

## CASS CITY, GEM OF THE THUMB.

### Its Agricultural and Industrial Advantages Have Been Mostly Gained Since 1880—Prominent Men of the Time.

Believing that it is the duty of every citizen of the town in which he lives, to contribute something towards the advancement and prosperity of such town, the Chronicle, from motives public spirited, takes pleasure in contributing this issue. The contents of this paper will be found on investigation to be just and truthful statements, in brief, pertaining to the town and her business people.

The main purpose of this work is to give to those persons seeking home and investment a brief and accurate recital of what the people of Cass City have done and with the advantages they possess can do, towards making Cass City one of the foremost business places in the Thumb. To this end we invite the reader to give the contents of this paper a careful perusal which may lead to a further inquiry concerning the natural advantages of Cass City and surrounding country. By a careful perusal of the business firms and manufactures represented in this issue you can readily see what Cass City needs. The firms represented herein are all solid financially and are public spirited men.

Cass City is the gem of the Thumb. It is situated near the banks of Cass River, a romantic stream wending its way westward along the eastern borders of the city. It was platted in 1868 and named in honor of the historic Cass River. About the year 1866, Nathaniel Clark started a store in a small board shanty on the spot where now stands the store of Laing & Jones. This with a small log schoolhouse, one of the first built in the town of Elkland formed the nucleus of the village. With the coming of peace at the close of the war and the falling back into the quiet pursuits of civil life, of the vast army of veterans, the magnificent soil and general healthfulness of the country succeeded in attracting a strong tide hitherward. The soil, a rich clay loam is of the most fertile and productive character. An abundant supply of pure water is readily obtained at a depth of from fifteen to twenty-five feet. Fruits of all kinds including apples, pears, quinces and small fruits, are remarkably productive. The soil and climate seem especially adapted to their maturing and perfection. Many hundreds of barrels of apples are annually shipped from this point. Poultry raising, so far as developed, has proved remarkably successful in this vicinity. Our nearness to large markets like Buffalo, Detroit, Saginaw and Bay City, creates a constant and unremitting demand for all that can be shipped. Fowls do well here and are to a great extent free from the diseases incident to them in many other quarters.

The great staples in this vicinity are wheat, corn and potatoes. The quality is first-class. Oats, rye and other small grains generally do well and are of a class that grades very high. The culture of sugar beets is still in its infancy. However it has been demonstrated that the soil in this vicinity is the best in the world for the raising of sugar beets. Cass City has all the advantages for a sugar factory and will secure one in due time.

The mineral deposits adjacent to Cass City must ere long also add to her prosperity as all tests in regard to marl and clay indicate a genuine value. The bed and banks of Cass River are filled with shale and the swamps to the extent of 2,000 acres are filled with marl. Some day these deposits will be utilized.

What has been said above has been largely preliminary as showing what this locality has back of it to sustain and support it is irrespective of the elements of business life and activity within itself. What the town is, it has been made by the rich and fruitful country about it. The enterprising and wide-awake citizens who constitute our agricultural population by their active spirit are developing one of the grandest countries on earth, and the same spirit now beckons mercantile, mechanical and manufacturing energy to lay hold with them on the matchless opportunities here now

awaiting recognition by those interested in these and other lines of human activity.

Cass City lies on the Pontiac, Oxford & Northern Railroad, about 100 miles to the northward from Detroit. It's only a question of time when the present railroad facilities will be improved by electric roads, which of necessity will be the road of the future.

Many of the business houses are constructed of brick, some of which are an ornament to the town, and would do credit to any larger city making greater pretensions than does Cass City. J. L. Hitchcock's opera house and the two hotels are the pride of the village. The opera house is a fine brick structure and the interior arrangements are both artistic and commodious. The traveling public is unanimous in praising the superior accommodations of the two hotels. There are none better even in large cities. The residences as a rule are built of wood, are neat and substantial and some are highly ornamental in design. The streets, especially Main and Secor Streets, are

the broadest and finest in the entire Thumb country. These streets are well graded and afford delightful driving. As a matter of protection, convenience, cleanliness, health and comfort, a good supply of pure and wholesome water is indispensable. In addition to the wells that abound, Cass City is blessed with a system of waterworks second to none, if not superior to most towns of its size. The source of supply is derived from 28 drive wells. Fire hydrants are distributed in various sections of the town. The pumping station is supplied with two splendid Dean pumps with a capacity of 1,104,000 each twenty-four hours. Direct pressure is used to force the water thus pumped from a depth of 20 feet through three miles of mains, thereby giving our people the purest and coolest water that it is possible to pump from the bowels of the earth.

