

REMINISCENCES OF FRANK NEDELA SR ., CRETE, NEBRASKA.

In 1869 my father came to Nebraska with my brother-in-law, Thomas Aron, and settled in Saline County on claims. They wrote us, telling us to come too. I married Miss Marie Papik and the day after the wedding, April 1, 1869, started for Nebraska. Any one can imagine our wedding trip when one considers what Nebraska was like in those days. We had to go by wagon from Nebraska City, those who had no conveyance had to go foot. Before my father came to Nebraska, he sent me to this state to locate on a claim, and I did take one up in Johnson County and then returned to Chicago. When I arrived in Nebraska a second time I made inquiries if I could take up a claim again, having done so once before, and was told to go ahead, that no one would know. I did so, but was sorry for it. I prepared a dug out, where we spent our honey moon. I plowed some and prepared for the next year, but before the year was up it became known that I was not entitled to a homestead and I was afraid I would lose it. I went to Lincoln, where my sister worked in the family of governor Butler, and sought his advice. He sent me to an attorney, Mr. ^{Robinson} Robinson, then considered the best in Lincoln, and in accordance with his advice I gave up the homestead and got a pre-emption and agreed to pay for it within a year. It was very ^{sad,} sad, to have no money and agree to pay \$200 within a year and not know where to get it. I thought it over and decided to do the work I fairly hated, that is: shoemaking, but there was no help. I worked ^{me} on-winter in Lincoln and earned a nice sum. There was no railroad then, so I used to walk. Music is my passion, I had served in a military band in the old country, during the war between Prussia and Austria, so pretty soon I gathered a number of fellow-musicians into a band. There were five of us, my father John Nedela, my brother-in-law Thomas Aron, Josef Chyba, John Svoboda and I. Of these only I am living. We used to

play in the capitol and our music was well liked. We got very good pay, eight dollars per man and the one who ^{owned} ~~owed~~ the team got eight dollars for his playing and eight dollars for transporting us. Our band was the first that played in Lincoln, for there was no other in these parts. Now it would not be so easy, in those days people were more easily satisfied, while now everyone must have the best. In the fall of 1870 Crete was established and I plied my trade here. In the spring of 1871 the railroad was built and I made good money with my cobbling. I had two workmen and we had all we could do. In those days boots and shoes were made to order, a pair of boots cost from eleven to seventeen dollars, and there was good profit in it. Thus I worked for two years and a half, while my wife worked on the farm. I went home Saturday evening and stayed over Sunday. Then I lived on the farm two years and then opened a saloon in Crete. In the spring of 1875 I rented a place and a year and a half later built my own building. In 1880 I sold it and built a larger one, where I kept a saloon for fifteen years. Then I started something about which I had no knowledge whatever, a drug store, and to this day I wonder how it happened that I made a success of it, for I had to hire help to run the place. Later my son studied ^{to be a} ~~pharm~~ druggist and then he took care of the store. I own three farms, a store in town and a nice home, and am well situated in every way, for my family life has been a happy one too.