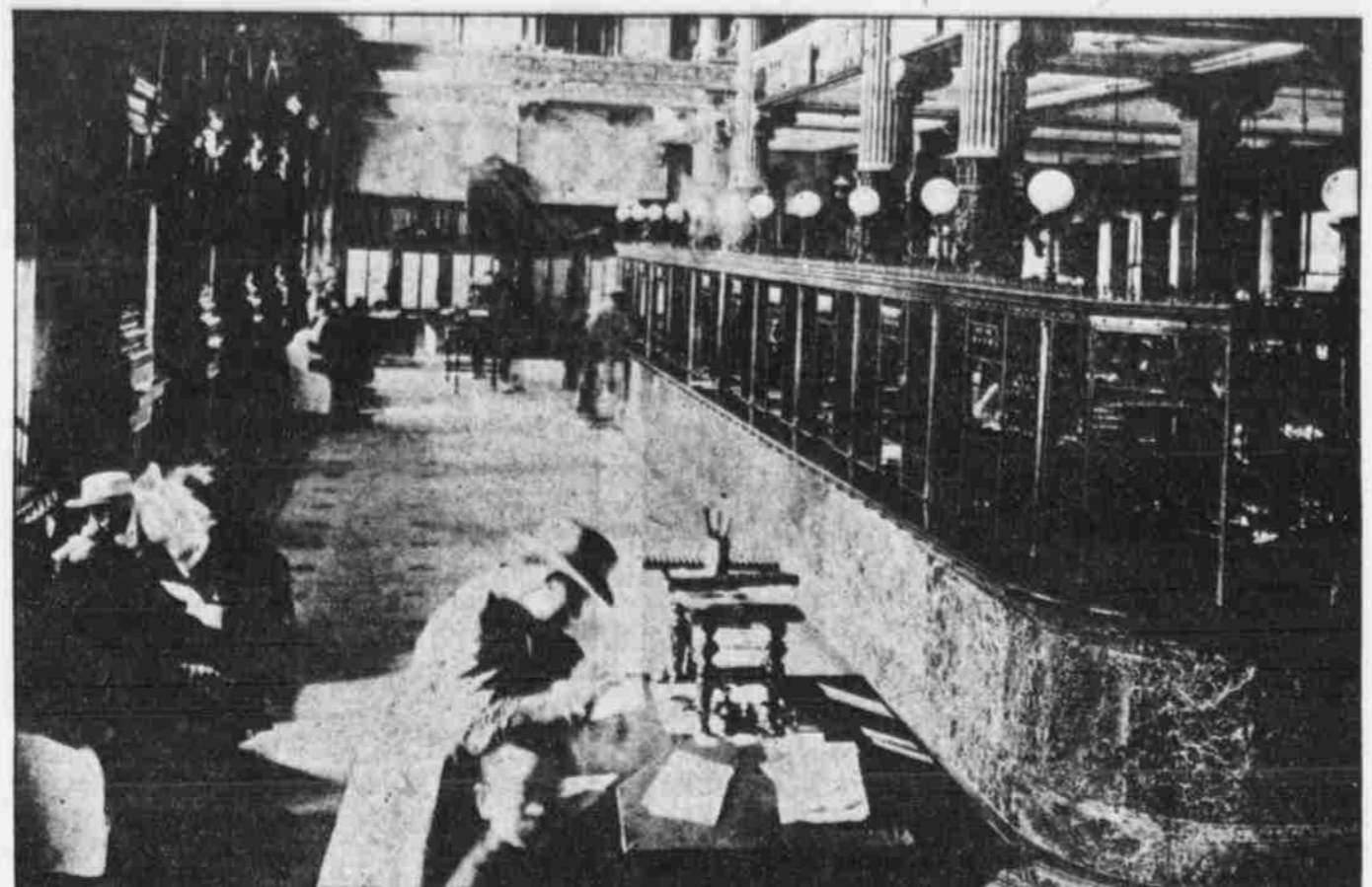


The Mitsui Family of Japan Its Millions and Its Vast Undertakings

Copyright, 1906, by Frank G. Carpenter. OKIO, Japan.—(Special Correspondence of The Bee.)—Have you heard of the Mitsui family? It is the richest of all Japan, and one of the richest of the world. What the Rothschilds are to Europe and Rockefeller to the United States, the Mitsuis are to Japan. They may also be compared with the Astors and the Vanderbilts, and their undertakings include such as have made the fortunes of Krupp, Marshall Field, Stephen Girard and John Wanamaker. They are famous as merchants, miners, manufacturers, exporters, bankers and financiers. They have a capital running high into the billions of dollars, and they do a business of hundreds of millions a year. In some years the foreign trade of this family is equal to one-seventh of the whole foreign trade of Japan. Its coal mines produce about one-third of all the coal mined in the empire, and they supply a great part of that used in the ports of east Asia. The Mitsuis own great cotton mills and furnish about one-third of the Japanese exports of cotton yarn. They have other factories and foundries throughout the empire, and their trading and banking institutions are in all the big cities. This family has also its branch establishments in the leading seaports of China, and in Hong Kong, Manila, Singapore and Bombay. It has branches in Australia and Java, and also in San Francisco, New York and London. In some years it ships as much as 5,000 bales of raw silk to the United States, and it has a fleet of good-sized steamers, which carries its merchandise to and from Shanghai, Hong Kong, the Philippines, the Straits Settlements, Burmah and Java. There is no more thriving corporation in the world today, and just at this time, when we Americans are talking of the Japanese as being on the edge of bankruptcy, it is surprising to come into contact with an institution like this.



INTERIOR OF THE MITSUI BANK.

In sight, the business were now less regarded and the government went on with its expenditures, not doubting it could get all the money it needed. Then a loan was proposed for the Manchurian railroads. To the surprise of the government it was only half taken. There seemed to be but little demand for those bonds in London or New York, and the officials were at a loss what to do. In the meantime the representatives of the large banking institutions of Paris, London and New York had come here in Tokyo to investigate matters for themselves. They were not satisfied with figures and estimates alone. They wanted to look at the books and to know just what the resources of the government were and whether it could, beyond doubt, meet all its obligations when they became due. They wanted to know whether it was advisable for them to invest in new bonds, and "like the man from Missouri," they had to be shown.

It was in connection with their report that Japan found difficulty in placing further loans, and on this account the foreign and clerks who represent the live, up-to-date banking and industrial interests of today have taken a hand with the government in putting Japan on a solid financial basis. This policy has already been inaugurated and through the advice of such men as the Mitsuis, it will be carried out to a successful conclusion.

