

Old Shorthand Man Visits Omaha After Twenty-Eight Years' Absence

LIKE a Rip Van Winkle awakening brought down to date, was the recent visit of John Hall to Omaha after an absence of twenty-eight years—the same John Hall who away back in the epochal days of the early '70s helped make Nebraska history by serving the constitutional convention as official shorthand reporter, and who also wrote the record in the impeachment proceedings against Governor David Butler.

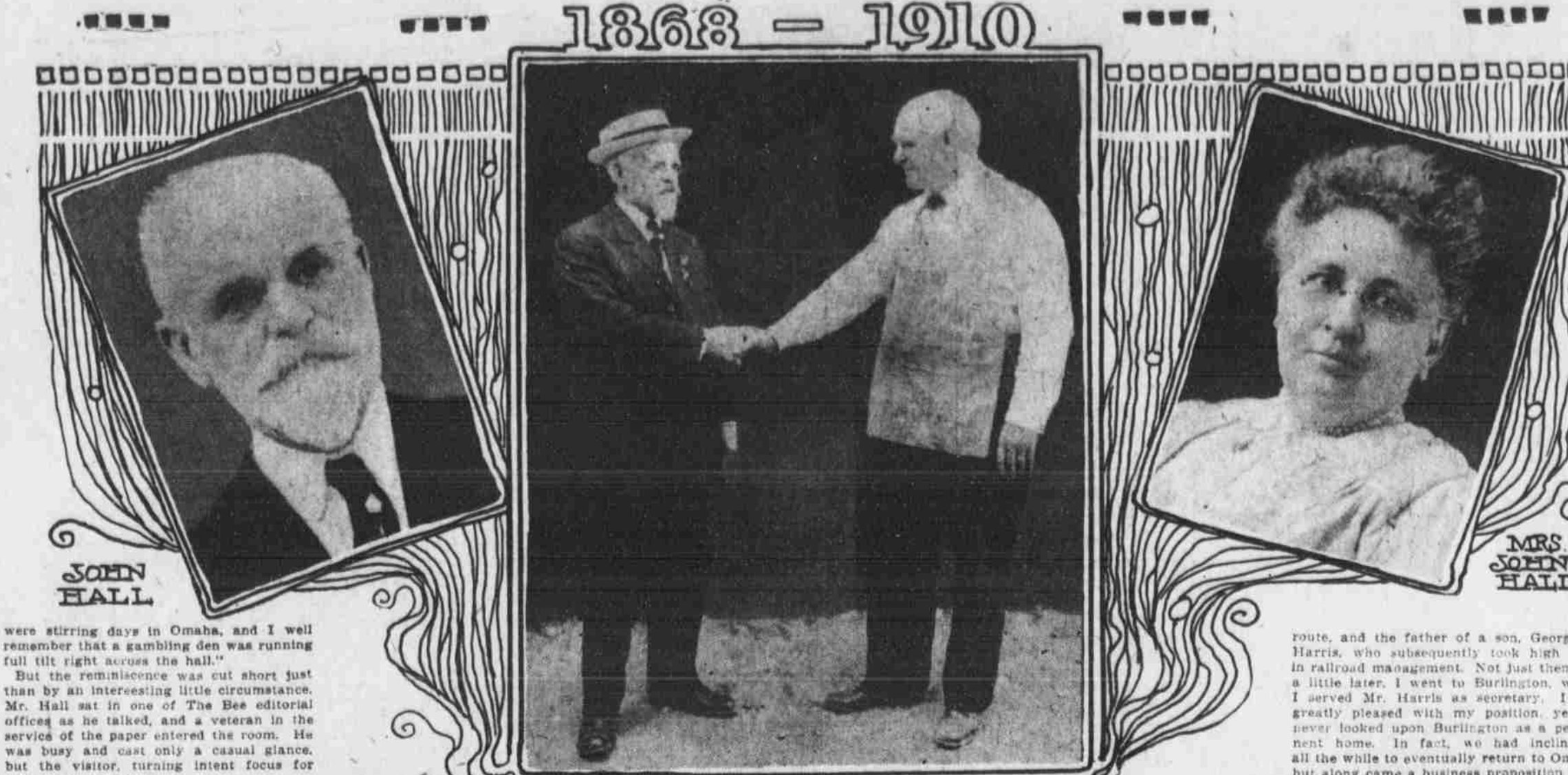
Mr. Hall has for many years been a resident of Rochester, N. Y., where he is prominently identified with the insurance business, giving odd moments to fruit culture as a side issue. He stopped in Omaha last Wednesday on his way home from Denver, where he attended a convention of nurserymen.

