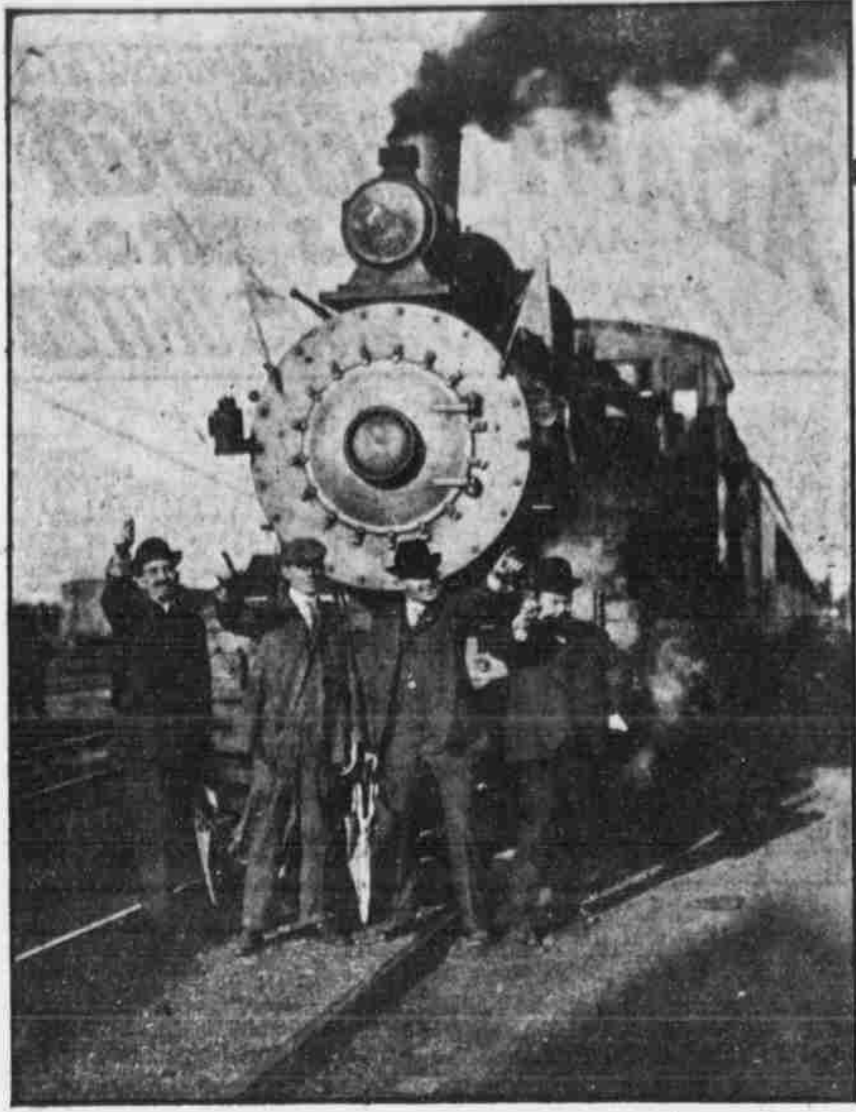


# Growth and Commercial Importance of the South Platte Empire



"COMMERCIAL CLUB TO THE FRONT."



SCENE AT SEWARD.



ARTHUR METZ TAKES A DRINK.

THREE days' tour of central and southwestern Nebraska with the trade excursion of Omaha's most enterprising and substantial business men, including jobbers, bankers, manufacturers and representatives of the Live Stock exchange and packing houses of South Omaha, was a novel experience and a revelation. Under the directorship of E. J. McVann, commissioner of the Omaha Commercial club, and the guidance of Will Yetter, chairman of the trade excursion committee, the 30 live, wide-awake, jovial and sometimes boisterous commercial tourists, comfortably housed in eight Pullman sleepers, passed out of the Burlington station on an ideal Nebraska spring morning, while the siren whistle attached to the locomotive blew a graysome goody and the superb First regiment band of Winnebago played "We Won't Go Home Till Morning." And the next day it rained, and the day after the next day it rained off and on, but there was no break in the procession of red, white and blue umbrellas marching double file and no intermission for the blue-coated band or the yellow-coated and white-bearded minstrels and the giant Scotch Highlander in full costume, who marched in single file playing "Auld Lang Syne" on his bagpipes, while the boys that followed on the flanks of the outlandish show blew shrill toy whistles that had been distributed gratis by the South Omaha tourists, and the little girls and big girls on both flanks, decorated pretentiously with ribbons and badges, played "catch as catch can" in the shower of candies projected by Omaha's inimitable pitey, Dave O'Brien. So much on the score of the grotesque and descriptive. Passing on the picturesque to the objective, the trade excursion was admitted on all hands to be a great object lesson and a phenomenal success.