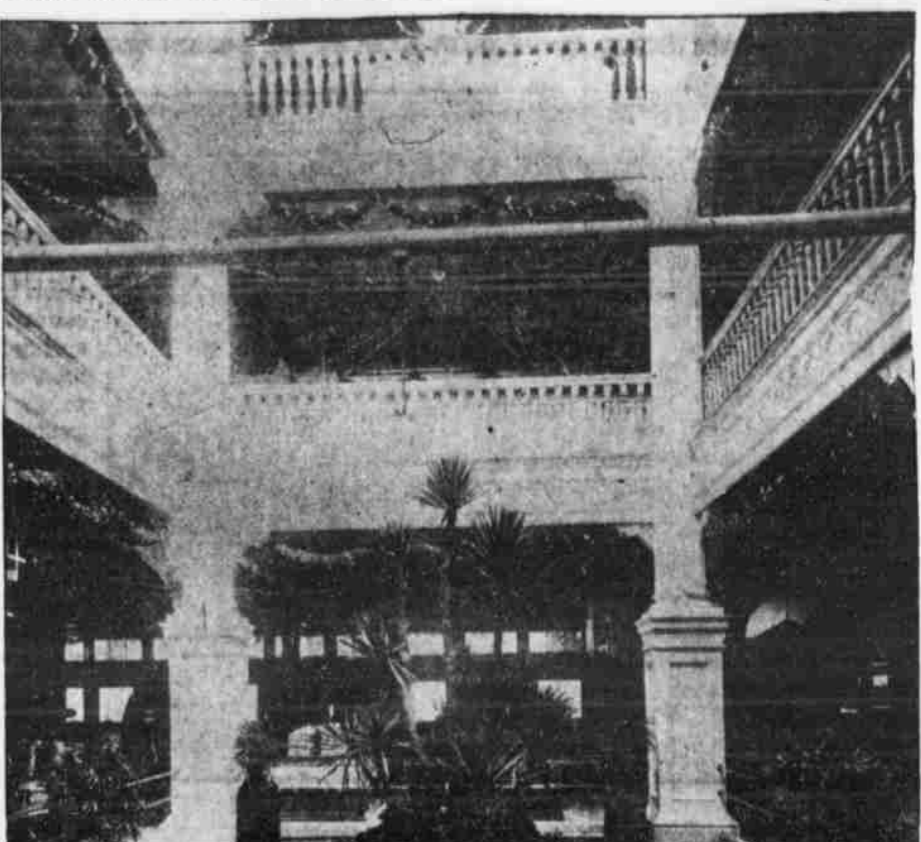
Mitsui Coal Mines.
An interesting branch of the establishment is the mining department. In this are shown samples of the coal, sulphur, copper, silver and other ores being mined by this great corporation. There are also models of the machinery used in the mines, showing how each of the larger properties of machinery for haulage, ventilation and drainage and that everything is done to protect the lives of the miners and to maintain a uniform output at the lowest expense. I saw models of some of the Mitsui coal mines near Nagasaki. They are known as the Mikko mines, and are one of the largest of such enterprises in the world. There are now six different workings, and the annual production is over 1,000,000 tons. The mines have an area of 14,000 acres, and the coal veins average about eight feet in thickness. This coal is bituminous and is used for cooking. It is regarded as a standard coal in the Asiatic markets. Another Mitsui property is the Tegawa coal mines, which produce the best steam coal of Japan, and largely supply the navy and the railroads. And another is the Yamano coal, noted for its easy firing and its high evaporating power. In addition to these coal mines the Mitsuis have silver and lead properties, which are turning out considerable ore, and they have two large sulphur mines.



Mitsui & Co. Mitsui Bank. MITSUI OFFICE BUILDING IN TOKYO. Mitsui Mining Co.

steadily grew, and it covered a large area, about one-half of which is now occupied by the Mitsui Gofakuten, as the store is called today.

The Mitsui in the past started the cash business in Japan, and this new store has fixed prices marked on the goods. It has cash carriers to take the money from one part of the store to the other and also a big mail order department, through which goods are sent to all parts of the empire and collections are made through the post-offices. It has automobiles to deliver its goods through the city, elegant dining rooms and waiting rooms for its customers and special exhibitions of new goods, which bring out fashionable society. It has a photographic department, a picture gallery, ladies' dressmaking and tailoring establishments and in fact almost everything found in the best department stores in the United States. The building is of three stories with wide plate-glass windows and a spacious entrance hall. In the center of it are two courts roofed with glass, so certain that just the right light can be admitted whether the day be bright or dark. In these courts are fountains, in the basins of which goldfish swim and about which are palms rising high into the air. The whole of the three stories are carpeted with the softest of white matting and are filled with Japanese goods of various kinds, beautifully displayed in glass cases.



PALM GARDEN OF THE MITSUI STORE.

