

Chase

# Our Nebraska Farms.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT

LINCOLN, SEPTEMBER 11TH, 1879,

DURING THE

# NEBRASKA STATE FAIR

Upon invitation of the State Board of Agriculture. by

COL. CHAMPION S. CHASE,

MAYOR OF OMAHA.

OFFICERS 1879.

MARTIN DUNHAM, PRESIDENT, Omaha.	R. W. FURNAS, 2D VICE PRES., Brownville.
C. MATHEWSON, 1ST VICE PRES., Norfolk.	CHRIS. HARTMAN, TREASURER, Omaha.
D. H. WHEELER, SECRETARY, Plattsmouth.	

BOARD OF MANAGERS.

A. G. HASTINGS, CHAIRMAN, Lincoln.	J. F. KINNEY, Nebraska City.
EDMUND MCINTYRE, Seward.	GEO. W. E. DORSEY, Fremont.
J. W. JOHNSON, Plattsmouth.	

*Published by order of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture.*

13 -  
2

OMAHA, NEB.:  
REPUBLICAN BOOK AND JOB PRINTING HOUSE,  
1879.

WITH COMPLIMENTS OF  
DANIEL H. WHEELER,  
Plattsmouth, Neb.

## AGRICULTURAL ADDRESS,

DELIVERED BY COLONEL CHAMPION S. CHASE, AT THE NEBRASKA STATE FAIR,  
IN LINCOLN, SEPTEMBER 11, 1879.

FARMERS, AND FARMERS' FRIENDS:—

The clock which notes the decades of time has twice struck since the organization of the Nebraska State Board of Agriculture. It is fitting, after twenty years, that we spend a few moments in taking a retrospective view of its course, and what it has done for our agricultural interests. The Board was organized under the provisions of an act of the Territory of Nebraska, passed October 14, 1858. The charter members were John M. Thayer, T. Gibson, E. Estabrook, C. Brobst, J. Hoover, M. S. Reeves, Brad Cole, Harlan Baird, H. Johnson, A. D. Jones, R. W. Furnas, J. Cole, S. A. Chambers, J. C. Lincoln, J. T. Griffin, and E. H. Chapin. The first meeting was held at the Herndon House, in Omaha, October 30, 1858. At this meeting R. W. Furnas was elected President; A. D. Jones, Secretary; and J. M. Thayer, Treasurer.

The first State Fair was held at Nebraska City, in September, 1859. In the list of those who took premiums at that Fair, will be found the names of not a few who have constantly been leading exhibitors, up to this time, and are here to-day, still competing for prizes and taking a deep interest in the work of the Board. The original Board of sixteen are still living, a fact worthy of note as indicative of the salubrity of our climate.

Among the discretionary premiums given at that Fair were three to Peleg Redfield, of Nebraska City, for "Apple pie melons, California citrons, and *Ne Plus Ultra* cucumbers." James Anderson, of the same place, was awarded a premium for "butter made from

apple-pie melons;" the Committee remarking "that it bore some resemblance to peach butter, and was of delicious flavor.

The premium for "the best cultivated farm of forty acres," was taken by Judge H. C. Wolphe, of Cass County. Among those who took first premiums were Geo. T. West, R. W. Furnas, J. H. Masters, J. B. Bennett, J. L. Gibbs, W. W. Hickey, and J. Sterling Morton.

At the end of the report of the Fair to the next Legislature,—which report was signed by S. W. Black, Chairman; R. W. Furnas, President; and H. H. Harding, Secretary, *pro tem.*—this Committee remark: "In closing their report your Committee beg leave to say that this first Territorial Fair of Nebraska, though not a complete success, is far from a failure. Taking all things into consideration, it is a marvel that we have done half so well. The Territory is but little more than five years old. During the first half of her existence she was exposed to the prevailing epidemic of wild speculation; and for the last two years she has suffered under the prostration consequent upon a long run of financial dissipation and folly. But instead of yielding to the almost fatal effects of low times after high times, the people of Nebraska betook themselves to their fields, and forsaking all the delusive schemes for speedy fortunes by speculation, followed their never-failing friend, the plow, to prosperity and independence. This Territorial Fair is a part of the first fruit. Energy, perseverance, and the awaiting courage which never sinks, are beginning to reap their great reward. In every element of prosperity, the present exceeds our utmost anticipations. The future is filled with encouragement and promise."

The address at that Fair was delivered by Hon. J. Sterling Morton, whom you all know, a practical Nebraska farmer, who still lives on his farm in Otoe County, where he pitched his tent in this Territory in 1854, the first year of its settlement. A single paragraph from his excellent address I must take the liberty of reproducing here. Alluding to the peculiar times referred to by the Committee, an extract from whose report I have just given, he says:

"We were then a very gay people; we carried a great number of very fine gold watches and ponderous fob chains; sported more fancy turn-outs in the way of elegant carriages and buggies; could point

to more lucky and shrewd fellow citizens who had made a hundred thousand dollars in a very short time; could afford to drink more champagne and talk and feel larger, more of consequence and by all odds richer than any yearling settlement that ever flourished in this vast and fast growing country of ours. In my opinion, we felt richer, better, more millionairish, than any poor, deluded mortals ever did before on the same amount of moonshine and pluck."

