

# Farmers Whose Soil Has Brought Them Much Wealth and Comfort

**D**O DREAMS come true? Could one dream of greater luck than going into a new country as a young man and penniless, settling down upon the unbroken prairies, and finding one's self, just at life's prime, with lands worth close up around the \$100,000 mark, with sleek herds of cattle around one's barnyard, with the respect of the community, with a modern home and modern luxuries for one's comfort, with crisp, fresh country air to breathe from morning until night, and with no difficulty in the world to worry over for the rest of one's life?

And yet it's not luck, after all. Nor is it a dream. Such cause for contentment on earth has come to hundreds and thousands of ordinary men—just plain folks—all over the fertile plains of Nebraska as the result of foresight and persistent effort properly applied. The story of success, as success in this world goes, is no uncommon tale in the Nebraska farm regions of today. Productive expenses of fertile soil, comfortable and even luxurious modern homes, well painted and well built barns and substantial, up-to-date and expensive farm machinery, good looking modern carriages and fat looking herds of live stock, are today common pictures painted here and there and everywhere over these broad prairies, and it is the story of failure that attracts interest and attention, rather than the commonplace story of success.

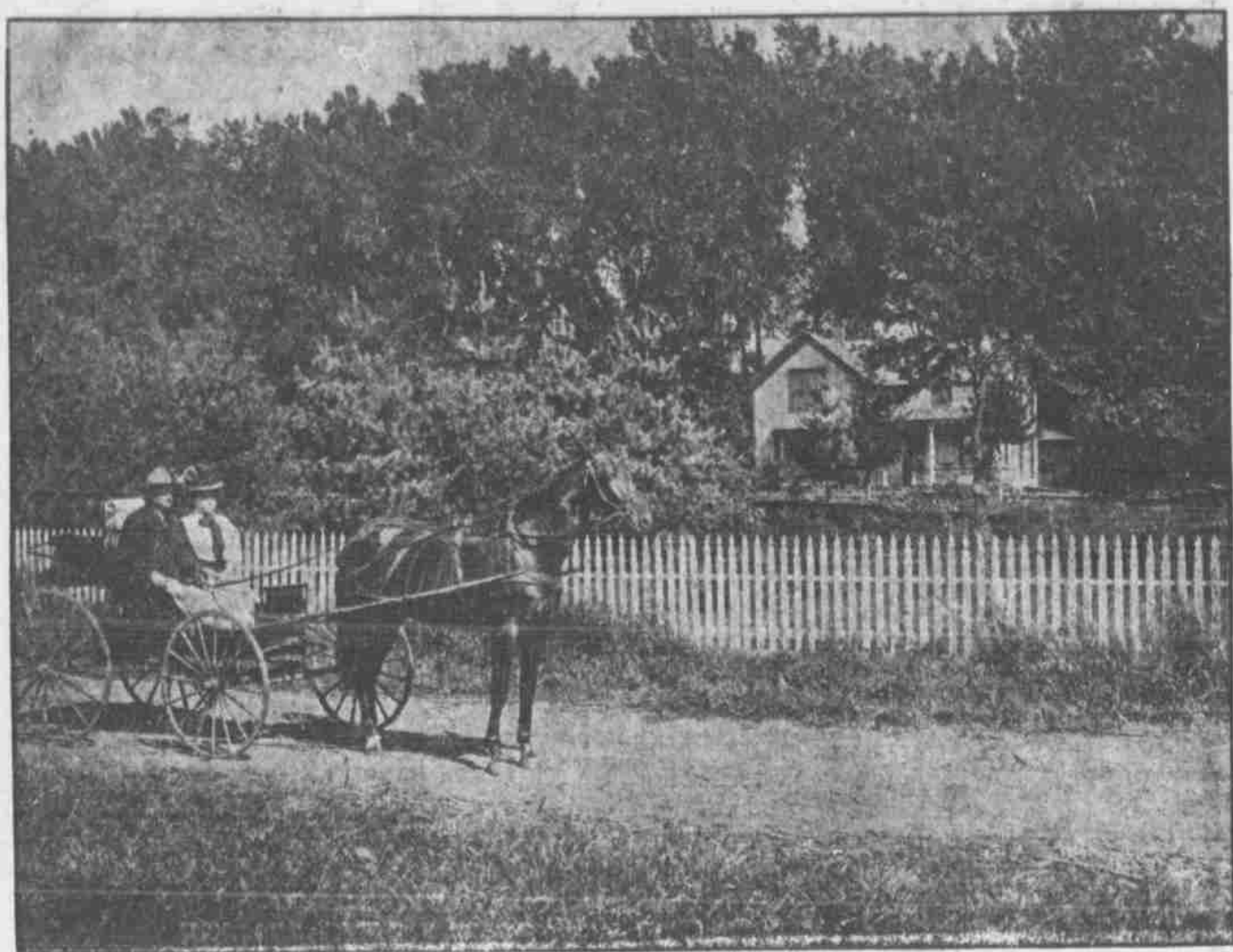
There was a time when money and finances had deep meaning for the west. But today kings of the farm land are of more importance. Today the Nebraska farmer, who walked into this section without a cent to his name thirty years ago, and who homesteaded a quarter section of land worth homesteaded, is as independent as a rear, or more so, and as care-free as a care-free could be. Gloomy forecasts of financial distress have no alarm for him, secure as he is from panic's perils, and on "Easy Street" through a calm knowledge that his crops go on growing, his cattle taking on beef, even while their master sleeps. It is little wonder that this uncrowned emperor is taking joy out of life, without a mixture of the city's nerve-strain, realising as he does that each passing moment is adding more and more to his material well-being.