Shopping in One's Stocking Feet.
This big store with its vast quantities of new goods of all kinds, is supported by the Japanese, although it has its departments intended for foreigners. There are about 2,000,000 people in Tokio alone, and the country around is more thickly populated than any part of the United States. The store is so beautiful that no one would think of entering it with muddy shoes, and the Japanese men and women all check their shoes and umbrellas at the door. I came out of a jirishika and one of the clerks drew over my shoes a pair of soft cloth slippers and it was in them that I walked through. The matting is as white as a tablecloth and there is not a spot of dirt anywhere to be seen. The store was full of Japanese women and girls looking over goods and going through the other operations of shopping just as our women do in the United States. Some were examining the magnificent obis or wide belts, which form the most decorative part of the Japanese costume, others were looking up stuff for kimonos and other buying shoes, jewelry, pictures, and, in fact, everything under the sun. Some of the shoes are beautifully lacquered and I saw a single obis which will sell for \$50. Think of a belt for your dress which might cost you \$100 or more, and you have an idea of a possible extravagance of the Japanese women.

As I walked through the establishment a concert began in the music room, and for an hour or more a Japanese girl played on a grand piano, being accompanied by two others with violins. I cannot say much for the music. It was an attempt at one of Sousa's marches, and was not a success.

I was taken through the store by one of the managers who spoke English. We went together from story to story, from the toy department at the bottom, where little dolls and dolls' housekeeping outfits are sold, up to the great photograph gallery

Family of Millionaires.
Through the kindness of Mr. J. Yamamoto, one of the directors, I have been able to spend the greater part of today in going through the big office buildings of the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha here in Tokio, which contain the Mitsui bank and the exporting and mining departments of the corporation, and I have also visited its big department store across the way, which has more trade than any dry goods establishment of the far east. Each of these institutions is a story in itself. But before I give it I want to tell you more about this remarkable family. The Mitsui house is a joint association, consisting of eleven families of partners who have pooled their capital in their joint name under the system of unlimited joint liability. The bank, for instance, which has a capital of 5,000,000 yen and a surplus of 11,500,000, inserts a statement in all of its banking advertisements that it is owned by the members of the Mitsui family and that they as partners assume an unlimited responsibility for all its debts. As a result the people know that all the wealth of the family is back of the bank and it has the highest credit. Its deposits are now about 70,000,000 yen, or almost \$5,000,000.

The same rule prevails as to all the obligations of the eleven families. The properties are all held in common, although each family may have independent property of its own. In the Mitsui establishments, however, there is no particular property to which anyone can enter his absolute claim. The institutions are managed by the Mitsui family council, according to rules laid down by one of the heads of the family who lived more than 200 years ago. This, making the family and not the individual the head of an institution, is in accordance with the social organization of Japan. Here the social is subservient to the family, and the rights and obligations of the family should outweigh those of any of its members.

Bankers and the Government.
Indeed, the Mitsuis are, perhaps, the most important element in the Japanese situation today. It is through them and the other bankers and capitalists of note, such as Matsuo, governor of the Bank of Japan; Takahashi of the Yokohama Specie Bank, and Baron Shibusawa, that the new policy of retrenchment, economy and reform is now being introduced. Until within a few months the country has been managed by a class of men who know but little of modern business methods. The leading officials were apt to look down on trade and to consider themselves as rather superior to those who were engaged in it. This was especially so up to the time of the war between Russia and Japan. Then the country needed a great deal of money and it had to go abroad to borrow it. It had not done much as to the placing of enormous loans, and it called in the financiers among the Mitsuis. As the war continued other loans were negotiated which supplied a large part of the funds for the war. Agents were sent to Paris, London and New York, and there was little trouble in the disposal of the bonds. As the war continued other loans were negotiated, and up to the time of its close there seemed to be no financial trouble

In a Big Japanese Bank.
No one can go through the big banking institutions of Tokio without being assured of the material prosperity and the great resources of this country. The building of the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha is surrounded by structures which would not seem out of place in New York or Chicago. The Bank of Japan, an enormous building of gray granite, is just over the way. The Yokohama Specie Bank is next door, and all about are other large modern buildings. The Mitsui building is of four stories built around the three sides of a court, covering more than an acre. It is of red brick and white stone and its interior is furnished like one of the best office buildings of the United States. There are wide halls, big rooms, many windows and an abundance of electric lights. Elevators take one from story to story, and there are parlors for the directors and all modern conveniences. The main room of the bank is larger than that of any bank in Washington and is as well furnished as that of any in New York. As I stood in the gallery and looked down upon the scores of clerks working away, I was impressed with the enormous business being done. Money was coming in and going out and I could see where the bank gets its deposits, which