At that time there were but six counties which had organized agricultural societies—Nemaha, Otoe, Cass, Douglas, Washington, and Dakota. From 1859, the time of the first State Fair, no more State Fairs were held until 1868. Ten years ago, the officers elected were R. W. Furnas, President; Alvin Saunders, Vice-President; J. Sterling Morton, Vice-President; D. H. Wheeler, Secretary; L. A. Walker, Treasurer. Col. Furnas has been a member of the Board from the beginning, and Maj. Wheeler has continuously been its Secretary for the past ten years. The Board has had but four Presidents, viz: R. W. Furnas, J. Sterling Morton, Moses Stocking, and Martin Dunham. It has had but three Secretaries, viz: A. D. Jones, C. H. Walker, and D. H. Wheeler.

It is not too much to say that the State owes to this Board,—the State Board of Agriculture,—much of its present popularity. Rivalry, honest rivalry, is one of the best promoters of prosperity. In no calling is this proposition made more manifest than in farming. The farmer's work shows for itself. He cannot deceive the observer as to its merits. A poorly cultivated farm will expose its owner. There is no help for it. The passer-by needs no one to inform him as to the tendency to industry or the indulgence in idleness, of the occupant. The home of the intelligent, industrious farmer, in its best estate, presents to the eye a picture, than which nothing can be more charming and attractive, for nothing besides, in one group, includes such a grand variety of those objects which most delight the senses. His broad acres, his well-defined fields, his variety of crops, his thrifty trees, his flowing streamlets, his fattening cattle, his blooded horses, fine-wooled sheep, and even his greedy hogs, all gladden the eye of any man who has a soul that can be attuned to sentiments of good taste. And then the more immediate surroundings of that farmer's house, whose family vies with him and seeks to make his dwelling the centre of attraction to

him—a place, where above all others, he should love to spend his leisure, his evening hours—present a model of rural home loveliness.

#### FARM ANIMALS.

The usefulness of agricultural societies, State, District and County, cannot be too highly appreciated. While there are now and then mistakes made, and sometimes very unfortunate ones, in the distribution of premiums and awards, and consequent ill-feeling created, on the whole they have been and are, of immense benefit to our farming population. No one can truthfully deny that the stock interests of this State have been greatly promoted by Fairs. Rivalry in the products of the soil, is not so alluring and exciting as that which arises from the exhibition of live stock.

The display here to-day, so creditable in every department, and especially so in the department of blooded stock, demonstrates this assertion. This is as it should be. It not only causes improvement in the stock, and thus enhances its value, to create and maintain this rivalry, but it as well improves our men—for it cannot be successfully denied that a love for and acquaintance with fine stock tends to improve the character of the man who deals in it. He who can, at a glance, discover the best points in the make-up of a fine stock animal, must be a man educated in that line. The man who can understand and fully appreciate the capabilities of fine horses, and the better species of neat stock, or even of sheep and swine, has a nature that is wont to acknowledge all the finer sensibilities of man and mankind. That man who looks upon what are so-called—but how falsely—dumb animals, as mere flesh and bones, without mental organization, and so treats them as if they were insensible to any influence except brute force, is not so far above the lower orders of animal creation as he claims to be.

He who does not appreciate the fidelity of the dog, the sagacity of the horse, or even the capabilities of the learned pig, is not the most useful member of society himself. On the other hand, the great ado some men make about ill-treatment of dumb animals is too often mistaken for tender-heartedness. No man who hates the human race and loses no opportunity to wound the feelings of his

fellow beings—to say those harsh things that tend to sting like a serpent and bite like an adder—should be taken as philanthropic, benevolent and kind-hearted, merely because he professes to regard the physical sensations of a brute.

If constant effort toward the elevation of the human race is one of the duties which we owe to our kind, as thinking, intellectual beings,—and no one, I think, will attempt to gainsay this proposition,—it cannot be less our duty to omit no opportunity to improve the animal race, so dependent upon us and so necessary to our support, not only in physical qualities, but as well in all those points which tend to render it helpful to us. Even farmers' children know full well in how many ways they can cultivate the better,—the brain element of the stock yard,—from the horse, so fond of being petted and groomed and taught, down to the pig, whose sleepy silence gives grateful assent to the favor which is shown by the child who merely carries its back with a cob.

