



THE COURIER



VOL. XVII, NO. IV

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, SATURDAY, JANUARY 25, 1902

ESTABLISHED IN 1886

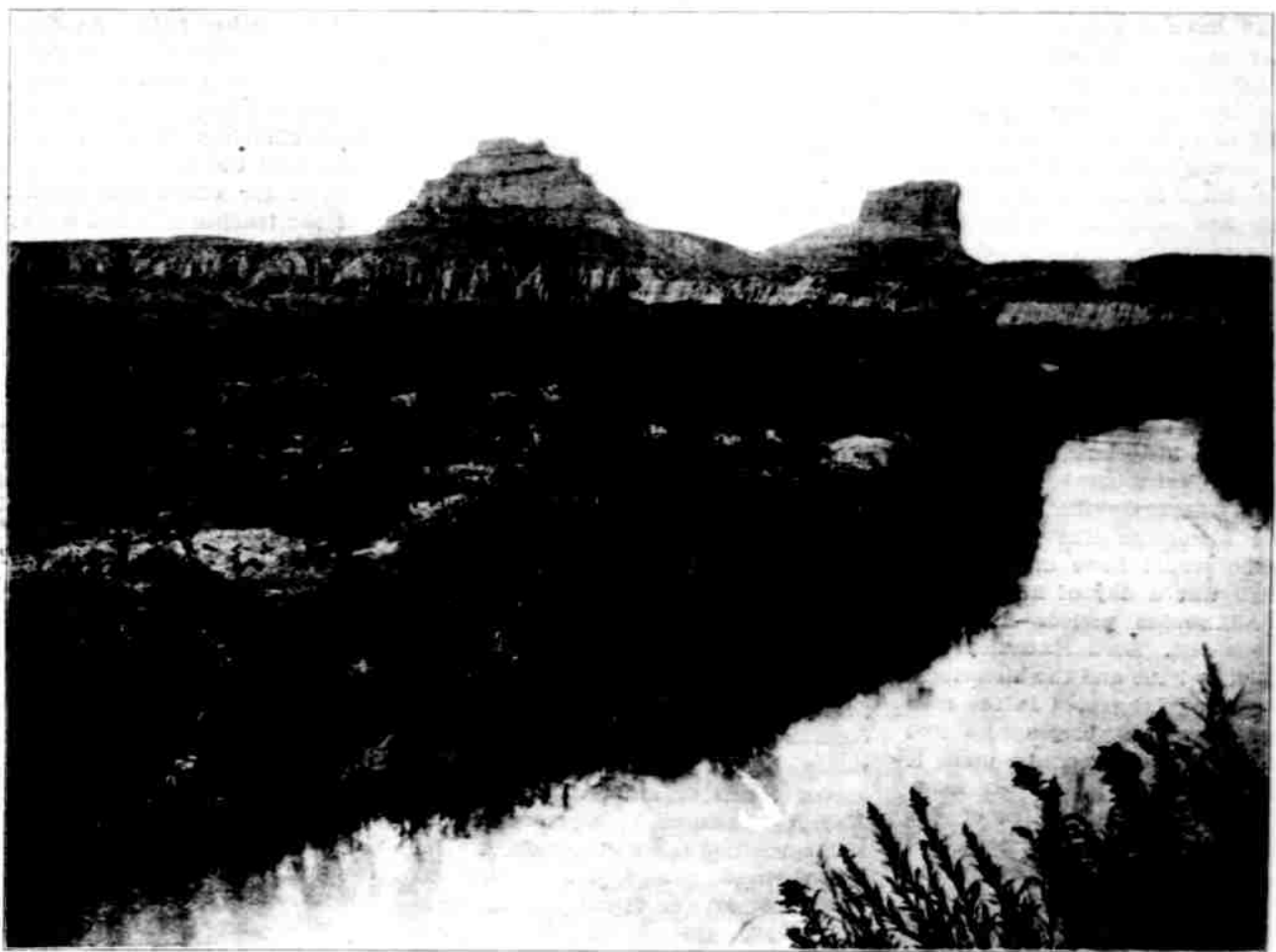
POSSIBILITIES OF IRRIGATION

**It Has Already Brought Prosperity to Western Nebraska
And With National Aid
The State Could Provide New Homes for Millions**

Irrigation in Nebraska is no longer an experiment. Already over one million and a half acres in the state, once considered hopelessly sterile and worthless, have been reclaimed and made fertile through application of water from running streams near by. It is estimated that as many more acres may be made productive by further use of this water in quantities that annually goes to waste.

One million and a half acres! An area as great as the combined extent of Rhode Island and Delaware! And the soil of Nebraska is known to be far richer and deeper than the soil of any of the Atlantic coast states. Considering that farms in the irrigated districts average 120 acres each, and that each farm supports a family of five members, homes have been provided for 70,000 people in Nebraska by the diverting of water to a useful purpose that would otherwise go to waste.

The Platte, Republican and Blue rivers are the chief boon of irrigators. On either side of the Platte in western Nebraska intricate networks of canals and ditches carry water to thousands of thirsty acres. Where the stream enters the state, Scott's Bluff county, there are 339 miles of ditches carrying life to 240,000 acres of semi-arid land that without water artificially supplied would be valuable for grazing purposes only. Cheyenne county, bordering Scott's Bluff on the east, has 248 miles of ditches feeding 96,500 acres; Deuel county, bordering Cheyenne on



Irrigation Canal in Cheyenne County, Nebraska. Court House Rock and Jail Rock, Two Famous Specimens of Nebraska Scenery, in the distance.



Irrigation Canal in Dawson County, Nebraska.

the east has 285 miles, giving life to 195,700 acres. Lincoln county, which is also divided by the Platte, has 285 miles of ditches watering 201,500 acres.

In some localities pumps have been used for securing subterranean water, while in others artesian wells have been bored, yielding a continuous flow of small proportions. These sources have been inadequate for feeding large tracts of land, however, and have been utilized chiefly by gardeners, and others who cultivate only on a small scale. The chief resource has been the diversion of water from running streams.

The supply has been by no means exhausted. Secretary Adna Dobson of the state board of irrigation estimates that it is possible to irrigate another million and a half acres in Nebraska by utilizing the water that is annually permitted to flow unhindered through the streams of the state. All this is without the use of storage reservoirs. All that has been done along this line in Nebraska has been without the aid of either state or nation. It has been accomplished through the investment of private capital, for the most part in comparatively insignificant sums. With national aid, and the establishment of storage reservoirs, no one can foresee the limit to the possibilities.

Some idea of the value of irrigation (Continued on page 9.)