From nothing to fame and fortune—to a niche among the "honest rich" and "desirable citizens"—at the age of 48. To walk into a virgin paradise at the age of 19 and to be independent of the wolf, to be independently rich under 60! From a dug-out and a homestead to possession of 800 acres of the finest farm land in all the world, a modern home equipped with every convenience, to a place of honor in the legislature of the commonwealth, and to be a young man still! Does it not savor of a romance or an imaginative story for Sunday afternoon reading? Why be an oil king?

Nor is one's imagination called into play to weave this story. The hero of this particular tale is Thomas E. Alderson of Madison county, Nebraska. And his is but the usual success that has been attained by persistent farming in Nebraska. As a youth of 19, young Tom Alderson and an older brother came to Madison county. That was 1871. Alderson had been born back in Iowa county, Wisconsin, October 25, 1852, and he had a yearning for the new west. His yearning was a money-maker. First locating on a farm three miles southeast of Norfolk, then moving to the present site of Creston in Platte county, Tom Alderson in 1874 returned to Madison county and took a claim eight miles southeast of the present city of Madison. Upon that claim he still resides, though differently surrounded.

Tom Alderson demonstrated that it is wise to marry young. He took a wife and his homestead at the same time, and both were good moves. Miss Amelia Slater was his bride. Two daughters have graced their home, Miss Alderson, first prize teacher at the Prescott school, Lincoln, and Mrs. A. V. Brown, whose husband is a successful druggist at Superior, Neb. After having lived in a dug-out for several years, Mr. and Mrs. Alderson built a home, which at present serves as the home for their employes. Eight years ago they built a new modern house in which they now reside. The 600 acres of rich Madison county land owned by Mr. Alderson is all in one body, but is divided into two farms. The home farm contains 400 acres and the rental farm 200 acres.

As the land has grown more valuable, so also has the live stock reared upon that



HOME OF JOHN W. RAY, NEAR NORFOLK—HE AND MRS. RAY IN THEIR BUGGY.

land becomes more civilized. Where formerly there was just a general run of cattle, any cow being a cow, today Tom Alderson is specializing in a fancy breed of Shorthorn cattle and Poland-China hogs. Each year he feeds from 150 to 200 head of choice hogs, whose value ranges well up around the \$20,000 mark.

With the transplanting of the dug-out by a modern home has come the transplanting of isolation by modern advantages. Solitude has been driven to the sand hills and Tom Alderson's farm has been brought within speaking distance of New York City by a rural telephone line. Today he writes his letters and drops them in a box just outside the front door, where the rural mail-carrier picks them up each day. Here, too, he daily picks up his papers and his other mail from the city. To supply the demands of his farm he buys, each year, besides what is raised on the home farm, from 15,000 to 25,000 bushels of corn.

So much for Tom Alderson's material success. But he has done more. He has been elected to a political honor by his neighbors. Last fall the republicans of Madison county were casting about for a man who could represent them in the state legislature. Their eye fell upon Tom Alderson. He was elected and did efficient work. He is quiet and mild-voiced, but effective. His name headed the list of all the representatives on the roll call and his vote acted as a guidepost to many who followed.