Earthquake Proof Chimneys.
The Mitsuis have a big engineering works here in Tokio, where engines and boilers are made, and where they are also turning out electrical machinery which is noted throughout the Far East. They are making steel chimneys and railway bridge material. Their steel chimneys are said to be earthquake proof. This is a very important item. Japan has, on the average, an earthquake a day throughout the year, and the brick chimneys are then a big one. At such times the brick chimneys are thrown down, and the chimneys fall far and wide. I narrowly escaped with my life. In that same earthquake the chimneys on the parliament house tumbled, making a hole in the roof as large as though the biggest elephant had dropped through from the skies.

This same engineering works is now making pumps, sawmills, mining machinery, dynamo, electric motors and electric machines of every description.

Mitsuis and Foreign Trade.
It would pay some of our big exporting firms to go through the foreign trade rooms of the Mitsui house. They have a commercial museum, which enables their clerks and employes to study all sorts of raw materials and manufactured goods. These rooms are somewhat similar to those of our Philadelphia Commercial museum, and one could hardly imagine such a collection being gotten together by a private company. Connected with the museum is a large library of up-to-date books on textiles, ores, mining and manufactures, and the clerks are well educated. The Mitsui family has its own system of education for its employes. It has set apart a fund of 20,000 yen annually to send its clerks to China and other countries, enable them to acquire the languages and education necessary for their business. It is now exporting all sorts of goods to the amount of 90,000,000 yen or more every year. It has a large import trade and brings into Japan locomotives, steel bridges and electrical machines. It purchases steamers, warships and ordnance for the government, and also railway equipment and materials. It deals largely in cotton and wool, and handles American canned meats, wheat, flour and other such things. The company also acts as insurance agents, representing some of the largest of the American and the English insurance companies, and that not only in Japan, but in India, the Straits Settlements and China as well.

Curious and Romantic Capers of Cupid

Homesteads Without Husbands.
THE Chicago Tribune has a column composed of persons who participated in the rush for land on the Rosebud Indian reservation five years ago, has received a call for husbands from two maidens who are holding down claims in Tripp county, South Dakota, and are lonesome.

These girls, Rose Freeman, who is but 18 years old, and Blanche Bates, four years her senior, were the first of their sex to go to the reservation after winning claims.

"We came out here to get the land given us by the government and to find husbands that are good and kind and true," says the letter. "We found good rich land. We hired men to work it. We built a house and are making money."

"But we are lonesome. We have suitors that would make the girls east of us jealous as far as numbers are concerned. Every man out here wants a wife. There are scarcely any women here but Indians. Some of the men have married squaws. But the majority want white wives."

"We are Chicago girls, and while the men here are nice enough, we want Chicago husbands. As you can see by our photographs, we are not 'undesirables.' We insist on good looking and young husbands of some business ability, who cannot only be good husbands, but who can carry out the work which we have started. Send letters and photographs to us at Dallas, S. D. It is a hard life out here, but we will make it pleasant for the right men."

An Ethical Marriage.
Dr. James H. Hamilton, head worker in the university settlement at Eldridge and Hamilton streets, New York City, a well known writer on economic and sociological subjects, was "ethically married" on Saturday, January 9, to Miss Etta Brodski, one of the associate workers in the settlement.

Miss Brodski, who is 21 years old, is the daughter of Dr. Benjamin Brodski, a self-styled atheist and believer in the "ethical form of marriage." The marriage came as a surprise to the many settlement workers in the city, and when the news spread through the settlement houses, there was a great buzzing of gossip.

