

# THE COURIER

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## LINCOLN AS A RESIDENCE CITY

Something About the Marvelous Expansion of the City's Home District and the Reasons That Exist for Believing It Is Not Yet Ended

Over three hundred houses were built in Lincoln last summer. These ranged in price from \$600 to \$10,000. The majority of them cost from \$2,500 to \$4,000.

The wise men of the town foregathered and agreed that the city was growing too fast, that these three hundred houses meant just that many renters moving into property of their own and thus throwing upon the market that number of houses for rent. Their prophecies were unfulfilled. The vacated houses were promptly rented if they were in half-way decent shape. The summer waned and every house in the city that was fitted for tenancy was occupied. Then the wise-ones predicted that with the usual fall hegira into steamheated flats a vast array of "For Rent" signs would greet the wandering gaze. But it was not so. The usual hegira did not come off. When the cold-blooded folks turned their eyes flatward they found their chosen apartments occupied, in most instances.

A Courier representative talked dur-

would be erected this summer than last.

Real estate men, who keep even closer to the swell of the house-building impulse, say that there can be no doubt but that this season will witness greater building activity than at any previous period in the city's history. This is a pretty strong statement in view of the tremendous building boom that struck the city in the latter part of the eighties. It is possible—there are no records save those in the memory of men—that in one or two of those years a greater number of houses were built, but it is very safe to say that the aggregate sum invested last year exceeded any other similar period.

The high price of lumber, plumbing material and furnishings and fittings is in part responsible for this, but the real reason is that the greatly increased prosperity of the people leads to greater expenditure. To own a home is the desire and hope of every sane man and woman happily wedded. To have and possess some place that

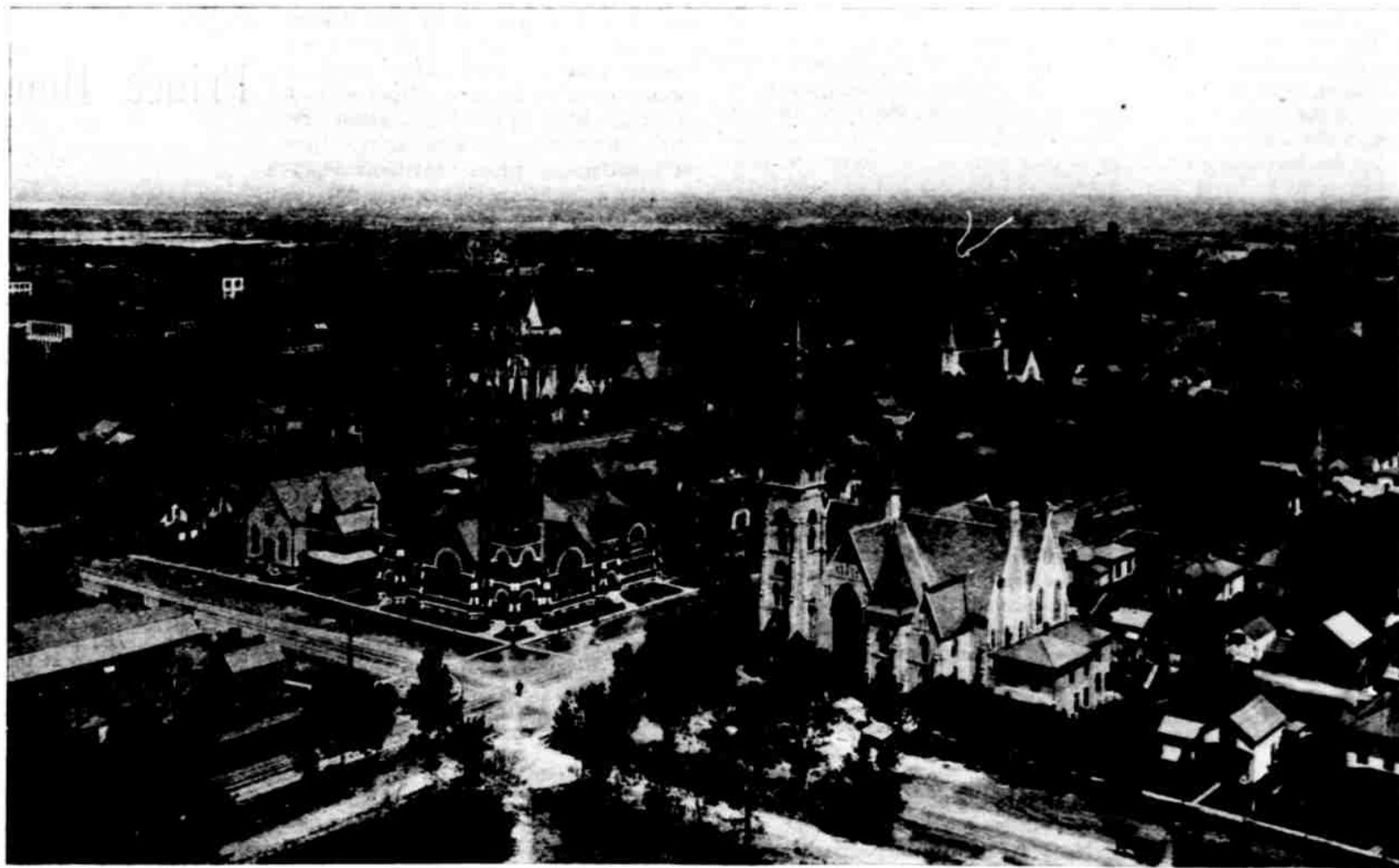
rush up a row of houses that, when finished, looked as though they had been cut by a circular saw from a twenty-five cent pattern is over. In the boom days almost any kind of a house could be rented. The cottage was then in most favor because it represented the ambition of most persons. Perhaps, too, there was still a trace of that old-time fear that in the cyclone belt a tow-story house was an invitation to destroy.