Tom Alderson has demonstrated that the road to fame and fortune is by no means a rocky one if built of Nebraska dirt. Some men were born rich and some have simply settled down on Nebraska farms to bide their time. Coming to Madison county in 1874 with no capital save their courage and willingness to work, John W. Ray and Louis W. Ray, now owners of 1,000 acres of fine farm land five miles west of this city, stand out as notable examples of the success that may be attained from Nebraska's soil through persistent effort. Undaunted by the fact that during the first three years of their life in this country their crops were ravaged by the grasshoppers, these two young brothers, today under 46, kept stiff upper lips and "made good." Continuously for a third of a century they have farmed the land on which they live. They took homesteads and later added to their claims. Farming has been their only occupation.

Besides farming today 1,000 acres of land bordering on the Elkhorn river—and there



LIVING ROOM IN JOHN W. RAY'S RESIDENCE—MRS. RAY PLAYING GUITAR.

is no prettier valley in God's out-of-doors than the Elkhorn—these Ray brothers feed and ship to market every year about sixteen carloads of fat cattle. All of the corn and other grain raised on their farm land is fed to their own live stock. Last year they raised 15,000 bushels of corn and 400 tons of hay has been cut this year. In a year they shipped sixteen carloads of cattle to market—ten cars to Chicago and six to South Omaha. Besides this, they ship six

to ten cars of hogs—sixty head to the car—every year to Omaha. And when it is borne in mind that hogs are practically "velvet" on the farm, their "board and keep" amounting to practically nothing at all when a herd of cattle is maintained, it may be seen that John D. Rockefeller has no monopoly on all of the money-making of the country. Not while the Nebraska farmer is on earth.

Both John and Louis Ray are happily



HOME OF T. E. ALDERSON, NEAR MADISON

married, beautiful homes and charming wives being among their proudest possessions. Their domestic relations are particularly pleasant, and, living next door to the rest of the world on account of the rural mail service and the telephone, they have nothing to desire. Besides being successful farmers they are princely fellows and take a large interest in the affairs of the community. L. W. Ray has one son and John W. has two sons.



THOMAS E. ALDERSON

## Another Fine Church to Be Dedicated

**A**NOTHER \$50,000 church will be added to Omaha's splendid array of magnificent ecclesiastical structures today. It is the handsome new home of the First Christian congregation. Situated on a commanding eminence at the corner of Twenty-sixth and Harney streets, the building is a good example of modern church architecture, combining the qualities of churchly beauty with substantiality.

It is built of an excellent quality of

faceted brick and heavily trimmed with Bedford stone. The style of architecture is Doric Greek. Its splendid colonades and porticoes fronting two streets present a most beautiful and imposing appearance. It is without a spire and has a roof of green tile. The basement of the building is finished in southern pine, and contains an assembly room for Bible school with numerous class rooms and every modern convenience for Bible school work beside a large kitchen and dining room. The auditorium has a seating capacity of 1,000. It is finished in white mahogany and provided with massive pews finished in mahogany. Back of the auditorium and above it are the ladies' parlors, an assembly room for the choir and the pastor's study. The building is heated throughout with steam and brilliantly lighted with incandescent lights. The contractor and builder says there is not a more substantially constructed and lasting building in the city than this one.

This magnificent churchy structure is to be dedicated free from debt. The fact that there is no debt is due largely to the wonderful advance in the value of Omaha real estate in recent years. The congregation was fortunate enough to buy

property in advantageous places selling it always at an advance and buying elsewhere, the same process of advancing values being repeated to the advantage of the congregation.

The first home of the congregation in Omaha was erected forty years ago on the south side of Harney street between Fourteenth and Fifteenth streets. The building is still standing and is now occupied by a blacksmith shop. The people then bought a lot on the southwest corner of Twentieth and Farnam streets, where

they built a church and worshipped for several years. When the grade of the street there was raised some thirty feet the lot was sold and the building was moved to the corner of Twentieth and Capitol avenues, where it was used until it was condemned as unsafe.

Then the congregation met for a time in various halls and other temporary places throughout the city. When the present pastor, Rev. S. D. Dutcher, took up his work in June, 1904, the congregation was meeting in the Rohrbough block, at Seventeenth and Douglas streets. Steps were taken at once to erect a building to be occupied until a permanent edifice could be provided. A lot was bought in the fall of 1904 at Nineteenth and Farnam streets and a frame tabernacle was erected. This proved the most fortunate of the fortunate real estate purchases made by the congregation. It paid \$18,500 for the lot in the fall of 1904, and sold it two years later for \$40,000. Then the ground on which the present church stands was bought. It is 90x192 feet and the price paid for it was \$10,000. Ground was broken for the new building in October, 1906, and the cornerstone was laid February 3, 1907.