But it is not the John Hall of today around whom public concern clusters, so much as the John Hall of early-day Omaha, who, with John Bell, divides honors of pioneer stenography. In those days there were no typewriters, and the word "stenography" had not been accorded space in common vocabulary. "Shorthand writers," they were then, and after having made their "pot hooks," much after the fashion of today, the transcribing of notes was done by hand with pen or pencil.

Mr. Hall married an Omaha woman, Miss Lillie Staley, whose brothers were well known pioneer railroad men. The wedding which was solemnized in what was then known as the North Omaha Methodist church, was one of the important social events of that era, for Miss Staley was a singer of note and held sway as a social leader. Her acquaintance among early-day Omahans was much more extensive than that of the young shorthand writer who led her to the altar, for her musical ability placed her prominently in the social limelight.

"I was here in 1882," said Mr. Hall, "and that was my last visit until now. I thought then that the growth of Omaha had been phenomenal, for the Omaha of 1882 was vastly different from the Omaha of the late sixties and the early seventies during which time I was a resident of this city. But today, I am simply bewildered by the metropolitan attainment of the town. Of course, through newspaper reading and in other ways, I have through all of the years kept fairly well informed as to Omaha. I came expecting to see a city but now I find that my expectations have been greatly exceeded."

"I learned shorthand in England before I came to Omaha—that was in 1858—but on arriving here, I found at first but little demand for shorthand, and as I was also a printer, I sought employment in that line, taking 'cases' on the old Republican. Those



JOHN HALL

MRS. JOHN HALL

HE GREETED AN OLD FRIEND

were stirring days in Omaha, and I well remember that a gambling den was running full tilt right across the hall."

But the reminiscence was cut short just then by an interesting little circumstance. Mr. Hall sat in one of The Bee editorial offices as he talked, and a veteran in the service of the paper entered the room. He was busy and cast only a casual glance, but the visitor, turning intent focus for a moment, exclaimed:

"How are you, Harry?"

He was addressing Harry Haskell, mechanical superintendent of The Bee, whose connection with the paper dates back thirty-five years, and who was a part of the Republican management at the time Mr. Hall served his tenure there as typesetter. Recognition in return was almost instantaneous on the part of Mr. Haskell, and the two old-timers entered into extended conversation of retrospective character.

"As I was saying when you came in, Harry," Mr. Hall continued, "there was a gambling house alongside us when we worked on the old Republican, and you will recall, no doubt, that the miners and freighters coming in from the west, laden

with gold dust and currency whooped things up in a rather wild manner."

Turning to further discussion of how the evolution of Omaha has brought a metropolitan city out of a straggling frontier town, Mr. Hall said: "I remember very well that when I worked on the Republican, I lived at what is now Twenty-third and Cuming streets. In walking to and fro between the office and home, I traversed an untenanted cow pasture, and Twenty-third street in the vicinity of Cuming was then considered away out in the suburbs."

