

## THE ILLUSTRATED BEE.

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## Pen and Picture Pointers

**N**EBRASKA was born into the union during times of trouble. Around the formative period of the state lowered the clouds of sectional strife, and the giving of a name to the present great commonwealth was almost accompanied by the lightnings of the struggle between the older states which ended in the triumph of the free soil idea and the abolition of slavery forever. To a large extent the people of the territory were actors in the little drama that was merely the "curtain raiser" for the greater tragedy that was to appal the world for four years, and the part played by the early residents of the section is still recalled by many who participated in it. Nebraska had no Jim Lane, no John Brown, and no Governor Reeder ever had to escape from the people of the territory, fleeing in disguise to avoid certain assassination. No massacres blot the pages of the state's history, and little of the violence that accompanied the bitterness of the struggle between the advocates of freedom and slavery was enacted on the soil of Nebraska. Politics was marked with much rancor, though, and the partisans were as earnest if not as demonstrative as in Kansas. Nebraska's part, though not so large, was as important in the closing days of the slave-power in the United States as that of Kansas, and the incidents are well to recall, as showing the nature of the strife that preceded actual warfare between the sections. In an excellent article, prepared for this number by Messrs. J. A. Barrett and A. E. Sheldon, this phase of Nebraska's history is given with some detail, and told in an interesting manner.

Coming into existence under such conditions, and with the stigma of "desert" attached to the land, it was natural that Nebraska should attract only the bolder spirits in its infancy. Those who did come, came with their minds made up to face the hardships and privation of life away from the older civilization, but with the glorious hope of a home and possible future wealth in the new country. How well they built many of them have been spared to experience. Prophecy of material and moral expansion has been more than outrun, and actual experience has widened the horizon for expectation to the end that even the most sanguine do not undertake to set down what Nebraska may be in another fifty years.

Men who have been active and prominent in the affairs of the state have dealt with this phase of the topic, to the end that some notable expositions of the past and present of Nebraska, with some hints at what may reasonably be expected in the future, are given in this number. These are from men who have spent many years within the state's borders, and who have been called by their fellow citizens to high places of trust and power and their acquaintance with the history and faith in the future gives them right to speak as they do concerning the great commonwealth that has leaped so far into the advance of the great union of states.

Nebraska has more than redeemed every promise made for it in the beginning, and has more than realized every hope of the men who laid the foundations of its government. Its people have been among the most progressive and most prosperous of the nation; they encountered the hardships of pioneer life, and suffered the trying experiences that came with the winning of the wilderness, but they have ever kept high the standard of civilization, and for years have been at the head of the list of all the states in point of intelligence, having the lowest percentage of illiteracy in the United States. Religion and education and all that goes to make for the higher life have thrived in Nebraska, and the future is certain for its people.

## His Present

"John," she said, "your little wifey has been saving up her money to buy you a nice present."

"Good little wifey," he replied. "What is it?"

"A smoking jacket," she explained. "And I saved the money all myself out of the house allowance. Wasn't I thoughtful?"

"Splendid!" he exclaimed.

"And now I wish you'd bring me home some more money tonight."

"What did you do with that I brought home last night?" he asked in some surprise.

"Oh, that's what I saved the smoking jacket money out of," she answered, "and there wasn't any left."—Chicago Post.

**A**LTHOUGH only a coincident in the passing of time, it is worthy of note that the celebration of the centennial of the purchase of the territory of Louisiana and the semi-centennial of the organization of the territory of Nebraska from a portion of the former, are both at this time receiving some attention from those taking interest in the country's growth and development. While the minds of the peoples of the civilized world are directed to a great exposition commemorative of the acquisition to the national domain, through the far-seeing statesmanship and matchless diplomacy of the illustrious Jefferson, of a great area of country in the very heart of the American continent, out of which have been carved many of the great states of the union, we of this state, in a modest way, give publicity to the fact that one-half a century ago the foundation was laid for the building of one such commonwealth by the organization of the territory of Nebraska out of a portion of the country thus acquired.

As the Louisiana Purchase exposition, now in progress at the metropolis of the country ceded to the American government 100 years ago by the emperor of France, affords unmistakable evidence of the marvelous and almost magical development and progress of the transmississippi country since that time, so it is that in this state, and for a period covering but one-half of the time, is the evidence at hand and upon every side of the most impressive character, convincing to the most obturate, that Nebraska, since its formation into a territory, has by leaps and bounds, and with the stride of a giant, grown in wealth and population until it has become in this short period of time one of the strong commonwealths of the nation. When organized as a territory it was by many well-informed men regarded, and so designated in the books, as a great barren waste and a sandy desert, fit only for the Indian and the buffalo, and quite unsuited to the needs and requirements of the progressive, intelligent American citizen. The hardy pioneer, who is constantly and restlessly moving from the rising to the setting sun in his resistless onward march, soon invaded the unknown territory and a country, rich in soil, congenial in climate and with wonderful opportunities for development and the making of prosperous and happy homes for the countless thousands of the present generation and the millions yet unborn, was brought to public view.