Cass City has also one of the best electric light plants in the state of Michigan and gives its patrons the best of service. The streets are lighted by 24 arc lights, while hundreds of incandescent lights are used by individual consumers and firms. No greater convenience to the business man can be had than a well devised and thoroughly equipped telephone system. As complete a plant as can be found anywhere in the state, is successfully operated by the Moore system, and the Bell company which gives its patrons good service. By the Moore line the entire Thumb as well as the outlying cities can be reached. We refer our readers to a sketch of this system given in another column.

The moral influences of every community are in a large measure attributed to the number of churches and church membership such community affords, providing a spirit of conservatism, liberality and independence prevails. True Christianity can exist in a hamlet where there is no church; in the village where there is but one church but not successfully in a town of much size unless there are several churches of pronounced activity in Christian work, for where the environments of a Christian people are such as will give an opportunity for wrong doing, there will be an absence of good deeds which are usually disseminated in a community of churches. Churches representing the Presbyterian, Methodist, Baptist and Evangelical forms of faith are actively engaged here. These churches while not elegantly furnished are comfortable and are supplied by good pulpit talent.

There are ten lodges of various or-

ders in Cass City. They are the Masonic, Oddfellows, Rebekah, Maccabees, Lady Maccabees, Foresters, Lady Foresters, Loyal Guards, G. A. R. and Relief Corps. These lodges have a fair membership and are all in a prosperous condition. The ladies of the village sustain a literary club and only recently a gentlemen's club has been organized who have nicely furnished apartments and consist of card and billiard rooms.

Cass City has a fine school building with all modern improvements and conveniences and the condition of the schools is such that people from the surrounding country send their children here to prepare for college work.

Prominent among the leading business interests of Cass City is that of banking. There are two well conducted institutions of this kind namely the Cass City and Exchange Banks. Both are doing a large business.

As a shipping point Cass City enjoys an enviable record. During the past year 800 car loads of produce and stock exclusive of broken lots have been shipped from this point.

Our elevator facilities are superb. The fact is, there is not a town in the entire Thumb that enjoys as good a market for all kinds of produce as the one offered by the Cass City elevator, Sioux City Seed Co., and roller mills. The brand of flour manufactured here is unequalled. Our stock market is the best in the country. There is more stock shipped from this point

ment the bank has always had. It has ever been liberal yet careful and conservative in all its dealings, no investment whatever being made without the most rigid examination. And especially has this been true since Auten & Seeley have owned the business. I. B. Auten, resident manager, is recognized as one of the ablest financiers in this section, and it is to his personal qualifications, his far-sightedness, his sagacity, his conservatism, and at the same time his progressive spirit and liberality of views, that the Cass City Bank has made such decided gains in business during the past few years. There is nothing if not push and enterprise in the makeup of I. B. Auten, not alone in his own private affairs, but as well in promoting the best interests of Cass City. He is for Cass City first, last, and all the time and never allows an opportunity to better her condition to pass him. The Cass City Bank is owned by Mr. Auten and J. F. Seeley, of Caro. They transact a general banking business—buying and selling foreign exchange, issuing drafts payable in any country on earth, loaning money on real estate, making collections, etc., and are most accommodating in all their dealings with the public. The bank is provided with ample cash funds for the transaction of all local business, as is amply attested almost every day during the busy grain and cattle buying season each fall, when quite often from

### Growth of the Public School System. Water Works, Street Lighting and Other Things which Cass City Runs on Its Own Account.

Cass City's present array of business and population is encouraging and is no reason why we should not expect a steady and prosperous growth during present century. As a village placed in the midst of an industrious and well developed farming community Cass City can hold up its head as a leader. Our shops and stores are kept up to the mark and what factories we have are run to their full capacity. In brief we have a substantial and permanent acquisition of capital, manufactures and trade. At this time we have an excellent make-up of the usual places of business required and we can name a fine set of merchants, artisans, manufacturers, who are all up-to-date in their callings.