### Welcome Along the Way.

At Milford, Seward, York, Strainsburg, Aurora, Hastings, Holdrege, McCook, Station, Clay Center, Geneva, Dorchester and Crete special efforts were made to entertain the excursionists, and the population turned out almost en masse. Among the surprises of the excursion were the automobile rides to which members of the excursion were treated over paved streets and excellent roadways. This was notably the case at Hastings, whose people justly feel proud of their public improvements and public buildings. The climax of entertainment was reached by the Elks' club dove feast at Hastings, and the demonstration that greeted the excursionists with a salvo of artillery and a brass band at

Geneva, and the great popular turnout at Dorchester. It was a continuous ovation from the Platte valley to the valley of the Blue, and from the plains of central Nebraska to the valley of the Republican. Everywhere the excursionists were greeted cordially and enthusiastically, and every town visited bore the unmistakable signs of phen-

omenal growth and unprecedented prosperity. In every town the banks were overflowing with deposits and most of these deposits belong to the farmers, who have not only paid off the mortgages and improved their farms, but have money to burn, or rather to lend to the banks. Extensive preparations for a popular greeting were made at Crete, where all the fraternal lodges were lined up in the street in regalia and uniform, and the children of the public and parochial schools and the students of Doane college were out in full force. Unfortunately, the excursion train had been delayed nearly two hours, so that the train did not reach Crete until 3 p. m., seriously disarranging the reception to the

disappointed excursionists as well as the people of Crete. To make good a part of the program Postmaster Wells, who is also editor of the Crete Vidette; Mr. Rowley, editor of the Crete Democrat, and their associates in the committee treated the excursionists with carriage drives about the city and entertained them at their homes. Beauties of Nebraska. It would take a master of word painting to portray Nebraska as it presented itself in the full glory of its verdure to the Omaha tourists. Never has Nebraska left such a profound impression upon the minds

of those whose eyes beheld a continuation of great cultivated fields of grain and rich pastures, with their numerous herds of horses, cattle and sheep, representing more productive wealth than all the mines of the Rocky mountain states. It was not at all surprising to learn that lands in York, Butler, Seward and Polk counties, which are regarded as among the most fertile of the state, have doubled and trebled in value within the last six years, but it seemed almost incredible that the lands in the Republican valley that were regarded as almost worthless without irrigation, and did not command more than from \$3 to \$5 an acre six or seven years ago, were today in active demand at \$25

to \$40 per acre, and even at a higher price in some localities. As a natural sequence of this marvelous change, due chiefly to the change in climatic conditions that have revolutionized agriculture in the semi-arid region, is the unexampled growth and prosperity visible

in the towns between Hastings and McCook—a section which ten years ago was impoverished and almost depopulated. At McCook, in the very center of the rainless belt, new churches, school buildings, business blocks and dwelling houses have been erected within the last three years that would do credit to any city in the west of ten times its population. At Indianola, Cambridge, Arapahoe, Oxford and Holdrege the growth was almost as great as at McCook. In some respects Holdrege had many surprises in store for members of the excursion who had not visited the place since 1900.

### Notable Industrial Establishments.

Most notable of all were the industrial establishments whose existence was not even dreamed of by the commercial representatives of Omaha. This includes not only the large flouring mills at Milford, Seward, McCook, Strainsburg, Holdrege and Crete, but the various manufacturing concerns, notably hydraulic cement block factories at Sutton, two incubator factories at Clay Center that are reputed to be the largest in the world, and a patent index tag factory at Exeter that supplies the United States navy, War and Treasury departments, New York Central railroad, Westinghouse Air Brake company and many great banking houses and railways in the United States and Canada. All in all, the trade extension flyer cannot fail to have a salutary effect in drawing into closer mutual friendly relations the merchants of Omaha and their patrons in the state. E. ROBEWATER.