"I was much impressed with Omaha then, and lacked but little of settling here for my permanent home—would have done so, perhaps, but for an incident which occurred at the dinner table in a Lincoln hotel, when I was reporting the constitutional convention. A man of more than ordinarily important appearance sat at table across from me. 'Are you a stranger in Lincoln?' he queried. 'I replied that I lived in Omaha, and that I was in Lincoln doing shorthand work. 'I've heard a great deal about this shorthand business,' he said, 'and I

am interested in it. Why, I understand that a business man can dictate his letters to the shorthand reporter and that he need then pay no further attention to the letters except to attach his signature to them.'"

"I informed the stranger that he had the right idea. 'A wonderful thing, indeed,' he continued, 'and I need just such a man.' That accidental interview led me into the service of the Burlington railroad at Burlington, Ia., for the man who discussed shorthand with me was George S. Harris, then land commissioner for the Burlington

route, and the father of a son, George B. Harris, who subsequently took high rank in railroad management. Not just then, but a little later, I went to Burlington, where I served Mr. Harris as secretary. I was greatly pleased with my position, yet we never looked upon Burlington as a permanent home. In fact, we had inclination all the while to eventually return to Omaha, but along came a business proposition from Rochester after a while, and as my wife had formerly lived there prior to taking up her residence in Omaha, she was in favor of the move. We made it, and still live in Rochester, where we have reared a family.

"I am deeply impressed with the magnitude of The Bee newspaper establishment. I knew the late Mr. Rosewater at the time he founded the paper, and I was more or less intimately acquainted with the early struggles incident to putting a paper on its feet in a town like Omaha was in those days. The work he accomplished and the lasting monument he left to attest his work, is truly wonderful."

Mr. Hall is 65 years old, but there is

scarcely a wrinkle on his ruddy face and his countenance fairly beams with the buoyancy that might be expected in a man of thirty. He spent a busy day looking up former acquaintances and in searching for landmarks, many of which have been razed to make space for the city's modern expansion. Over at the Nebraska Telephone building he met President Yost. He addressed him as "Caesar," and slapped him on the shoulder as a token of kindly remembrance of former days. Then the two veterans indulged in exchange of reminiscent gossip.

One of the things that greatly impressed Mr. Hall in looking about Omaha was the number of colleges where shorthand is taught. "A great thing these schools are," he said, "and the young folks of today are fortunate in having such training made easy for them. When I learned shorthand, I had to dig it out by main strength."

Mr. Hall expressed regret at leaving Omaha so soon. "I am getting along in years," he said, "and this may be my last visit here. Home ties always lead to Rochester at once, but I shall always remember most kindly the early years of my life which I spent in Omaha. Some of the best fellows it has ever been my pleasure to know lived here. I wish I could meet them all again—but many of my old-time comrades have passed away forever."

And a modern trolley car whisked John Hall away over asphalt streets to a modern railway depot where on a luxuriously appointed train of cars he sped away—how different from the mud-spattered hacks and the steamboats that carried him Omahawards away back in the sixties.

Thirty-Nine Busy Years

(Continued from Page One.)

of The Twentieth Century Farmer, for he it remarked impressive here and now, that The Twentieth Century Farmer, while a separate publication, is at the same a part of The Bee—a journal of high class, conceived by the late Edward Rosewater and published by The Bee company—an other instance of the fulfillment of Mr. Rosewater's mission.

The Bee local room is one of the most commodious in the United States with plenty of wholesome natural light. The office of the Sunday editor and the engraving department, and the art department is immediately associated with the Sunday room. The Bee's engraving plant, where half-tones and zinc etchings are made, is by odds the finest newspaper adjunct west of the Mississippi, with the possible exception of San Francisco. Here, within a remarkably short space of time, photographs and drawings are converted into cuts ready for publication.

The visitor now having covered the second and third floors of the annex, retraces his steps to the floor below, which is given over entirely to the advertising department of The Bee and The Twentieth Century Farmer. Here, clerks and stenographers are busily engaged on the subscription records to subscribers. One of the interesting sights of this department is to see the carrier boys take out their papers. More than 100 boys and men are required to distribute The Bee in Omaha and its environs. In no other corner of the immense bee building is there a scene more animated, nowhere a scene of more strenuous activity and industry.