To carry the analogy further, as the Louisiana purchase embraced the choicest and richest of the natural resources of the American continent, so Nebraska's fertile plains and valleys included some of the most fruitful and best of this vast empire. It occupies relatively a similar position with respect to the territory embraced within the Louisiana purchase that that territory does to the whole of the United States. It possesses an equable climate being neither so far north as to be unusually cold nor so far south as to be oppressively warm. Its surface is unbroken by high mountains and it is so well drained as to be altogether free from swamps and marshy places with attendant conditions inimical to the enjoyment of health and happiness. With ample rainfall over the larger area of the state, agriculture is carried on most successfully and under conditions as favorable as in the other states in the great Mississippi valley, the granary of the world. When the state yet comparatively in its infancy can produce, as it has done in the past, more bushels of wheat and corn than any other of the great agricultural states, then it must be conceded it has earned and is entitled to a position well in the forefront of the sisterhood of states. In times past, the remark was sometimes heard that the western portion of the state because of the insufficiency of rainfall contributed nothing to the growth and upbuilding of the state and it has even been suggested that the state might with profit be divided. Such remarks are no longer heard. With the millions of acres brought under irrigation in the level and fertile valleys, with the climate unsurpassed and with the inexhaustible fertility of soil capable of supporting a dense population under a well developed system of irrigation, where small farms can be made to produce three and fourfold as much as where the natural rainfall is relied upon, with the hills and uplands covered with rich grasses and devoted to the raising of live stock, this part of the state is rapidly developing in wealth and population and "the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner."

Nebraska citizenship well represents that contented condition and evenness of life spoken of by Solomon wherein it is said, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." There are few citizens of great wealth nor should there be any in extreme poverty. The people of the state are characteristically home owners and home builders. The distribution of the wealth and comforts of life so that all may enjoy the same approaches more nearly the ideal life. It is doubtful if any other state in the

union presents a more satisfactory state of affairs in this respect. The location and surroundings, the growth and development in population and material wealth of the territory and state during the first fifty years of its existence is a cause for mutual felicitations and warrants the belief that in the next half century yet immeasurably greater will be her progress and advancement in the increase of her population and the development of her resources, and that there shall be attained a higher civilization, the beauty and perfectness of which we can now scarcely comprehend.

The occasion renders it appropriate that some reference be had to the social and civic life of the state in addition to comment on its natural advantages. Too much cannot be said in praise of the foresight and intelligence of the early pioneers who first settled in the state and took part in the formation of a well-ordered social system in framing its laws and establishing a wise plan of government for the comfort of society and the protection and preservation of rights of person and property. Schools and churches were established as settlements were made and marked the outposts of advancing civilization. The foundation was early laid for the proud eminence later attained in the enjoyment of the distinction of having a population with the least percentage of illiteracy of any of the states of the union. Nebraska is essentially a state of schools, colleges and universities. Its people during its entire history have been devoted to the cause of education. Its educational institutions have been and are the especial pride of all citizens. Upon this subject we are all united. The first settlers believed in the dissemination of knowledge and the dissipation of ignorance. They believed in progress, advancement, growth and development. The results have given ample proof of their intelligent wisdom and foresight.

It is proper here to offer a tribute of praise and gratitude to those of a past generation who planned so well and laid so firmly the foundation upon which has since been erected the superstructure of a state government which has proven most stable in form, just and fair to all interests and which vouchsafes to all equality before the law. Some of these eminent men are yet living. Many of them came here in the early days of the history of the territory and the state. These were men of stout heart and active brain who have had so much to do with shaping the fundamental and statute laws which now govern us. Aside from its natural advantages, the most potent influence which has contributed to the growth and development of the state can be traced to the wisdom and foresight of these fearless and able men whose lives are written in so many pages of its history. For over a quarter of a century we have been living under the constitution promulgated by the wisdom, statesmanship and patriotism of those to whom I have referred. Their wisdom and capacity for so important an undertaking is attested by the fact that the state has grown and prospered so well and with no considerable sentiment favorable to radical changes in that instrument. That some changes are required is generally conceded. The wonder is that so few have been called for. In what manner shall our fundamental law be altered? Regarding this there is a division of sentiment. Whether by a constitutional convention or by amendment to the present instrument is the question to be decided. Much argument of merit may be advanced in support of either plan. The present fundamental law in nearly all respects is an ideal one. Some amendments, however, are imperatively demanded.