The ceremony, reports the New York Times, took place at 341 West Twenty-seventh street, in the apartments of Dr. John L. Elliott, head worker of the Hudson Guild Settlement house, at 436 East Twenty-seventh street, a close friend of Dr. Hamilton and well known among sociologists of this and other cities. He is

and his nurse. Day and night she was constantly by his bedside at the Jewish hospital and had a room adjoining his, in order that she might be near to comfort him.

With that premonition common to those in the shadow of death, relates the Philadelphia Ledger, Mike felt that the end was near, and a week ago he asked to be taken from the institution to a house of his own, so that they might be married amid more happy surroundings. Apartments were engaged at the North Twenty-first street house and there Mrs. Kugel resumed her duty as nurse. Early Saturday morning Mike felt that he could not last throughout the day and earnestly urged his fiancée that they be married at once, so that he might die happy in the thought that he had married the woman he loved.

Mrs. Kugel summoned Dr. Herbert M. Goddard of 1338 Spruce street, who attended Mike throughout his illness. The physician saw at a glance that the patient's condition was extremely critical and agreed that it would be well that his last wish be taken from the institution to a house of his own, so that they might be married amid more happy surroundings. Apartments were engaged at the North Twenty-first street house and there Mrs. Kugel resumed her duty as nurse. Early Saturday morning Mike felt that he could not last throughout the day and earnestly urged his fiancée that they be married at once, so that he might die happy in the thought that he had married the woman he loved.

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Japan's Biggest Department Store.
Leaving the Mitsui Bussan Kaisha, I crossed the street and went through the big department store belonging to the Mitsui family. This is by far the largest and most complete store in the Japanese empire. It has a capital of 1,000,000 yen and it does a daily business of about 20,000 yen. It is like nothing else in Japan and is one of the best examples of how the western movement in carrying the empire and also of the solidity of the new institutions. R. is known as the Mitsui dry goods store, Marshall Field, who was at the time he died worth about \$50,000,000, made as a storekeeper, never liked the words "department store." He called his big establishment in Chicago a dry goods store. The Mitsuis follow the same rule, and that, perhaps, because the fortunes of the family were founded on dry goods. As I have said, the business was begun during the sixteenth century—almost 100 years before Boston was founded—and it was only a few years later that a store was opened right here on the site of this big establishment of today. After the combination of the five Mitsui brothers in 1723 this store

New High School Building at Superior

SUPERIOR has put itself in line with modern methods by providing a high school building which is not only ample in size to accommodate the pupils, but provided with modern sanitation, ventilation and of a style of architecture to attract rather than repel those who are to use it. The formal dedicatory exercises were held on the 4th of this month and many of the citizens took occasion to critically inspect the structure and words of commendation were universal.

Superior has a four-year high school course, together with a normal training department, the attendance at present being 150. In erecting the new building provision has not only been made for the present, but future needs have been anticipated. The