In the basement below the first floor of the annex is the stereotyping department, where all of the stereotyping equipment except the compressed air moulding apparatus is located. For sake of speed in reaching the forms they are finished by the make-up men in the moulders area on the composing room floor. This part of the work done, the scene shifts to the basement where instead of lifting the molten metal into the casting box by hand in a big ladle with a long handle, as was formerly done, the metal is pumped in, one stroke of the pump handle or lever being all that is done the work. Much time is thus saved—and time is a great factor in newspaper making, especially at that stage of the game when the forms are in the hands of the stereotypers. The Bee is the only newspaper in Nebraska equipped with this modern stereotyping equipment—in fact, but few other newspapers outside of New York, Philadelphia, Chicago, St. Louis and Boston have made the innovation which relegates the old-time hand labor to the rear, and substitutes compressed air and the metal pump instead.

You may have often heard in song and story the figurative pumping of lead by western gun-fighters, just here in the stereotyping department of The Bee, you find lead pumping an actuality.

As the stereotypers in the basement of the annex finish a circular plate you will observe them look it upon what is technically known as a conveyor. Perhaps you, if you are not versed in mechanically nomenclature, would call the conveyor an "endless chain." This conveyor carries the plate away somewhere—just where, you do not comprehend at first glance. It seems to be merely going into a hole in the wall, but if so, it stays there, for the chain creeps back presently and the plate is not in sight. Here, for further understanding, it becomes necessary to escort the visitor through a subway and over into the Bee building proper. There the mystery of the disappearing plate is explained, for in this big basement is the press room where the mighty floor grind out editions at a rate of speed so marvelous that the visitor stands awe-stricken.

But to get back to that disappearing plate and the endless chain—the endless chain operates through a little subway of its own as fast as it carries a plate through the press room, it takes it and fits it to the press. Then comes another plate, and another, and so on, until at last the full complement is in. The pressmen touches a lever, there is a mystic whir like the buzzing of a thousand motors off in distance somewhere, a forward spurt of the great machine, and then away goes the army of newboys to the street.

Such part of the basement as is not used by the big presses and the machinery of The Bee's private heating and lighting system, is devoted to the storage of the huge rolls of white paper from which The Bee is printed. This paper comes in the shape of immense spools, and if all of the paper used by The Bee in a year were unwound, its length would be sufficient to stretch a wire of white carpet all the way from New York to Japan.

Leaving the press room, you have had a glimpse of every department of The Bee except one. That exception is the photograph gallery, which is on the top floor of the Bee building proper, where its chief photographer has his studio, equipped with all the latest cameras and appliances. In all this journey you have been presented with views of only the latest and most efficient of machinery. All the apparatus used for producing The Bee is of the most modern type and of the highest order. Its telegraph wires and telephone wires keep it connected at all times with the world outside, while perfect intercommunication between the several departments is maintained by telephones. The plant is lighted by electricity, the machinery is all driven by electricity, everything that has a wheel to turn being equipped with its own individual motor, and the whole making one of the most complete installations of any modern newspaper.

Some Interesting Instances Where Cupid Has Played Tricks in Unique Way

Wedding Tour Atout.

GEORGE E. KUFER, the Baltimore printer who met, wooed and wedded Miss Gertrude McCloskey in exactly sixty minutes, drifted into Washington, accompanied by his bride, the other day, and are making a 15,000-mile walking tour through the country and are now on the last lap of the "jaunt." About 13,543 miles of the journey already have been completed. The last mile will be covered long before October 23, when the time limit expires. Kuffer will then win the wager of \$4,000 made by Baltimore friends, and besides will receive a bonus of \$500 because of his marriage.