DISTRIBUTING CANDY AND SOUVENIRS AT YORK.



PARADE AT SUTTON.

### Reasons for a Divorce

Mrs. Julia S. Grubbs of Lawrenceburg, Ind., aged 70 years, recently obtained a divorce from her husband, Hamilton A. Grubbs, aged 76 years. This aged couple were school lovers, and after a long courtship were united in marriage nearly a half century ago, and have reared six children. Mrs. Grubbs alleged in her petition for divorce that over twenty years ago, after a family quarrel, Mr. Grubbs abandoned her as a wife, and although they have lived in the same house ever since they have lived apart. Mr. Grubbs selected a front room in the eastern portion of the old log house, and placing his belongings there, requested the members of the family never to enter it. Although Mr. and Mrs. Grubbs have eaten at the same table during these many years they never spoke to each other, but were served by their children during the meal. A few months ago the last effort was made by members of the family and relatives to bring about a reconciliation, and as it proved unavailing, the family decided to separate. This daughter desired to join her brothers in Kansas and keep house for them, and the mother, not wishing to remain alone with her aged husband, asked the court for a legal separation, and she will accompany her daughter on her western visit.

## Gossip and Stories About People of Prominence

### Department Commander for Iowa.

SENATOR S. H. HARPER of Ottumwa, who was elected department commander of the Iowa Grand Army of the Republic at the Okaloosa encampment, is the senior member of the firm of Harper & McIntyre company, a wholesale hardware firm of Ottumwa. He is now serving his first term in the state senate. His service during the civil war reaches over a period of three years and seven months, at the close of which he held the position of captain,

and wanted to go back to the United States. "He said he was from Kansas and had enough of the Cubans. I told him he was taking his life in his hands by coming into the Spanish lines and if he was caught they would make quick work of him as a spy. "He said he didn't care. I was satisfied he was telling the truth and sent him out for a bath and hair cut. When he came back in a new suit of clothes you wouldn't have recognized him as the same man. I got him aboard a steamer the next day without arousing any suspicion. He landed safely in the United States. That man was General Funston, who captured Aguinaldo."

Shrewdness of Morgan. George C. Thomas, one of the leading figures in the Philadelphia house of the Morgans, tells a story which illustrates the shrewdness of J. P. Morgan. Mr. Thomas' daughter was married not long ago and a day or so before the ceremony there came to her father's office a paste-board box wrapped in coarse, brown paper, broken at two of the corners, tied merely with twine, but distinguished among its fellows by the address, which was in Morgan's own bold handwriting. Investigation brought to light that it carried a pearl necklace for the bride-to-be worth anywhere from \$1,500 to \$2,000. The sender had properly thought that the unnoticed was, after all, safer in transit than the parcel advertised as valuable by registry and wax seals.

The Guardian of "Buster Brown." "Buster Brown" has made a hit. A lawyer and two secretaries are said to be employed constantly by Mr. Outcault, his author, to keep track of the "business end" of Buster Brown, for there are Buster Brown cigars, suits, garters, stockings, belts, sweaters; there is a successful Buster Brown play. And in Buster's every effort Mr. Outcault profits. He lives at Flushing, L. I., and has an income of some \$2,000 a year. His inclinations are to the theater; he has contributed largely to the club's annual burlesque, and is co-author of "Buster Brown" as a stage production. He served his apprenticeship to art in Paris, and returned with the regular artist's outfit—a beret, or soft cap, and a velvet painting jacket. To this day, in his hours of ease, when not drawing Buster Brown or royalties therefrom, he dons this cap and jacket and strums student songs on the banjo. He is preparing himself for the stage, or says he is; but is also fond of base ball and takes his children to the wild parts of Flushing and instructs them in the mysteries of "Three Old Cat," as he used to play it in Ohio when he was a "Buster" boy himself.

Philadelphia's Reform Leader. Mayor John Weaver of Philadelphia, who is just now prominent in connection with the gas lease, is a talented lawyer. While he was district attorney he procured convictions in many election fraud cases and when elected to the mayoralty in February,

1905, he won on the platform: "I recognize God Almighty as my boss, and by Him alone will I be guided in my every act. He is a devout Baptist, teaches a Sunday school class and over the desk in his office are the lines: 'For the cause that needs assistance, for the wrong that needs resistance, and for the future in the distance, all the good that I can do.' Mayor Weaver was born in England forty-two years ago and was brought to Philadelphia by his parents in 1863. By hard work he gained an education and now stands in the front rank of the legal fraternity. He also is considered to be one of the best dressed men in the city.

