the census takers last year: Acres of wheat in Platte county 22,480, corn 81,610, oats 52,100, barley 6,130, hay 4,750, melons 20,000. Stock was returned for taxation by the assessors: horses 9,750, cattle 28,221, hogs 24,262, sheep 10,064, mules 408. The number of acres of improved lands in the county as stated above is 54,000, and the unimproved is 177,100. It is estimated that fully 400,000 acres of the total acreage in the county are suitable lands. The assessed valuation in 1891 was \$2,331,000. The total estimated valuation is \$18,000,000. The average price of farm land in Platte county is \$30 to \$35 per acre. The population in 1891 was 18,820, against 8,511 in 1880, showing a gain in ten years of 5,200. The total bank deposits are \$240,000 or \$25.75 per capita. The principal towns are Columbus, Humphrey, Platte Center, Lindsay, Corral, Creston, Oonoon and Monroe. Columbus, the county seat, is in the southeastern part of the county near the junction of the Platte and Loup rivers, on the main line of the Union Pacific road, twenty-one miles west of Omaha. It is situated on a high level, stands on elevated plateau, and besides the main line of the Union Pacific at the junction of the Platte and Loup rivers, it is connected by the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy system and the Union Pacific with its Sioux City, Norfolk, Albion, Cedar Rapids and Fullerton branches. It has a population of about 10,000 and in early days was the principal stopping place between Omaha and Denver, and a staple point for a hundred miles. It has water and electric lights. Columbus has a daily newspaper, five weeklies, one monthly and one semi-monthly. It has a weekly newspaper, edited by D. F. Davis, who, by the way, is a state oil inspector by appointment of Governor Boyd. The Columbus Journal is the oldest paper in the county, is republican in politics, and is edited by M. K. Turner. Mr. Turner is also editor and proprietor of the family journal, The Journal, is printed on the self-feeding power press, run by hand, which first came to the county in 1857. Besides the Journal there are three other papers, and it bids fair to be an excellent work for another generation. The Home Journal is a weekly paper, semi-monthly to the patrons of the Columbus creamery and is edited by W. P. Lay. The Platte County Argus is a weekly alliance paper edited by G. A. L. Bixby and Warwick Saunders. The Columbus Argus is a German weekly edited by L. N. Kilius. There are three banks, the State, National and Commercial, with a combined capital of over \$1,000,000, with personal resources of nearly \$2,000,000, and of it. Two large flouring mills, three elevators, one creamery of large capacity, doing an immense business, four large first class hotels and several chamber houses, one cigar factory, a wooden shoe manufactory, a wholesale butter, egg and fruit business, a large brick and tile house, doing a business that reaches to the coast, a planing mill, foundry, wind mill factory and other smaller industrial enterprises. The B. & M. and Union Pacific each have splendid depots. Humphrey is next in size to Columbus, having a population of 1,000, is located in the northern part of the county at the junction of the Union Pacific and Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley roads. It has three elevators, two banks, one good hotel and one newspaper, the Humphrey Democrat, edited by McMill & Myers. Platte Center, as its name implies, is in the center of the county, on Shell creek, on the Union Pacific road. There are Lindsay, Corral and Creston in the northern part, in the North-west and Creston is one of the best of Columbus, eight miles, on a branch of the Union Pacific, and Monroe is on the Albion branch of the same road. The Columbus Argus is a religious, prohibitionist paper, published at Monroe, by E. A. Gerrard, one of the Platte county pioneers of unimproved lands in Platte county awaiting the homesteader at prices varying from \$5 to \$20 per acre, while improved farms can be bought for \$10 to \$20 per acre. The Columbus Argus is published at Columbus, a religious, prohibitionist paper, published at Monroe, by E. A. Gerrard, one of the Platte county pioneers of unimproved lands in Platte county awaiting the homesteader at prices varying from \$5 to \$20 per acre, while improved farms can be bought for \$10 to \$20 per acre. Columbus has many one of the oldest towns and trading points in the state and a good place to stay, has been busy in business and holding positions who have been familiar figures for many years. The Messenger, the station agent at the Union Pacific depot, has held down that same job for twenty years. By the way, pianos are sold here as well as in the other counties, having served as a colored man in the army, but owing to his modesty nobody "out west" knew it until recently. Everybody has his Jim Mender. M. K. Turner, editor of the Columbus Journal, started his paper in 1870, when there was only one paper in the state west of Columbus. He had just started at North Platte. Mr. Turner has been prominent in newspaper and political circles all these years and is still at it. He is something of a

farmer, too, having about 1,000 acres of land. A few years ago he was too poor to build a shanty on his own land and had to live elsewhere. Leander Gerard is president of the oldest state bank in Nebraska and was the founder of it. He is still an active man and general as a banker. Anderson, president of the First National bank, is at present engaged in assisting the farmers by the free distribution of tobacco seed, which he has secured in large quantities. He is the oldest live stock dealer and shipper in the state resident in Columbus. Among them is the Hickory and Hannibal. John Wright is another well known and very familiar name. South Omaha yards and has been prominent in shipping circles for a great many years. His office here is the depot is headquarters for stockmen all over the country. Leander Gerard, now president of the State bank of Columbus, the oldest state bank in Nebraska, came to Omaha in 1856 and resided in Columbus ten years later. He came to Nebraska with little or no money, fringed, railroaded, traded with the Indians, practiced law or anything and eventually secured a home in Columbus. He established his bank in 1871, and has been instrumental in placing a great many farmers on their feet. He has a fine farm near here. Mr. Gerard, said that if that farmers who have the title to farm lands in Nebraska should be all means glad to get it, even if it is hard to keep the interest and taxes, for it will soon be worth a great deal more money than at present. "When I was when an active man, I had a deer but could not get it, the Indians had to kill it, the Indians man to Iowa or Missouri, or so on, but now they are doubling their money. I have a fine farm near here and the opening of reservations causes a rush of thousands of men, which is proof of what I say. Another thing—real estate is the most profitable investment in the world, and good farm land is fast becoming the most profitable land a man can own. Fair to go for cost.

Charles Henke was one of the first men to settle in Platte county. He purchased a quarter section ten miles northwest of Columbus in 1856, when there were but few men in the county. He was the first to settle on the spot where he first settled and has since formed it into a pleasant and even a luxurious home. When asked how he secured his money to make a home, he replied: "In the first place I paid the full price of \$2.00 and in three years after when Uncle Sam wanted his money, \$1.25 they paid me for it. I had a fine farm and a friend loaned me \$100 at 60 per cent, but that was not enough to get out, so I sold my land for \$1.00 and got \$1.00 and paid on. When the homestead law was passed I wanted to get another 160 but I could not do so without moving on it and I did not want to move. I had a fine farm and a friend loaned me \$100 at 60 per cent, but that was not enough to get out, so I sold my land for \$1.00 and got \$1.00 and paid on. 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