

Omaha—This is one of the most progressive cities in the West. It is the county seat of Douglas county, situated on the western bank of the Missouri River, on a slope about 50 feet above high-water mark, with an altitude of 966 feet above sea level. The first "claim cabin" was built here in 1854, and the place named *Omaha*, after the Omaha Indians.

It is related that the first postmaster of Omaha used his hat for a postoffice, and many times, when the postmaster was on the prairie, some expectant, anxious individual, would chase him for miles until he overtook the traveling postoffice and received his letter. "Large oaks from little acorns grow," says the old rhyme 'tis illustrated in this case. The battered-hat postoffice has given place to a first-class postoffice, commensurate with the future growth of the city, which now claims a population of 24,000.

In 1875, the Government completed a large court-house and postoffice building, using a very fine quality of Cincinnati free-stone. It is 122 feet in length by 66 feet in width—four stories high—cost \$30,000, and is one of the most attractive buildings in the city.

The State capital was first located here, but was removed to Lincoln in 1868. Omaha though the first settlement made in Nebraska, is a young city. The town improved steadily until 1859, when it commenced to gain very rapidly. The inaugurating of the Union Pacific railroad gave it another onward impetus, and since then the growth of the city has been very rapid. There are many evidences of continued prosperity and future greatness, one of which, is the fact that there are *no* dwelling houses in the city "To Let;" besides the organization of a Board of Trade, with 128 members; smelting and refining works, employing 140 men, and reducing ores to the value of \$5,000,000, annually; and three banks, with a banking capital of \$820,000. In 1877, there were 2,974 depositors, with average deposits of \$2,587,021.20. These banks' "exchange" for the year, amounted to \$38,181,671.38, and their "currency shipments" to \$8,548,303.00.

The receipts of wheat, corn, rye, barley, oats and flax, at Omaha, for 1877, amounted to 1,756,865 bushels; of flour 16,900 barrels. The shipments for the same time were: flour, 5,720 barrels; of the grains named above, 1,795,745.

Omaha has three daily newspapers—

the *Herald*, the *Republican* and the *Bee*; two weeklies, the *Journal of Commerce* and the *Commercial Exchange*; one tri-weekly, the *Omaha Post*, and one montaly, the *High School*.

It has 17 hotels,—“hotels till you can't rest,”—chief of which are the Grand Central and the Metropolitan. Of Churches, there are 19. Schools, both public and private, are numerous, and if the Omaha people feel proud of one thing more than another, it is of their schools. The city has \$430,975 invested in *free* school property, employs 44 teachers, and is educating about 3,000 pupils.

The High School is the finest building of its kind in the Western country, and stands on Capitol Hill, on the site of the old State House, the highest point in the city, and is the first object which attracts the attention of the traveler approaching from the East, North or South. Its elevation and commanding position stand forth as a fitting monument to attest a people's intelligence and worth. See ANNEX No. 6.

To the north of the High School building, is the Creighton College, just completed at a cost of \$5,000, with a further endowment of \$100,000, the gift of Mrs. Edward Creighton. The building is 54 by 126 feet—three stories and a basement—capable of accommodating 480 pupils. It will be a *free* school, and conducted by the Jesuit Fathers.

The annual report of the Board of Trade gives the amount expended for buildings and improvements, in Omaha, for 1877, as \$750,000.—“Figures talk.”—The same authority says: “In addition to the receipts of base metal and ore, amounting to 3249 car-loads as freight, there were received \$34,385,516 in gold bullion and coin, and \$15,936,843 in silver bullion and coin by the Union Pacific Express Company. In other words, Omaha handled over \$60,000,000 out of a total production of \$98,000,000.

The Willow Springs Distillery, near the city, used, in 1877, 196,550 bushels of grain, made 624,000 gallons of spirits, paid to the Government, for tax, \$532,856.10, fattened 1,500 head of cattle, and 2,000 hogs.

The Union Elevator is another new establishment. It cost \$15,000, and handles grain by gravity. It is built on the side of a hill, so that cars are unloaded into the *top* of the building. Ten cars can be unloaded into the bins on the upper track, and at the same time ten can be loaded from the spout on the lower side. The