The couple came from Pittsburg, and the next stop will be in Atlanta, relates the Washington Post. Despite the rainy weather and the long tramp from Laurel, they did not appear fatigued or footsore. The romance connected with the wager is rather an unusual one. More than a year ago Kuffer made a wager with friends in Baltimore that he could tramp 15,000 miles by October 23, 1910. He was told that if he could find a girl on his line of march whom he could love, and who would marry him, an additional \$500 would be given him.

It was in Woodville, O., a year ago that Kuffer met and wed the now Mrs. Kuffer, who is accompanying him on his tramp. She was Miss Helen Gertrude McCloskey.

"I had seen George's pictures in the papers and had read long accounts of his tramp before he reached Woodville," Mrs. Kuffer said. "One afternoon, a year ago, my brother came strolling up to our home, bringing with him a stranger. He introduced the stranger as the globe trotter, Mr. Kuffer. At that moment my mother called us to dinner. We always have dinner at 7:30 o'clock. 'I'm pleased to meet you,' is all that George said to me when we were introduced. I liked the expression on his face, and the levellight in his eyes made my head turn dizzy. During the dinner hour he said but little to me, and my responses were brief, indeed.

"How would you like to complete the journey with me," he asked, as he prepared to make a hurried departure from the dinner table. 'Fine,' was the reply. He soon disappeared, and I wondered where he had gone. At 8:15 o'clock I saw him come into the hall with a minister and a small paper in his hand. 'I'm ready,' he said to me. 'Ready for what?' I excitedly asked. 'To make you my partner, not only on the jaunt, but for the rest of my life,' was his reply. Before I knew exactly what

had taken place, I heard the minister say: 'I pronounce you man and wife,' and George took me in his arms. I knew then that it was too late to draw back, and I was glad of it."

Gypsy Weddings in Poland.

Once the famous Russian painter, Verestchagin, used to travel about Russia looking for subjects and models for his pictures. One day he came upon a gypsy encampment, relates the World Magazine. Among the women was a young girl of great beauty, with whom he fell in love. She was barely 16, and her parents were very poor. They asked very little for her and the painter married her. The young couple left the camp at once and in course of time went to St. Petersburg. Prince Chertkoff used to go to the painter's studio to play, and he, too, fell in love with the beautiful Olga, who was now mother of a small daughter. The officer, who knew the story of his friend's marriage, asked him if he were not tired of her. At first the painter laughed at the question; then he said: "No," and finally, when it was repeated many times, he revealed it in silence. One winter's evening Chertkoff came in, and as usual suggested a game of cards. "I would play with pleasure," the artist said, "but I've no money."

Chertkoff laughed. "Well, then," he retorted, "let us play for love—the stakes to be Olga." They both laughed and sat down to play. The game got interesting, then absorbing. At dawn they ate a hasty meal and sat down again. The artist always lost. They agreed to stop at once, because Chertkoff had business, and Olga watched them, perhaps not ill pleased to think that she might exchange the studio for a more exciting life, for the officer was energetic and, people said, likely to make a career. By noon the artist was still loser. Chertkoff rose and looked at Olga.

"It is for you to choose," he said. She got up and went for her cloak. Then she spoke to the artist.

"You are tired of me," she said, "I go with him only on condition that he marries me today. And I take the child into my new life as well."

Chertkoff went to a priest and told his story. "We do not recognize gypsy marriages," was the decision. "She can be your wife at once if you wish."

And so Olga became Princess Chertkoff. She was a clever woman as well as a handsome one, and in a few months this gypsy became fashionable in circles where many are refused an entrance. A few years later

her husband, rising from one post to another, became governor of the province of Vins, then of the Caucasus, and, finally, viceroy of Poland. People say she was cruel and revengeful, and that she urged her husband to many cruel acts, until at last he died, a very old man, hated, but feared. The princess returned to Russia, a handsome old woman with a queenly air and cruel eyes.

Stunts of the Bonsettters.