### No Waste Material.

Secretary Cortelyou tells of an Englishman who was out west in early days and fell in with a long train of prairie school-ers. The leader of the caravan announced that he and his fellow emigrants were going to found a town, having everything that was needed and nothing that was unnecessary. "We won't have any waste," he said. "There isn't a person in our party who won't do some important duty in the new town." The Englishman pointed to an old and feeble man with a bent back and a long, thin, white beard. "But that very old man there," he said, "he can't possibly be of any use to you, can he?" "Oh, yes," said the leader. "We'll open our new cemetery with him."

### Royal Tips.

Some of the European monarchs give very large tips whenever they travel, and others, on the contrary, are quite niggardly. Emperor Nicholas of Russia is the most liberal in this respect. During his brief visit to France three years ago he spent \$10,000 on tips to servants, and almost as much on presents to officials and others. King Edward of England is not quite so generous, but as he travels a good deal, both within his own realm and abroad, he is obliged to lay aside each year \$22,000 as an allowance for tips. Emperor William of Germany is much more generous in a foreign country than at home and during his recent visit to Cowes, England, he spent not less than \$10,000 on tips. Of the remaining rulers very spend reasonable sums and others very little, but probably quite as much as they can afford.

### Boyhood of Great Men.

One fine day in the summer of 1844, relates the Chicago Tribune, two 10-year-old boys who had been fishing in a stream near a little town in southern New York became hungry and went to a farmer's house to get something to eat. The farmer's wife gave them a beautiful supply of bread and milk and refused to take any pay for it. One of the boys merely said: "Thank you, ma'am." But the other wiped his mouth on his coat sleeve, bowed, and expressed his gratitude at greater length. "To say that you have conferred a great favor up on us, ma'am," he said, "and that we are correspondingly grateful, conveys the idea feebly. Here we were, miles

from home and suffering from hunger, having caught nothing in the little stream in which we were fishing. You have supplied our wants most generously. Out of the abundance of your largess you have ministered to the wants of two hungry strangers, and with a hospitality rare indeed in these days of sordid greed, you have refused to accept any remuneration for the same. It is scarcely necessary to assure you, madam, that we shall always hold you in grateful remembrance, and should it ever be in our power to requite the favor, you may depend upon us doing so with the liveliest satisfaction. Madam, we thank you."