The renter of today is just as exacting as the house-owner. He insists upon having gas and electric light, furnace, bath and all the other appurtenances of latter-day luxurious living. He is willing to pay for them, and pay liberally. The demand for good houses and up-to-date flats has not yet overtaken the supply. Practically every new house last summer had from three to six applicants, and this fact caused a considerable stiffening in the price of rents. Some contend that rents are too high and that the inevitable tendency will be to drop,

if this continues, as it is likely to do, the tendency will be toward higher rents.

It is true that there are empty houses to be found here and there. This is inevitable in a shifting population. If the number is in excess of the usual it is due to one of two causes, either the house is old and out of date or the rental is higher than is justified. On one prominent corner in the good residence part of the city a large ten-room house has stood vacant for months. It is close to business, with good surroundings and is not a bad-looking place. It is unoccupied because the owner will not modernize it, put in sanitary closets, water, bath, gas or electric lights. Yet he wants \$35 a month for it. Other similar instances could doubtless be pointed out by rental agencies.

The trend of house building in the past five years has been towards the southeast and east. The salt basin and railroad tracks on the west and north long ago barred those sections from popularity. The southwestern



BIRD'S EYE VIEW OF THE CITY OF LINCOLN, LOOKING NORTHWEST FROM CAPITOL BUILDING.

ing the past few days with six builders. With one exception each of the half dozen had all the houses he could possibly build during the summer under contract. The other had not yet secured enough to keep him busy, but he joined with his fellow-contractors in the prediction that even more houses

they may call their own is a natural and proper instinct. The easier times are, the more prosperous the individual is, the better will be the house he will build.

The same thing is true about the building of flats and houses for rental purposes. The day when a man could

This, however, is not likely to occur until the supply of eligible apartments or houses overgrows the demand. If three or four hundred more houses are added this summer to Lincoln it is possible that rents may be forced down. There is a constant influx of persons able to pay good rentals and

section of the city presents some very slightly locations, but the bar sinister of railroad connections has made it unavailable or undesirable to those who desire surcease from the consumptive locomotive and the whirring wheels.

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