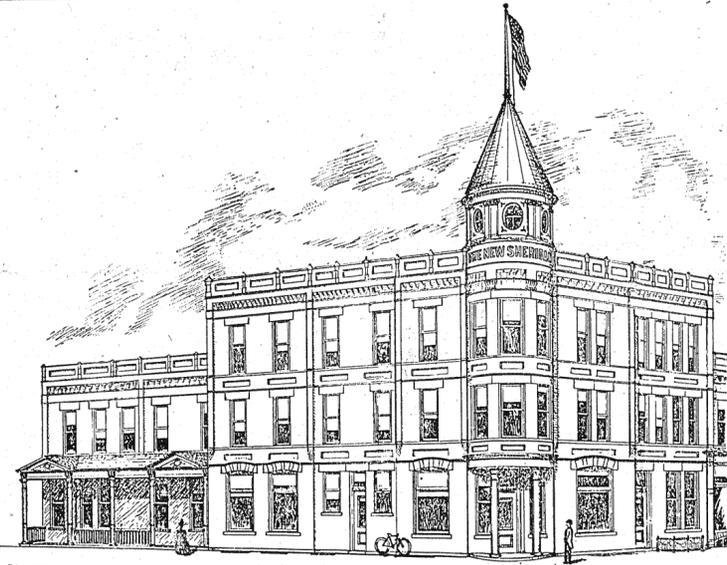
At the depot ground Frutchey, McGeorge & Co., the Cass City Coal and Lumber Co., the stock yards of Schwaderer Bros. & Striffler, and the planing mill owned by Landon, Eno & Keating, are handling the farmers produce, stock and where the choicest line of building material at right prices can be secured. In the village proper are Chas. Spencer, jewelry and watch repairing; the up-to-date pea harvester works of Wettlaufer & Ratz Mfg. Co., and the newly re-established Cass City Foundry. Then comes Fred Lee, undertaking and furniture; Mrs. E. K. Wickware and Mrs. F. C. Lee, both fashionable milliners; Gordon's Tavern, A. A. McKenzie's undertaking establishment and J. S. Dunham's livery barn all in one block. Yakes & Co.'s livery, Dr. Morris' veterinary stables, Riker & Ball, barber shop. The Enterprise office has seen 20 years of good patronage. Then comes Fairweather Bros., the biggest double store in town; Fritz, the druggist; Dr. Fritz, the dentist; J. D. Brooker, attorney at law; Dr. Wellemeyere, physician; Jas. Brooker, justice of peace; Harrison, the tailor; and the U. S. postoffice, Postmaster H. S. Wickware, all in the new and well arranged city block. The

McCor-mick machine man; Ostrander, shoes and furniture; Mrs. Parker's handy restaurant; David Tyo's barber shop, Frost's grocery, Bond's well kept drug store, E. F. Marr, gents' clothing, Bell phone, and express office, Champion's tonsorial parlors and the Cass City Bank. Just around the corner is McLellan's hotel and Robinson's gem laundry. Then over on the corner is Stevenson's table supply house, J. F. Hendrick, pioneer jewelry store; Jno. Schwaderer's new meat market; the big store of 2 Macks; Geo. Matzen, dry goods and gents' furnishings; H. L. Hunt, grocery and crockery; and Mr. and Mrs. Goff's harness store and bazaar; and half a block back is Ferguson's marble shop; across on the corner of Main Street we find J. L. Hitchcock's fine opera house and general store. Then comes Karr's pool room, Dingman's grocery; Hill & Parent's marble establishment, Lutz's blacksmith shop, and last but not least we mention in the veteran and hustling drymen, Scott Brotherton and Wm. Smithson. With such an array of energetic talent we can see no reason why Cass City cannot hold her own with other towns of the county; and there is a splendid farming vicinity to back the future prosperity of the village.

The history of the Cass City schools is one of which all its citizens can be proud. From a small insignificant beginning the educational work in our midst has developed, until now it stands forth as a mighty factor of moral and literary culture, which next to a healthy religious sentiment, is of more importance than any other element that helps to make up a progressive and happy community. It was in the early part of 1864 the first schoolhouse was built on the site where the New Sheridan now stands. The building was of unheated logs, possibly 12x18. In the interior a board bench was built along on three sides with the log wall for its back. At the end opposite the door a small, home-made desk, three or four feet long, was set back close to the long bench. This was the teacher's desk. On each side of the room were two similar desks in front of the wall bench and facing the center of the room. These were for older scholars. The little tots sat on seats in front of the desks with their little feet dangling back and forth, for the seats were too high for them to reach the floor. Back of the door was a blackboard; 3x4 feet in size. On the other side of the door, a bench was placed for the water pail and dinner baskets. A tinplate stove and a pipe that went up through the roof, completed the furniture of the room.

It has been impossible for the compiler of this history to secure anything definite as regards the second school building. Even the oldest residents are unable to give satisfactory information, as to dates, names of school directors and teachers. However, it is quite certain that the building belonged to some private party and was rented by the district for school purposes. The building stood at that time where Geo. Matzen's store is now located. In the year 1869-70, Mary Clark, now Mrs. Barnes of Pittsburg, Pa., taught the school. In a letter to the historian, she says: "The most vivid recollection which I have of my experience in the capacity of teacher then, is connected with the seating arrangement of the schoolroom. A long desk against the wall extended the entire length of each side of the room. The pupils sat on two equally long benches. When they faced the desks their backs were toward the teacher. When they faced the teacher they had no desks in position for use. Perhaps the discomfort of this arrangement of the pupils had some connection with the strong conviction which I gained there, that I had no talent whatever as a disciplinarian."