#### NATURE AS AN EDUCATOR.

It is not alone in giving due consideration to the cultivation of animal mentality that the farmer may improve and perfect his own better nature. A great variety of the forms of life are ever before him, and every one of these, as they appear in turn throughout the animal and vegetable kingdom—furnishes food for thought to him who loves to

“Look up through Nature to Nature's God,”

and contemplate the wonders that everywhere prevail throughout that vast field where both animate and inanimate creation reign supreme. He must be indeed sordid and insensible to those sentiments which tend to elevate and improve the mind,—those thoughts which inspire man with loftier emotions and higher conceptions of life, who can be constantly surrounded with those varied forms of beauty which present themselves on the well-tilled farm, and not be touched into admiration, if not reverence for the Author of them all.

The tiller of the soil is constantly surrounded with the means of improvement. He has but to invoke Nature, and tender her his aid and handiwork, and she at once responds and clothes herself in

all the additional loveliness which Art can conceive. Not one of the various employments to which man turns his attention, bears any comparison to Agriculture and its natural allies and surroundings in the opportunities which it affords for mental and moral improvement. The whole world of the Mechanic Arts, while more especially illustrating the ingenuity and skill which may be evolved by man's mental organism, only calls forth admiration to a limited extent, an admiration which becomes boundless when contemplating the beautiful and wonderful in Nature.

The farmer, then, should be the noblest and best of men. All his surroundings are such as to promote contemplations of the loftiest and purest character. It is most fortunate that this is so, for nearly one-half of all who are engaged in the so-called industrial pursuits are farm laborers. Estimating the number of working men in the United States at fifteen millions, we have some seven millions of people who depend upon farms and farm labor for their support: From the necessities of those conditions with which mankind is surrounded, this must ever continue to be the case. There is, then, no power in the land which can compare with that wielded by our agriculturists. They are potent in every department of the Government, both State and National. If they do not, they may if they will, control the destiny of the country. They are the important and conservative element in all that goes to make our nation great and powerful, both in peace and war, and they have given to this land some of its wisest statesmen, its bravest generals and its truest patriots.

#### THE GRAND ARMY.

The march of the grand army of enterprising men and women, who seek easily made and beautiful homes in the Far West, still continues. The problem of the hour with these new comers is simply—where shall we find the most salubrious climate, the best land, all things considered, and ready, advantageous market facilities? It is no longer a question as to whether this is the garden of the Union for farming purposes. Every one admits that that it is all this,—that, in fact, it has no rival in the world as a produce raising country. The "Frontier," that line so well defined but a few years ago, no longer exists. When the great railway which traverses the

country from the Missouri to the Pacific, was finished, then, and not till then, the frontiersman lost his last chance to live on the border and beyond the confines of civilization. Since then

"No pent-up Utica contracts our powers,  
The whole boundless Continent is ours."

The foreign emigrant of to-day has but to take the cars at such port on the sea-coast as he may sail to from his native land, and ride in state, as it were, to his future home in the luxuriant West. The "prairie schooner," too, is a thing of the past. Its burly teamster, with his loud, cracking whip, has disappeared with the frontiersman. In his day, time was reckoned by the year, or at the shortest, by the month; now it is only calculated by the day, or it may be by the hour. The steam engine, for traveling purposes, has captured the highway, and easily outstrips the horse, noble and fleet as he is. The slow sailing vessel of fifty years ago which landed the adventurous emigrant at New York in three months from Germany, is superseded by the steamer, which often makes the trip in eight days.

The tedious expedition which lay before the adventurer who in olden times was about to leave his friends in the Old World for a home in the New World, has now, by the aid of steam and its associate discoveries, become but an excursion of pleasure—a transportation simply from the old home of non-remunerative toil to a new one, of rapid development and most promising surroundings. The score of years which it required the early settlers in the Eastern and even the Middle States, to clear a farm, are here abolished, and the farm, Minerva-like, springs into existence, fully developed, and offers itself to the newcomer, with all its fields ready made for his grazing herds, and his clean furrowing plow, without tree or stone to delay his search for the treasures that so surely lie hidden in the inexhaustible soil of these Missouri table lands, and but just beneath the grassy surface of velvet green which adorns the land. Such treasures as these are sure to win and woo the keen-scented man of enterprise who is seeking for fortune's garden, where he may dwell with comparative ease, and yet become wealthy by the aid of Nature, the ever-willing co-worker with Labor, with Science and with Art, in promoting the advancement, the welfare, the enjoyment,—the ultimate and truly substantial happiness of man.

## NEBRASKA SOIL.

It is now conceded by those who travel, and are not prejudiced, that the western slope of the Missouri River, in the vicinity of, and above and below the mouth of the Platte River, presents the richest soil in the world,—that even the valley of the Nile, enriched as it is every year by overflows, and the consequent deposit of rich alluvial coating, does not equal it.