The subject is worthy the attention and consideration of the best minds of the state. The patriotic sentiment of the people should be aroused to the transcendent importance of the subject. The press, all-powerful as leaders of thought and molders of public opinion, has here a great task to perform. Public interests have been allowed to suffer because of insufficient attention and consideration to the question of amendments of the most simple character and yet of the utmost importance. There exists urgent necessity for an amendment which will give wider latitude for the profitable investment of the trust funds belonging to the state which are devoted to educational purposes. With funds and investments now amounting to more than \$5,000,000 and a probable increase of these funds to \$10,000,000 or more and with the constitutional restrictions now existing regarding investments in securities yielding reasonable returns, it becomes at once obvious that we are nearing the danger line, if not, in fact, inviting a most deplorable condition of affairs. It is assumed that the increased revenues to be collected under the new law will result in the gradual extinguishment of the state's floating indebtedness, thus closing one of the avenues now open for the investment of these funds, in which event it seems fair to presume that large sums must constantly remain idle to the partial deprivation of the children of the state of the patrimony so widely provided for their benefit. Danger lies not only in the direction of retaining uninvested large sums of these trust funds,

but also, judging by past experience, in the safe-keeping and caring for them while so compelled to remain idle.

An amendment providing for the enlargement of the supreme court is proven by experience and considered by those informed on the subject to be one of the pressing demands of today. A supreme court commission to aid in the work of the court can only be regarded as a temporary expedient. A delay in the administration of justice is in a measure a denial of it, and I cannot but believe that the interests of the whole people are far better subserved by a prompt, speedy and final disposition of all matters which are the subject of litigation in the courts. In this connection, I venture the suggestion as one possibly worthy of consideration of a plan which makes provisions for the establishment of an intermediate court as better calculated to accomplish the desired result and by such method afford relief to the court of last resort of much of its labors that now comes to it direct from the trial courts of the state.

Salaries of some of the state officers, if I be permitted to speak on the subject, are confessedly low and admittedly not commensurate with the labors and responsibilities imposed on the incumbents. Justice to those who give their time and best efforts in the service of the state requires reasonable remuneration be given them and this can be accomplished only by a constitutional amendment.

The organic law itself, as I view the subject, should be altered and made susceptible of amendment with less difficulty than that which experience has demonstrated now stands in the way of amending it in any of its parts.

Many other subjects of equal importance might be adverted to, but time and space forbid. A strong inclination arises toward a discussion of the subject of revenue and taxation, a matter so very vital to all citizens and affecting as it does in a measure every owner of property in the state, but the proprieties of the occasion is a warning that the time is inopportune.

Innumerable questions affecting the welfare of the people and the development of the state deserve mention and consideration which cannot here be given. There is responsibility resting upon all. There is some duty to be performed by each. We should all be up and doing to the end that the work heretofore begun may be carried forward to a successful conclusion. Those of the present generation meet and grapple with the great problems confronting them relating to human government. Let the intelligent and patriotic citizens of today realize the responsibilities resting upon the people and seize hold of and overcome the difficulties we now have to contend with, displaying in doing so the same zeal and courage as did the early pioneers. Let us ever keep in mind the sentiment contained in the state's motto, "Equality before the law," and with a keen sense of fairness and justice to all perform our whole duty so that when another fifty years shall have rolled away and the 100th anniversary of the formation of the territory of Nebraska is being celebrated by the millions who shall then live within its borders, they may be able to say of us: "They lived in their day and generation and performed well their part in the upbuilding of a grand commonwealth whose government is founded on the principles of human liberty, equality and justice."

*Julius A. Holcomb*

## Pointed Paragraphs

Some men stop drinking for the pleasure of beginning once more.

Friendship is one of the things that cannot be prescribed in alcohol.

A busy person isn't necessarily industrious. Gossips are always busy.

Neighboring sympathy, as a rule, turns out to be about nine-tenths curiosity.

Some girls are too modest to ask for undressed kids at a glove counter.

There is nothing natural about some women but the foundation and framework.

While the pessimist sees only the thorns on the rose the optimist sees only the roses on the thorns.

Every candidate for a back township office imagines the country will go to the dogs if he isn't elected.

When a mother hustles her children out of the room when another woman calls it's a sign there is gossip in the air.—Chicago News.

## Qualified

The young man was applying for a position as drug clerk.

"And you consider yourself competent to stand in a pharmacy?" interrogated the proprietor.

"I should say so," responded the young man. "I can smile at babies, hand out ten almanacs a second, understand the soda water wink, paste stamps on envelopes, hunt up names in the directory and listen to everyone's troubles."

"You'll do! Dust off the tooth brushes."—Chicago News.