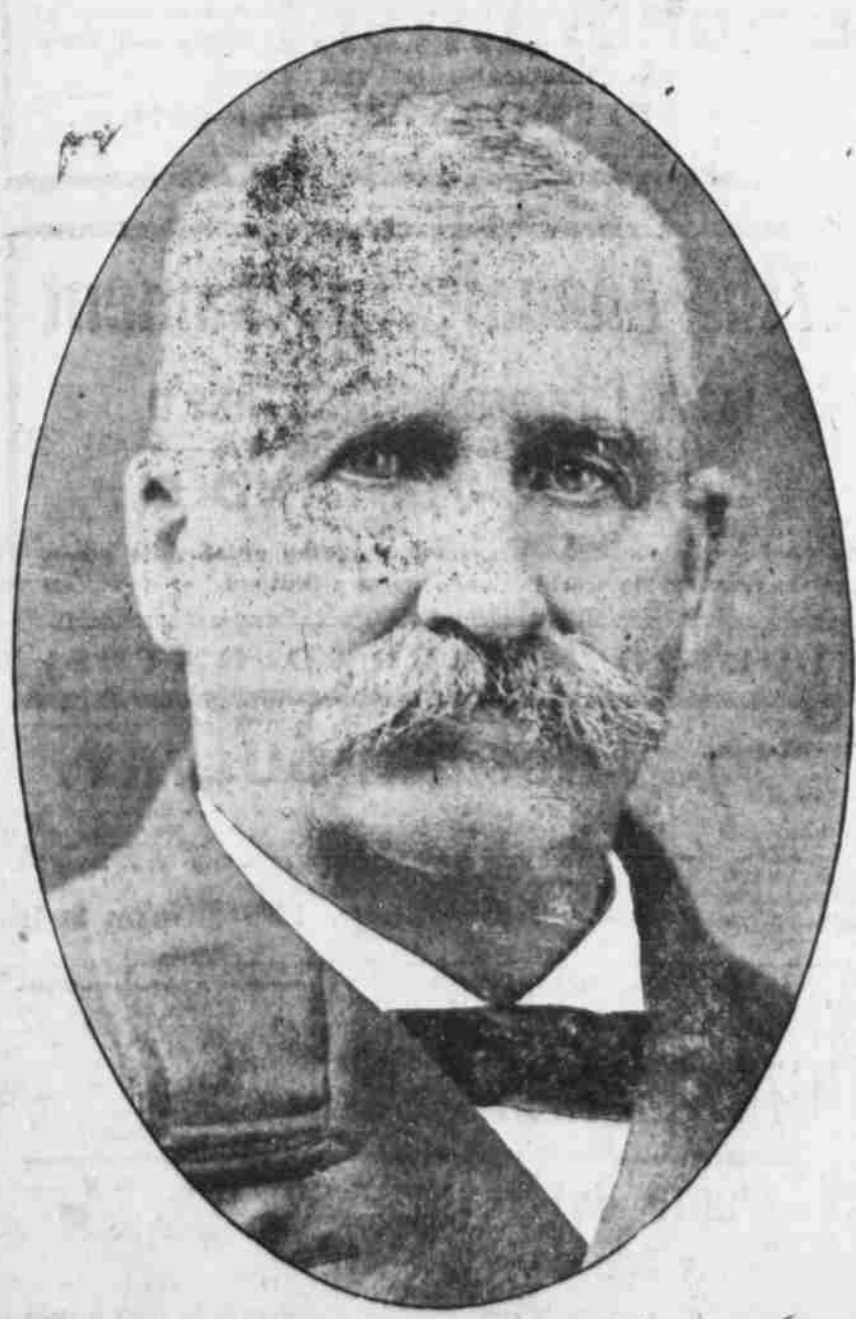
"Good land, little boy!" exclaimed the farmer's wife, "what I done for you wasn't worth all that, but I like to hear you talk. You'll be a big man some day." Her foresight was unerring. The boy grew up to be Chauncey Mitchell Depew, the greatest after-dinner orator of his day.

### Commercial Club Gallantry



A FAIR LADY OF FAIRFIELD.

### A Noted Sailor and Explorer



THE LATE CAPTAIN E. F. REYNOLDS OF FLORENCE, Neb.

### Head of A. O. U. W. in Nebraska.

O. J. VanDyke of Shelton, Neb., who was recently elected to be grand master of the Ancient Order of United Workmen for Nebraska, is a native of Pennsylvania, and is 56 years of age. He was born at Harrisville and lived there until he was 24 years of age, when he removed to Nebraska, bringing with him a wife and two children. He took up a homestead near Shelton and lived on it some years, finally removing to the town to engage in business. In 1884 he became a member of the Ancient Order of United Workmen, and two years later was appointed a deputy for the state, which position he filled for seventeen years, resigning because of his wife's health, which demanded his care. He was elected to be head of the order in the state at South Omaha after a most spirited contest.

### Fishugh Lee and Funston.

During his visit to Hartford, Conn., in April last, in the interest of the Jamestown exposition, the late General Fishugh Lee related the circumstances under which he first met Fred Funston in Cuba. Just before the Maine was blown up General Lee resisted many threats that he would be killed and was in daily fear of his life. Soon after being warned of a plot to slay him the American consul got one of the worst scares in his life. He was alone in his office when the door opened and one of the worst looking faces he had ever seen looked in at him. The man had long hair, unkempt beard, and a gaunt appearance. His hat was full of holes, shoes about all gone, and he had no clothing apparently but a linen duster. He approached General Lee cautiously, and the latter instinctively grasped his revolver. "If that fellow had once put his hand under his duster I am positive I would have shot him without waiting for a word," said General Lee.

"I was satisfied he had been hired to come and kill me. When he approached to a speaking distance he astonished me by asking in good English if I was General Lee. I told him I was and asked him who he was. He said he belonged to the Cuban army, was General Gomez's chief of