Without considering the reason why this is so, many persons answer the proposition by the remark, or some similar phrase, "Oh, you are prejudiced in favor of Nebraska!" This is not a denial, but simply an announcement which should have no weight. Let us see. Are there abundant reasons why this slope is thus so fertile and so inexhaustible in its soil? For ages untold, the valleys which empty their streams into the Platte, from the Missouri to the Rocky Mountains, have been washed from year to year, and the rich deposits of the immense numbers of wild animals and wild fowls which have from period to period roamed over the hills and plains of this wonderful region, have been carried down the mountain side, the hill side, and the lesser slopes, to the waters of the dales and thence to the great outleading streams which have so naturally, during this vast series of years, brought them to the western slope of the true father of waters, and as they overflowed all along, have scattered and disseminated over this great alluvial region the finest fertilizing elements extant. Add to this fact the other, no less important, that vegetable growth has also, during this vast period, been enormous here, and has constantly been decaying and thus becoming a fertilizer, and there will be no lack of reasons for this theory. This region, too, is limited. It does not extend to the base of the Rockies, nor does it reach far north or south from the Platte's mouth. A reasonable estimate would make its extent one hundred and fifty miles each way from where this great eastward bound stream enters its superior as a tributary, and from thence back on its course it may be three hundred miles or more.

If it be answered by rival States and by rival advocates that other regions possess these same advantages, we answer, no; for there cannot be found another tract of country so adapted as this to

produce these results. The latitude of this region is such, neither being too cold nor too hot, that both animal and vegetable growth were here at one or more periods prodigious. Nearly all the mammoth species of animals, birds and reptiles, have at one time or another left in this special region their excremental deposits. All these, in addition to those which have been gathered by the rivulet of the mountain, the creek of the valley, and the river of the plain into this great valley where we to-day stand, have remained where they were left to enrich these plains.

## ROTATION.

It is only a very few years since the best practical farmers of the Eastern and Middle States warned our people not to allow any crop—and more especially wheat,—to be grown on the same field two years in succession, as it would in the end impoverish the soil. The great cry of "rotation," so usual and so useful in the Eastern States, was raised, and the other cry, equally uncalled for here, "fertilize, fertilize, and thus keep the soil up to the standard," was common up to a very late period. Experience, however, has proved, and in many instances, that wheat can be, and has been, raised twenty years or more in the same field, year after year, in succession, and without fertilizers, and yet no diminution, but rather increase of crops. Thanks to those few persevering men of our State who are never weary in well doing, that these facts are becoming known. We admit some of our leading farmers still advocate rotation. Be this as it may, Nebraska stands to-day in the very front rank as a grain, vegetable, grass, and fruit-growing, as well as wood-producing State. In the latter respect it certainly has no rival this side of the Pacific slope. With a soil of such vast productiveness, usually varying from three to ten feet in depth; with a climate such as rivals the mountain regions by its purity, and yet is not so depressed as to produce the diseases of the tropical countries; with an enterprising people, gathered from nearly all nations under the sun, here to join heart and hand in the great work of developing the wonderful resources of the soil, intelligent, industrious, and fast becoming independent of moneyed influences; what more can a Nebraska farmer ask for his home surroundings? Look to-day

upon this display of the products of toil in all the various branches of industry which are here represented, and tell me, ye men of discernment, where else in all this broad land do you find it excelled, and yet we are as a Territory but twenty-five years old, and as a State have but just passed the thirteenth year of our childhood. To sum up, our showing for the year, in part, is a surplus of 75,000,000 bushels of grain, and we have 500,000 cattle, 600,000 hogs, and 150,000 sheep.

#### THE OLD WORLD.

Owing to a variety of causes, during the last few years the tide of emigration has been moderate in the direction of the United States, compared with what it had been for sometime before. The interest taken in the advantages presented by the West is again largely on the increase. We are evidently soon to see the tide once more flow freely in our favor. The comparative failure of the wheat crop, now and then, in Europe, and the fact that with us grain can be so cheaply produced as to enable us to ship it to the Old Country and there realize a handsome profit on its sale, is attracting not only the attention of the dealer at home, but as well of farmers abroad. The tocsin of alarm is already sounded in the mother country.

Eyes shut willingly, if not willfully, heretofore, are opening to note the important fact, now demonstrated beyond a doubt, that the British farmer cannot longer afford to pay his pound sterling per acre land rent to the county squire, and still compete with our Western farmer, who buys and owns his wheat land at the rate of one pound sterling for four acres, and who, without expense, save merely plowing and sowing, raises better crops than can the English farmer with all his extra tilling and artificial fertilizers. So long as the English tenant can be kept in ignorance of this and facts akin to it, he will toil on comparatively contented, but in this ignorance he cannot long continue. The day for his release—the day when he shall no longer be a tenant, but himself a land owner—is rapidly approaching.

He can read. The Press of his land may endeavor to conceal the fact that beeves can be raised on the plains of Nebraska, and shipped to English markets at a profit, by publishing all sorts of rumors

in regard to the unhealthy condition of the cattle when they arrive there, but truth will out. In the end, when the real fact is discovered that this stock is as fine and healthy when landed on foreign shores as when it was feeding upon the grasses of the Far West the reaction in favor of buying American raised cattle, because they are cheaper and just as good, will be overwhelming. This fact the English cattle-raiser will see, and act accordingly. Then, but let them be convinced of another fact, well known to us, that these cattle become as fat and fit for market during the three summer months, without any other feeding than what the nutritious grasses of our prairies afford, and with no expense whatever, save herding, at a mere nominal cost per head, and all the papers in the Old World and all the money there, too, to back them, will find it comparatively useless to attempt to stay the tide of emigration to this region.