Rev. S. D. Dutcher, the pastor, has earned a reputation as a builder of churches. He came to Omaha from Oklahoma City, where he had just completed a fine church. During a ministry of twenty-five years he has erected seven churches.

William A. DeBor is chairman of the building committee, John McDonald is the architect, and Charles W. Partridge is the contractor and builder.

At the dedicatory services today Dr. Z. T. Sweeney of Columbus, Ind., will be the chief speaker. Dr. Sweeney was consul general to Constantinople under President Hayes. He has a high reputation as a



W. A. DeBOR

## Gleanings from the Story Teller's Pack

**Need Not Know Geography.**

**I**T is not necessary for a girl to become a scholar in geography in order to obtain a husband, according to a story related before a meeting of the Association of Head Teachers of the United States in Chicago.

U. D. Lowry, school district superintendent, told the story, which had to do with one of the teachers in the Nixon school, Forty-second and Dickens avenues.

The mother of one of this teacher's girl pupils had demanded the reason why her daughter had not been promoted at the end of the year. The teacher replied that the girl had not passed in geography.

"What difference does that make?" asked the irate mother. "The girl has got an older sister who didn't know her geography and she was promoted and has got a man; and I never knew geography and I have got a man, and you know geography and you ain't got no man at all."

"There is considerable philosophy beneath the view that woman took," said Mr. Lowry. "There is something in life more than the learning a child gets from books."—Chicago Inter Ocean.

**Highly Suspicious.**

"It is a rule, to which good lawyers usually adhere," says a Philadelphia attorney, "never to tell more than one knows. There was an instance in England, not many years ago, wherein a lawyer carried the rule to the extreme.

"One of the agents in a Midland Reversion court objected to a person whose name was on the register on the ground that he was dead. The reversion attorney declined to accept the assurance, however, and demanded conclusive testimony on the point.

"The agent on the other side arose and gave corroborative evidence as to the death of the man in question.

"But, sir, how do you know the man's death?" demanded the barrister.

"Well," was the reply, "I don't know. It's very difficult to prove."

"As I suspected," returned the barrister. "You don't know whether he's dead or not."

"Whereupon the witness coolly continued: 'I was saying, sir, that I don't know whether he is dead or not; but I do know I buried him about a month ago on suspicion.'"—Harper's Weekly.

**Not His Thunder.**

A Philadelphia property man was relating in a sad and respectful voice, his memories of Richard Mansfield.

"If one worked hard," he said, "one got on with Mr. Mansfield well. He never rebuked me but once, and then it was hardly my fault.

"It was a sultry afternoon in the spring,



REV. E. F. SWEENEY



THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF OMAHA.

## Quaint Features of Every Day Life

**Swindler Wins Encore.**

**A** QUAIN story of a swindle with an encore comes from Potter county, Pennsylvania, where a prominent farmer named John Bloomer, residing near Ayres Hill, lost a large sum of money.

He received a personal letter, in which it was stated that there was an abundance of the best grade of granulated sugar to be had at 2 1/2 cents per pound, providing that the purchase was made in ten lots and also that payment be made in advance.

The name signed to the offer was that of W. G. Wagner of Cumberland, Md. Mr. Bloomer thought that he had a rare opportunity to make some money, so he mailed a check for a ton shipment. In a week he had heard nothing of the order, and he wrote to Mr. Wagner. He received a letter in which the writer stated that he was surprised to learn that the sugar had not been delivered, and that he would send a tracer after the lost car. He also stated that he still had one ton left, and if Mr. Bloomer wanted it he would ship it at once upon receipt of the necessary amount.

meanwhile several thousand persons were making suggestions to Powers.

"Get some salt" and "Show him some milk" and "Get a balloon," and other bits of advice and encouragement were offered. Finally, because no one had suggested it, he thought of the fire department and sent for a hook and ladder truck.

When it came the cat was gone. So were the several thousand persons. So were the blocked cars. There was no one left to tell the story. All that remained was the memory of it and the elevated structure, with nothing marking the spot where the cat had been.

The truck was sent back.

**Equalization.**

Prof. Grandner Matthews, who is at least as good a wit as he is a reformer, was overheard once talking with Mr. Carnegie.

"I notice, Mr. Carnegie," he said, "that you don't limp."

"And why should I?" asked the philanthropist.

"Well," slowly answered the professor, "maybe they pull them alternately."—Lippincott's Magazine.



REV. S. W. DUTCHER