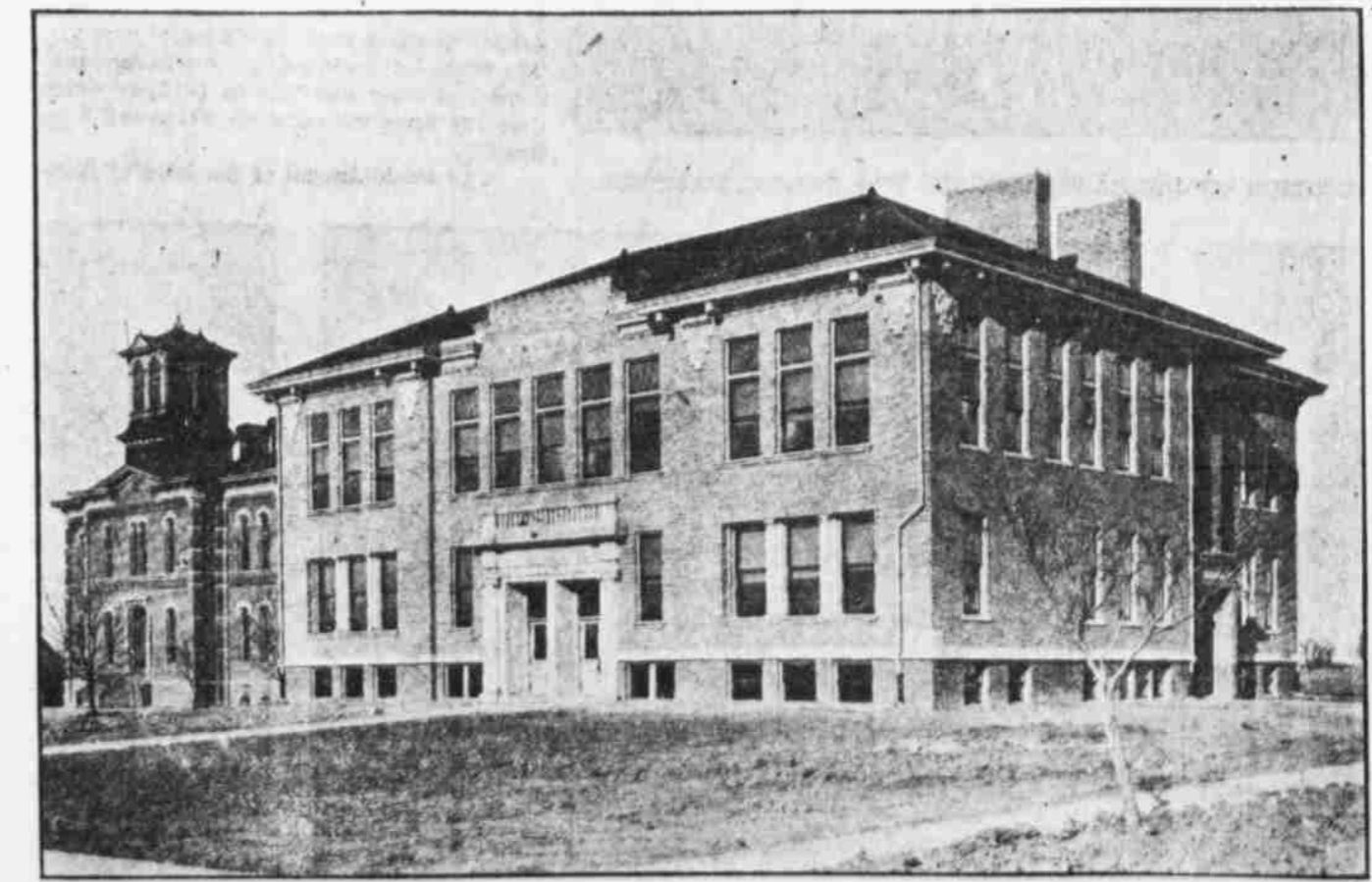
builders pride themselves on the fact that they have erected a handsome and substantial building and one which would be difficult to improve upon in the matter of adaptability to the use for which it was intended.

The dedicatory exercises were in the nature of a general felicitation on the completion of a building which has been greatly needed and which the rapidly growing needs of the city made impossible to delay much longer. High School Inspector Reed of Lincoln delivered an address, complimenting the city not only on the acquisition of the beautiful building, but upon the excellence of the city's schools.

One of the most interesting features of the program was the presentation to the school of a handsome American flag, which is to fly from the start on the building.

This was presented by Mrs. C. E. Adams as the gift of the Grand Army of the Republic and Woman's Relief corps organizations of Superior. The presentation was made the occasion of a patriotic address. A number of other addresses were delivered, all suitable to the occasion and the structure formally turned over to the Board of Education.

With the completion and occupancy of this new building Superior not only expects to acquire better facilities for its youth to acquire an education, but will be in a position to offer its advantages to pupils from the country and smaller towns in the vicinity which are less fortunately situated in the matter of high school facilities, a number of whom have already taken advantage of the opportunity.



HIGH SCHOOL BUILDING, SUPERIOR, NEB.