#### THE GREAT REVOLUTION.

Silently, but surely, the Great Revolution is going on which shall make every man who tills the soil the owner of the acres upon which he bestows his labors of love.

The profits which arise from the plow must yet belong to him who either holds or drives, and not be turned over to the silent looker-on who is comparatively indifferent as to the crop, merely because he is the landlord.

The lessons which are constantly being taught by those who come from the Old World to till the soil of our fertile valleys will not be lost. The toiling millions who are to-day in foreign lands working as tenants or serfs for a bare subsistence for themselves and their little families will heed these lessons, and be induced by them to lift themselves up into a land-owning, more useful and happier life. Turn then whichever way we will, and nowhere do we find a competition which endangers our prosperity as a grain raising, stock growing people.

The constant efforts of the English press to induce the belief that our cattle are diseased, our sheep infected, and our hogs trichinotic, will be in vain. If these things as they state were true, why such trepidation across the water as to the decline of their agricul-

tural industries,—why the organization just at this time of a Ministry of Agriculture? Official farming in that country may be entertaining, but it will not become dangerous to American interests so long as our lands possess as they do an inexhaustible soil, more than equal by nature to the richest manufactured or fertilized soil of England. “Facts speak louder than words,” and just now above this din and clangor of the English press, the noise of the caulker’s mallet is heard upon the “Great Eastern,” and this old sea monster is being fitted up, at an expense of half a million dollars, to carry cattle from our American plains to English stock yards. Such a floating meat market as she will present with her living cargo will be worth while, for it is estimated that she will accommodate 2,000 head of beeves, or 10,000 sheep, upon her decks.

Another fact, a few days since announced by cablegram, that a steamer would soon arrive in New York with \$6,500,000 in gold for the purchase of grain, shows which way the financial wind is blowing across the water. The landlords of Great Britain may not fancy the present outlook in this direction, but the hired toilers who make up so large a proportion of the population of that Kingdom—the employes in the endless cordon of mills, manufactories, and workshops, which hem in that famous island, are to-day rejoicing that, notwithstanding the failure of crops at home, they can still buy bread of their American cousins at less than starvation prices.

There seems to be a kind of innate confidence in the success of crops in America, that buoys up the day laborer abroad as well as at home. We feed fifty millions of hungry mouths at the door of our grain fields, and still have enough and to spare for the needy of the old world who look to us for food. Our farming interests are greatly enhanced by the fact that we furnish a very large proportion of grain shipments to the old world. The commercial reports of the United States for the eleven months ending June 1, 1879, show that our exports for that period reached the sum of \$635,042,078. Of these, our agricultural department furnished \$562,813,197. Of neat cattle, we sent abroad during that period in value of \$2,897,846; corn, \$43,610,441; wheat, \$90,700,598; flour, \$23,000,854; cotton, \$173,629,922; beef, \$7,120,000; cheese, \$11,737,928; pork, \$4,629,000; lard, \$28,068,490; tobacco, \$23,400,000; grass seed, \$2,000,000—besides other products,—while our exports for the year

ending June 30 last, were \$710,000,000; imports \$465,000,000, in round numbers.

But it is not alone in dollars and cents that we have been benefited by these transactions. We have shown the world once more that we can be depended upon for food supply, and that our agricultural capabilities are, and always will be, equal to the universal demand, whether it is made by the toiling masses who create the cheerful hum of industry in the workshops of foreign lands, and who can pay us a penny a loaf, or by the unfortunate poor who are compelled by the hunger which famine creates, to pray us to send them without price, corn by the ship load, to alleviate the dire necessities of their misfortunes.

In any event, by these commercial transactions the United States is honored, its name receives an additional blessing, and honest industry rejoices that it can always find an abundance of labor, and food with it too, on this Western Continent.

#### STATE IMMIGRATION.

While our rival sister States have been busy devising and carrying out schemes for increasing their population by immigration, and have, through the instrumentality of prudent legislation, appropriated generous sums of money for this purpose, by means of which they have established immigration bureaus, printed and circulated documents showing the special reasons why people seeking new homes should settle with them, our State has almost entirely neglected this work of such importance to her industrial and ultimately to her financial interests. The result is, that Kansas and Minnesota and Colorado have several hundreds of thousands of settlers who would as gladly have made their homes with us, had they been truthfully advised as to the merits of our State. Our railroads have done much, in fact have done about all that has been done in a public way, to inform the emigrating world concerning our soil and general resources. Still it is believed that State work in this direction, fully sustained by our Legislature, and indorsed by our State officials, would be greatly more effective.

Our progress, notwithstanding lack of State immigration aid, has been remarkable. This, no doubt, is attributable in a great degree



to the fact that we have had thousands and tens of thousands of private agents writing, talking, and working for us. A large number of those who take up their abodes on our prairies—who make their temporary dwellings in the sod houses and dug-outs so common with us in the new settlements—are well-informed, educated people, capable of writing entertaining letters to those they left behind, and not a few of these honest missives, containing glowing accounts of our agricultural advantages, find their way through eastern friends into the papers. To these prairie settlers, for this work, the State should be doubly grateful. There are often to be found among them men, and women, too, who have been raised in affluent circumstances, but who, through the inevitable changes and chances of life, have been left to decide between poverty continued, and poverty discontinued. Choosing the latter, they have bravely started out for homes upon the vacant lands of our State, and many of them, who have not been within our borders five years even, are now in the midst of thickly settled regions, with improved farms, and flourishing farmers all around them. Mingled with this class of people everywhere, we find that other equally valuable and important, composed of those sturdy settlers, usually from the old country, who bring with them means sufficient to at once make for themselves homes, and cultivate the soil on a large scale.

In future we should spare no pains in letting the advantages of our State be known. No true Nebraskan can fail to appreciate this proposition, who attended the centennial display at Philadelphia, and there compared the meagre though striking exhibit of Nebraska soil and products with the immense and most attractive show of our sister States, Kansas and Colorado, neither of which, then or now, excels us in farm produce, while our State excels both of them—as it has at several national fairs, all the other States of the Union—in quality and variety of its fruits.

#### OUR PROGRESS.

When Nebraska became a State, thirteen years ago, her population was estimated at forty thousand. To-day we have not less than four hundred thousand, and still they come. The influx last year beyond question, was sixty thousand, and at the end of this year our im-

migration will reach for 1879 full seventy thousand, while in 1880, when the census of the general government is taken, it is the firm belief of those best informed, that we shall count within our borders five hundred thousand people. In ratio of increase we have not fallen behind the States around us, notwithstanding the large amount they have spent in paper and ink to advertise their resources, while all the handbills we have used, so far as State effort is concerned, have been our broad, fertile lands, our vast grain fields, our productive soil, our countless herds of cattle, our fine stock, unrivalled fruit and vegetables, and our healthy climate. These, once seen by the lover of agricultural thrift, need no printed praise nor fulsome adulation from the rostrum. They tell their own story, and tell it, too, from the never-failing standpoint of facts.

And what are some of these facts as demonstrated by figures? When our State entered the Union, in which for ten years and up to 1876, at which time Colorado was admitted, she was the youngest sister; she was bounded on the east and south by States long before admitted, and whose institutions were already well established. They had money, they had railroads, they had national prestige, they had immense agricultural development and liberal State aid, and yet to-day we have overtaken them in comparative State prosperity and industrial advantages.

In stock growing we lead them, as we do all the States of the Union except Texas; in wheat raising we are well up with them; Minnesota alone, of our neighboring States, leading us this year by any margin of consequence—the estimate being that our crop of that grain will be but little short of 30,000,000 bushels. In corn we make equally good if not better showing, and will strike 60,000,000 bushels in that crop for this autumn's harvest.

No one will question this statement after reading the figures lately published by the State Board for the last year, when it is borne in mind that a very much larger acreage than then is now under cultivation, and our fields everywhere loaded to the fullest measure with crops. Here again arises

#### THE GREAT QUESTION,

What shall we do with our products? Methinks I hear some one answer, "sell them." That certainly is very easy to say, but is it

the best practical answer? By the ordinary method of sale, at such prices as the raw material will realize, are we securing to ourselves such profit as would be gained by some other method of transmuting our labor into money? Would it not be more in accord with enterprise to so dispose of our products as to realize the greatest profit? "Sell them," we must; but when, how and in what shape? A profitable home market for the raw material does not present itself up to this time. To be sure we can tardily dispose of our wheat by the bushel, at a moderate figure, and so with our corn and other grain, but at a figure so low that the dealer who takes the wheat to St. Louis, and there flours it and then sends it back to us for our housewives to make into bread, causes us to pay him five times what we sold it to him for in the kernel, and he pockets the margin. And so with our corn. We sell that at fifteen cents a bushel, and then after it has been exported East, manufactured and returned to us in the shape of starch, buy it back at two dollars per bushel.

Illustrations of this character are numberless. Yet we are advancing, and our farmers are becoming forehanded and general prosperity prevails. To secure that more rapid advancement which we all desire, and to greatly enhance the value of our productions, a home market must be secured. To this end we must erect manufactories where the raw material can be put in shape for consumption or use. Our lucky farmers who have acquired spare capital, must ultimately find that to use it in working up the raw material which they raise, will insure them greatly increased profits. Lack of fuel, heretofore, has retarded the erection of manufactories, but this deficiency is fast becoming supplied by artificial planting of trees. In a State where the soil produces such a wonderfully rapid growth of wood as does ours, the supply of fuel will more than keep pace with the demand. Coal, too, is being discovered within our borders, and ere long some lucky prospector will find it in paying layers. If our corn is to be used for fuel, better turn it into steam operating purposes for home manufacturing, and thus use its caloric properties with greater moneyed profit.

But we have plenty of water power in every direction, and this must soon be utilized. In southwestern Nebraska, especially, there are some as fine mill streams as could be desired. Among these, the

beautiful and romantic Waunita Falls, on Spring River, are said to be capable of supplying the machinery of a second Lowell with motive power. When our State can boast of a town which sends to the sea-board 70,000 barrels of flour from its own mills each week, as does the city of Minneapolis, in Minnesota, and at a freight tariff of but sixty cents per barrel, a new day of prosperity will have dawned upon us.

#### AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

Education in every branch of the arts and sciences, trades and professions, is valuable only as it is pursued with the intention of acquiring knowledge for the actual benefits it confers—the advantages it gives its possessor over those who have not secured it. The modern method of studying farming through the medium of books, and by the aid of professors, so-called, is all well, provided the student has been a practical cultivator of the soil, so that he can appreciate the subject upon which his thoughts are engaged. And it may be of much service to the man who afterwards becomes, not in name only, but in fact, a farmer. For a mere graduate of an Agricultural College to suppose, unless he has been a practical farmer, working with his own hands that he has gathered from books or the training of his tutors, the necessary knowledge to enable him to successfully conduct an ordinary farm, is simply preposterous. While he has acquired a knowledge of chemistry and of the nature of soils, and their relation to vegetable growth, and may have continued his researches until he can answer abstruse questions as to the affinities existing between vegetation and animal development, still he will find, if he concludes from this fact that he can run a farm, that he is sadly mistaken. Of all the callings to which man has ever turned his attention, farming requires the most actual practical experience. The custom in the New England States, in the olden time, as it is said, of sending the dull boys of the family to college and putting the bright ones to work on the farm, was a sensible one. A boy of ordinary mind can be educated up to the ordinary standard of the so-called learned professions, or to follow the routine of the professor's chair, but it takes a bright brain and an energetic hand to so manage the soil as to make it a willing, profitable servant.

The man who tills his land with an appreciation of the possibilities of his calling, who is never satisfied with what has been done in his line, but is ever looking forward to what may be accomplished upon his fields by work, hard work, and earnest endeavor, is sure to win—is sure in the end to realize the golden promise which his hopes have cherished. While he cannot absolutely control his fortune as a producer, he can so far control it as to secure for himself vastly greater profits and more satisfactory results than he would realize by merely following the habitual thoughtless routine of the indifferent farmer. No calling of the present day holds out more flattering inducements to our enterprising young men than agriculture. It conduces not only to length of life, but as well to that happiness and contentment which freedom from speculative schemes, the chances of trade, and the more uncertain results of most other callings, will not permit those who follow them to enjoy. True, it is rare that the farmer becomes suddenly rich, yet it is as rare that he becomes suddenly poor. The terrible vicissitudes of all speculative pursuits he escapes. The failure of one crop, if he farms intelligently and cultivates assiduously, will hurt his prospects but little. His wheat may be destroyed, while his corn will be left; his oats may fail, but his rye is all right; his barley may blight, but his sorghum will take him through; and when his crops are for any cause or series of causes a failure, he can still look to his orchard for a support, though it may for one season be scanty. Nor is this the end of his hopes. If he be a true Nebraska farmer, he will be sure to have one resort still left—his flocks and his herds. His pastures are there, and with them there is no such word as fail in this climate.

#### THE EAST AND THE WEST.

Those of you who read the published transactions of eastern agricultural societies, must be somewhat amused at the question so earnestly and constantly discussed among farmers there. It is this: "How shall we so fertilize and cultivate our land as to secure a crop?" They are hemmed in, as it were, by markets, and high prices for all farm products prevail, but it requires the most skillful management of the farm, and the most devoted attention, to obtain such favor with the rock-bound soil as will secure its bountiful hand in return.

Not so in the West. And here lies the great difference between the two sections. While we are asking "what we shall do for a market, our crops are all right," the counter query comes back from the East, "what shall we do for a crop, our markets are all right." The question they put, makes us often wonder that they do not come West, while the question that we put is evidently the one that keeps them in the East. The solution of the problem which puzzles them most, apparently, remains unanswered; while the difficulty we are discussing may be substantially solved by our farmers, and at their own doors. The solution is this: Condense your crops. Fatten your cattle and can your beef.

If you can but condense your grain into beef, pork and mutton, its transportation in that form will secure you a very large profit over what it will realize to you in the kernel. What we want is a home market. Give us that, and our farmers are independent. If we cannot secure such market at our doors, we can at least bring it far on its way towards us by largely reducing the bulk of whatever we have to sell, by feeding and manufacturing, yet, at the same time increase its value. We know it takes time to accomplish these things, but labor, energy and enterprise are three formidable antagonists when brought to bear on time.

#### OUR FUTURE.

Nebraska is just rounding the point which marks the first quarter century of its existence. Its past has been prosperous, its present is bright, and its future promising. Every year demonstrates the fact, that the supposition formerly so common that after leaving the vicinity of the Missouri River on our eastern border, no more arable lands could be found, has no foundation upon which to rest. The northern, southern, eastern, western and central portions of our State are here to-day vying with each other in the display of their farm products, each region claiming to possess the best soil.

The long search for "The Great American Desert" within our borders has been as futile as the assertion that it ever existed here was ridiculous. All those improvements which indicate a rapid advancement with us are fast being made. Railroads are being extended in every direction, crossing each other like so much network; our

educational institutions, the bulwark of the coming generation, are prosperous; our farmers are becoming more and more public spirited, and as a consequence are stocking their farms with the most approved breeds of horses, cattle and swine; while not a few of them are looking practically to the fact that sheep raising is a very profitable business on our plains; our immense crops, which otherwise must spoil on the stalk, are being gathered by the best machinery the manufactory affords; and our people are industrious, temperate, thrifty, and proverbially healthy.

What, with all these favorable omens, may we not expect of the future? Ten years hence, when the census of 1890 is taken, we shall count our numbers by the million, and all the departments of industry then represented here will show a proportionate increase in our material prosperity and wealth as a State and as a people.

#### THE LESSON OF THE HOUR.

The country is apparently just emerging from a long period of depression in all the avenues of business life. Our financial men have for a season, at least, suspended the operation of thrusting their peculiar theories on the currency question in our faces, as they did last year during the discussion of the silver question, and as to the consequences of a return to specie payments. They have learned by this time that financial theories and financial practices are, in nearly all cases, very different things. Scarcely one of the money prophets of 1878 can draw on 1879 to verify his predictions.

It is a curious feature that these times of depression usually occur once in about ten years. Observing men say that it takes about that length of time to clear away the rubbish after a financial crash—to foreclose the mortgages on real estate and dispose of the surplus land with which men encumber themselves in times of inflation. This theory is sustained by the fact that in 1836, and in about every ten years thereafter until 1876—the first exception to the rule—money was plenty, and speculation ruled the day, while following closely after, came the night of adversity. Owing to causes such as had not existed before, the period of depression which followed the inflation of 1866 was prolonged. The peculiar condition of the currency caused by the contest to save the Union, had much to do with this

result, and beyond doubt hastened the premature bank crisis of 1873. It is now believed by the best financial minds of the day that we are again entering upon one of our seasons of so-called prosperity. If so, the active business men of to-day, forgetful of the lessons of the past, will rush into speculations in all the departments of trade, and thus again cause the same unhealthy condition of finances, which we have all so much deplored during the last few years.

A word of warning to our farmers in this connection. Stay by the plow. In times when real estate is inflated and those who live in the cities can buy a lot to-day for one price and sell it to-morrow for twice as much, the fitful fever of speculation reaches the rural districts, and farmers become discontented with what they call the slow process of getting rich. They exchange their farms for city property, move into town, embark in gambling operations in real estate, and however smart they may think themselves, they find still smarter men surrounding them and combining to fleece them. The result is, that in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the farmer speculator in the end becomes the poorest of the poor.

Be contented with your Nebraska farms, as long as you live. You cannot possess a safer or happier fortune.

#### THE PRESENT STATE BOARD.

In every branch of industry and trade pursued in our State, unusual prosperity prevails. Our success and ultimate triumph is an assured fact. The State Board of Agriculture, which has hitherto done so much towards developing our material interests, and which has meritoriously won the confidence of our people after many a conflict, has but to pursue the even tenor of its way, and it will yet embrace upon the list of its supporters, every intelligent farmer in the State. Let its legitimate work continue, and we shall soon see Nebraska in the lead of every State in the land in agricultural wealth. She has the capabilities for this, and she will not fail to improve them. Her spirit of self-pride is already too far advanced to allow her hereafter to despise her golden opportunities. Located as she is, practically in the center of the only Republic upon which the sun never sets—a country upon whose extreme

eastern shores yonder glorious orb of day, which shines for us all, sheds its greeting light in the morning dawn, ere it has thrown its last good evening kiss to Alaska's western isle—constituted as our State is, so that her great leading pursuit must continue to be centered in agriculture—the awards which await her in the near future will far more than repay all the efforts which her public spirited men of this hour are putting forth in her behalf.

Go on, then, ye men of to-day, and with your stout hearts and willing hands lay deep and firm the foundation of that monument to Industry, upon whose rising walls shall be inscribed by you, and those who come after you, in never fading letters of rural beauty, the annual successes of our prosperous young State, **THE GARDEN STATE OF THE AMERICAN UNION.**