It must have been in the year 1876, that the third schoolhouse was built, which was located near where the house of Andrew Campbell now



THE NEW SHERIDAN HOTEL.

than any town within a radius of forty miles. Only recently an extensive lumber yard has been established here. This is an industry greatly appreciated by the farming community.

Cass City is also the center of the famous T. H. & S. Fair Association. The fair grounds are fine and the race track is of the best. The amusement feature of the annual fairs are proverbial and as a result the treasury of the association is in a healthy condition.

We have two enterprising weekly newspapers, the Cass City Enterprise and the Tri-County Chronicle, which set forth the manifold advantages afforded by Cass City as a business point.

All kinds of mercantile business are represented with us by active and pushing firms as the following sketches set forth.

#### THE CASS CITY BANK.

A STRONG, SAFE AND INFLUENTIAL FINANCIAL INSTITUTION.

For nearly 20 years this old and reliable banking house has been the mainstay of the business men of Cass City and surrounding country, having been established by C. W. McPhail way back in 1882, when this was but a struggling village, and during all the succeeding years, and through the several financial crisis that have been visited upon the country, has splendidly weathered the storms and today continues among us stronger and safer, if possible, than ever. It has been severely tested in troublous times, but has never been found wanting whenever weighed. The causes for this remarkable record, however, are apparent in the excellent manage-

\$10,000 to \$15,000 in cash is disbursed daily. The CHRONICLE strongly commends this bank to its readers for whatever banking transactions they may have to do. You will at all times receive the most cordial greeting from either Mr. Auten or his efficient cashier, C. W. McKenzie.

#### STRIFFLER & McDERMOTT.

AN OLD, RELIABLE AND SUCCESSFUL HOUSE UNDER NEW MANAGEMENT.

AS SUCCESSORS to the business of J. H. Striffler, the change having taken place Feb. 1, of this year, Messrs. G. A. Striffler and Hector McDermott may be termed fortunate, for Jacob Striffler has been one of the leading and most successful implement dealers here for more than 20 years, and when he turned his trade over to the new firm it was so well established, and patrons have been so pleasantly catered to for so many years, that it would be hard indeed to induce them to deal elsewhere. In consequence Striffler & McDermott are meeting with more than liberal patronage. They handle all the best-known time-tried farming implements, making a specialty of the world-famed Champion binders and mowers, and carry an unusually large line of wagons, buggies, bicycles, etc. In a word, theirs is a complete implement house, where not only the best and most desirable of everything that is new may at all times be had, but where, as well, repairs for all machinery may be obtained. If you have intention of purchasing anything in their line it will be to your interest to see Striffler & McDermott.

New Sheridan occupies the most prominent corner in the town. On Seegar Street we find Landon & Perkins law office, the Cass City hotel, David Houghton's livery, Dr. Wickware, physician and surgeon; the Woolen Mills, the pioneer shoe man, G. Ahr, Dr. Deming, who is known all over; the home of the Tri-County Chronicle; Johnson & Seeley, bicycle repairing; and Laing & James, the oldest dry goods and grocery firm in town, in which is also Moore's telephone office. Down Main Street we meet the Exchange Bank, J. D. Crosby & Son, the hustling shoe men; Fitz, Tennant's grocery store, C. E. Jaz, racket store; Mrs. M. L. Moore, the place where ladies buy their bonnets; W. C. Janks, A 1 meat market; Laud-erbach's confectionery and ice cream parlors; Wm. Wallace, harness shop. This brings us to the corner where P. S. Rice sells dry goods and groceries. Across the way is Messner's reliable harness shop, then comes Lenzer's well-known furniture store; Maier, the photographer; T. H. Hunt's general store, Cross, the painter; Lon Pierce, blacksmith and horse-shoer, and a ways down Mrs. Ale's boarding house. Across the way on Main Street is the well-established agricultural implement house of Striffler & McDermott; then we come to the best grist mill in the country, C. W. Heller, proprietor; back a ways the farmers feed their horses at McColl's feed barn. John Rensler, who makes a specialty of shoeing horses; Anderson, the wagon maker; and Moore, the blacksmith, are all in a bunch on Main Street.

In the next block are the following: Bigelow & Son, hardware; Fallis, sad-