Down at Kirksville, Mo., one of the students of the Osteopathy school got married a while back. It was a most audacious thing to do and it fairly took the "bonsettters" by surprise. They rallied, however, and that student and his bride were the center of proceedings for one whole day. From somewhere a sun-bonnet and a Mother Hubbard were produced for the bridegroom and an equally grotesque costume for his bride. All the students took a day off and pulled the carriage up and down the streets and across the college campus. Lectures, demonstrations, likewise clinics, could go on. They were not given a chance like this every day in the college year and they were determined to make the most of it.

The old stunts of pasting alleged facetious labels on the trunks of the newly

weds are too mild to meet with modern approval. It is much better to kidnap the bride or bridegroom and hold them captive for a day or two. Or to cut the bridegroom's hair with a pair of horse clippers as a sort of a farewell touch to the festivities. It is still the galsome custom in the rural regions of the middle west to charivari the husband and wife on the evening after their marriage.

"Shivaree" is the free and easy way they pronounce this ear-splitting custom that was borrowed from the French. All the cow bells, hunting horns, shotguns, circular saws, anvils and other noisemakers that can be found are brought into action.

The Evening Call.

People in the country still have the old-fashioned habits of going to bed early and all is still over the farms when the night is split and shaken by a terrific discharge of musketry.

Then the cowbells and the horns chime in to the infernal melody and everybody in the neighborhood wakes up and gets out of bed to listen to the fun. The fiendish clang of a big circular saw carried on a trowler and beaten with a blooming hammer rises triumphant over the booming of muzzle-loading shotguns, the roar of army muskets, the clamor of cow-

SCENES AT OMAHA HIGH SCHOOL COMPETITIVE DRILL



PART OF THE GALLERY

LEFT TO RIGHT - 1ST PLACE NORMAN POTTER, CORP. CO. I
- 2ND PLACE PAUL BRADLEY, Q.M. SERGT. - CO. F
3RD PLACE EMIL PILRODT, 1ST SERGT. - CO. F

COMPETITION is the culminating point of the activity of the High School Cadet regiment. Camp is a great event, but the real test of the year's work is the competitive drill, which is held at the end of camp. Here shows up the work that has been done by each member of the organization during the year, and the proficiency attained in drill tactics and maneuvers is set down in cold figures and points, and the result settles the standing of the men beyond argument. Battalion, company and individual contests are had, and at the end the best battalion, the best company and the best individual is known to a certainty.

This year's competitive drill was held on the parade ground at Fort Omaha, a very highly complimented by the regulars for the excellent work they accomplished.

Cost of Making Gas

An English engineer who is visiting St. Louis states that the City of Aix la Chapelle and the Krupp iron works in Germany produce the coal gas they use without cost, the other products from the coal consumed more than covering the expense of the operation. He also says that Sheffield, England, furnishes gas for 23 cents per 1,000 cubic feet, though coal costs more in England than in the United States. According to this account, gas in St. Louis can be placed in the holder for 15 cents a thousand cubic feet, and distributed at a cost of 18 cents. A leading gas company in London is restricted by parliament to a profit of 8 per cent, and required to give consumers the benefit of economies. This visitor maintains that artificial gas could be furnished in St. Louis for less than the cost of natural gas. American engineers do not seem to agree with him on this point, and our cities reach out long distances with pipe lines to get a cheap natural supply. But if it falls in time, manufactured gas should be ready to take its place.

Every American who visits England knows that the price of coal gas is much lower in British cities than in the United States, though the supply of British coal is small in comparison. Congress, which controls the public affairs in the District of Columbia, has under consideration a measure that will limit the cost of gas in Washington to 30 cents a thousand cubic feet. This reduced price would be more than three times that established in Sheffield. Washington is within easy reach of the coal mines of West Virginia and Maryland, yet is paying more than four times the Sheffield price of gas. A situation of this nature helps to explain why a growing discontent prevails among consumers.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat