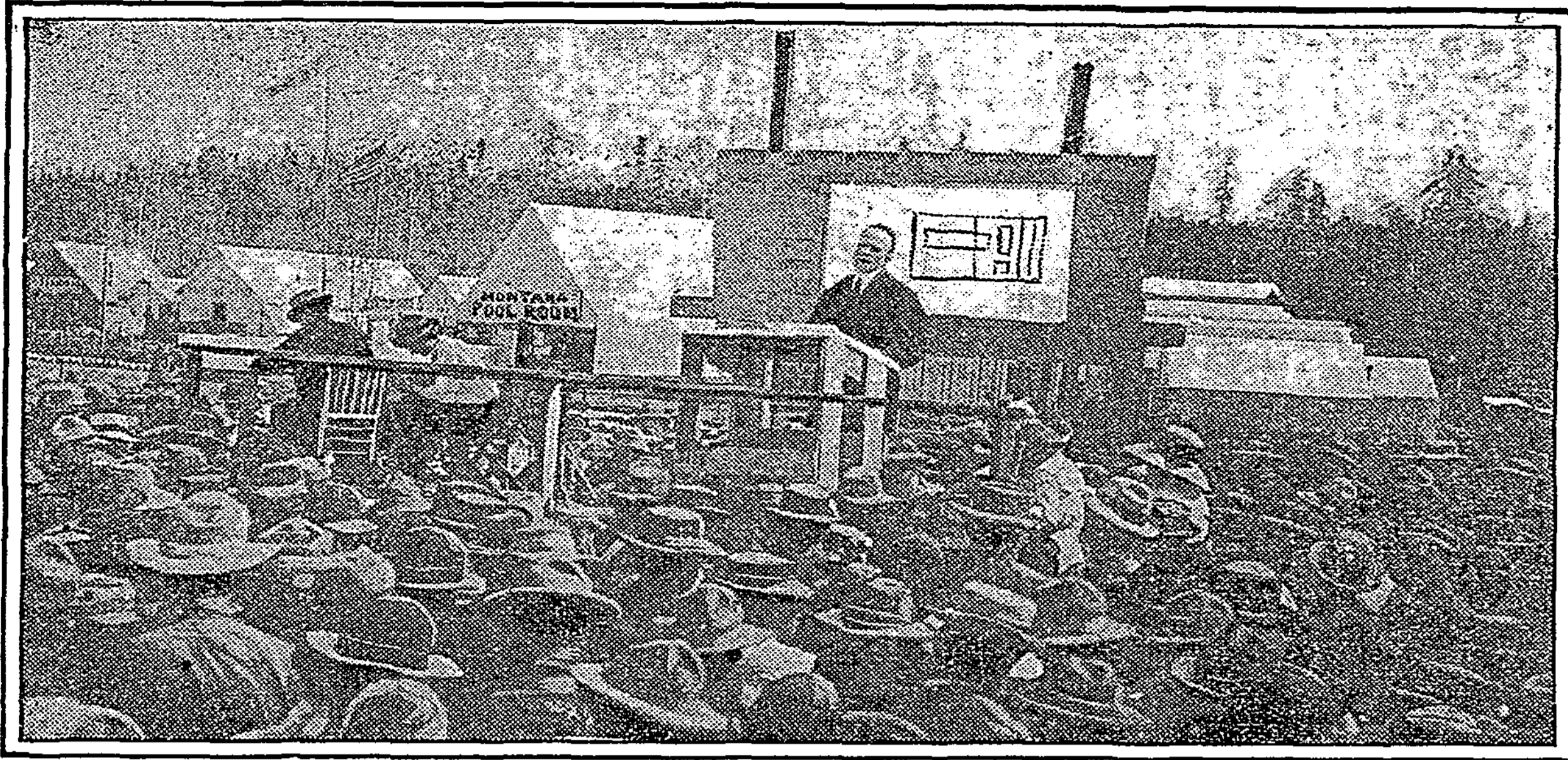


# THE MAGIC TOWN OF ANCHORAGE



Auction Sale of Lots by the United States Government at Anchorage, Alaska.

## New Government Railway in Alaska Creates Modern City, Where Lots Sell at Record-Breaking Prices

where came, thinking they could secure work on the road, but many of them have been disappointed. A number of white men have taken contracts for some of the station work, but have been unable to make a living wage out of their contracts. Some of them have made as little as from \$1.27 a day to 60 cents.

The Government is paying for common labor at the rate of 37½ cents an hour, and carpenters get from 40 to 50 cents. Teamsters are paid \$60 per month and board. Most of the station work given out thus far has been let to the "bohunks," as the laborers from Greece and Montenegro are called. The common wages in this part of Alaska have been \$3.50 per day and board or \$4.50 without board. By the time a workman pays for board and room he has from \$1.40 to \$1.60 left. A large number of Alaskans have gone to the commission and tried to get contracts, but were turned down, and the contracts were let to "bohunks."

Undoubtedly there is some cause for complaint in a large number of cases. But, on the other hand, there are many unfavorable reports which have no foundation.

One set of men took some station work, and after the work was completed they had to wait eleven days for their checks from the Government. They kept after the commission, and after spending about three weeks they were paid for their work and lost time. Superintendent of Construction O'Reilly admitted that they were entitled to this pay because the engineers were slow in making their report.

In another case a teamster had been employed for \$60 per month. He notified them when he started that he was going to board at home with his wife, and this was shown on the books. When he had worked a month a check for \$60 was given him and the commissioners refused to give the matter any further consideration and told the man that he was out that much because the board was there and he did not take it, and for that reason it was his fault. After trying for three weeks, in every way possible, he finally secured what was due him. This was not done until he placed the matter in the hands of a lawyer.

The commission is making a charge of \$2.50 a ton for lighterage; that is, for landing the freight from the steamers to the dock. The Knik and Susitna Transportation Company is making a charge of \$2 per ton and lands the freight on the bank of Ship Creek. The drayage from the dock to the town is \$1.50 a ton from the Government dock and \$2 a ton from the beach, which makes the charges the same. The commission states that they are handling the freight at cost. The nearest to cost is about \$2.25 per ton. The transportation company pays \$1,000 a year license and pays its longshoremen 50 cents an hour, against the Government's 37½ cents an hour.

commission had made plans to construct their yards.

The Land Department then was called upon to survey and arrange for a new townsite on a plateau on the south side of Ship Creek, overlooking Knik Arm. The townsite is in every respect the ideal location for a city of several thousand people. The town of Anchorage has 121 blocks and over 1,400 lots, which are 50 by 140 feet. The streets are sixty feet wide and the alleys are twenty feet wide.

That the people have full confidence in Anchorage's future is shown by the amazing prices paid for building lots. These prices broke all sales records in the United States Land Offices.

On the afternoon of July 10, the new townsite lots were placed on sale. The first lot was appraised at \$400, and was sold to the highest bidder for \$825. The highest price lot went for \$1,175. The sale of lots for the first two days brought over \$96,000. Up to date the sales have reached over \$150,000. Naturally, all of the Government officials are highly pleased at the rapidity with which the lots were sold and at the prices they brought.

In the town of Anchorage the commission has already set aside a block for Federal Reserve, Municipal Reserve, School Reserve, and Recreation Parks, in different parts of the city, and for city wharves in different parts of the city which are on the water. The commission has partially cleared the greater portion of the city by cutting and burning the trees. The streets have been cleared, the commission having placed an assessment of \$10 on each lot within the cleared area in order to cover the expenses of this work. The commission is also clearing the Federal Reserve block and will erect thereon a building to be used by the Post Office. A temporary dater supply is being put in, and many improvements are well under way.

The appraised value of the lots ran from \$25 to \$400. The lots are paid for according to this ingenious and generous plan. If a lot is sold for \$25 the

purchase price must be paid in full; if a lot is sold for less than \$70, then \$25 must be paid and the remainder is allowed to run for a period of five years.

If a lot is sold for more than \$70, one-third of the purchase price is paid at once, and the balance paid in five annual installments. That is, if a lot is sold for \$300, then \$100 is to be paid at once, and \$40 a year for five years, with no interest.

Chairman Edes and Mr. Mears of the commission, together with Superintendent of Sale Christensen and Superintendent of Construction O'Reilly, made a trip up the Matanuska on the 13th of July to look over some of the railroad line and the new townsite at the junction. On their return they made the announcement that there would be no more townsites surveyed this year or offered for sale.

The Alaska Engineering Commission has constructed a temporary dock near the beach to take care of its freight. When the commission first arrived at Anchorage it was seriously handicapped by the lack of sufficient lighters to handle the freight from the steamers. The steamers anchor about one-quarter of a mile from the temporary dock, which measures 60 by 200 feet.

It is the intention of the commission to dredge a channel from the point at which Ship Creek flows into Knik Arm to a depth sufficient to make it possible for the largest steamers to dock at the Government docks. Pilings have been driven along the proposed channel and a drill will be used to ascertain the character of the ground to be dredged.

To date the commission has constructed about three-quarters of a mile of road, and the work is by no means completed. A large number of the station men have not as yet completed their work, which was to have been finished by the first of July. From present indications it will not be completed before the 15th of August or later. The right-of-way has been cleared for about fifty miles toward the Matanuska coal fields.

The labor question at the present time is very serious. Hundreds of Alaskans as well as hundreds of men from else-

**I**N August, 1914, the Government commenced survey work on the east side of Knik Arm, a tributary of Cook Inlet, in Alaska. In April, 1915, the place had developed into a great city of tents. And now, in August, 1915, it has become the flourishing town of Anchorage, with broad streets, tall buildings, and provisions for every modern improvement.

Thus during a year when hundreds of European towns were wiped away by war an American waste became, as if by white magic, a prosperous and busy town. Not even the records of Colorado and California when the soil first revealed its precious ore furnish any complete parallel to this amazing development. For Anchorage came suddenly into being, not because of the deceptive lure of gold, but as a result of that sure herald of commerce and civilization, the Government railway.

Anchorage is the first townsite to be thrown open by the Government, along the line of the new proposed Government railway, as provided by Congress. During the Summer of 1914 the Alaska Engineering Commission commenced survey work from this point, and at that time notices were posted warning people not to locate on any of this ground.

When the commission left Anchorage last Fall there were very few people in the place, but during the Winter hundreds came and erected tents and temporary frame buildings. When the commission returned this Spring they found a very large city of tents. The tent city sprung up on the north side of Ship Creek, which flows into Knik Arm, the very spot where the

### Interesting Bits.

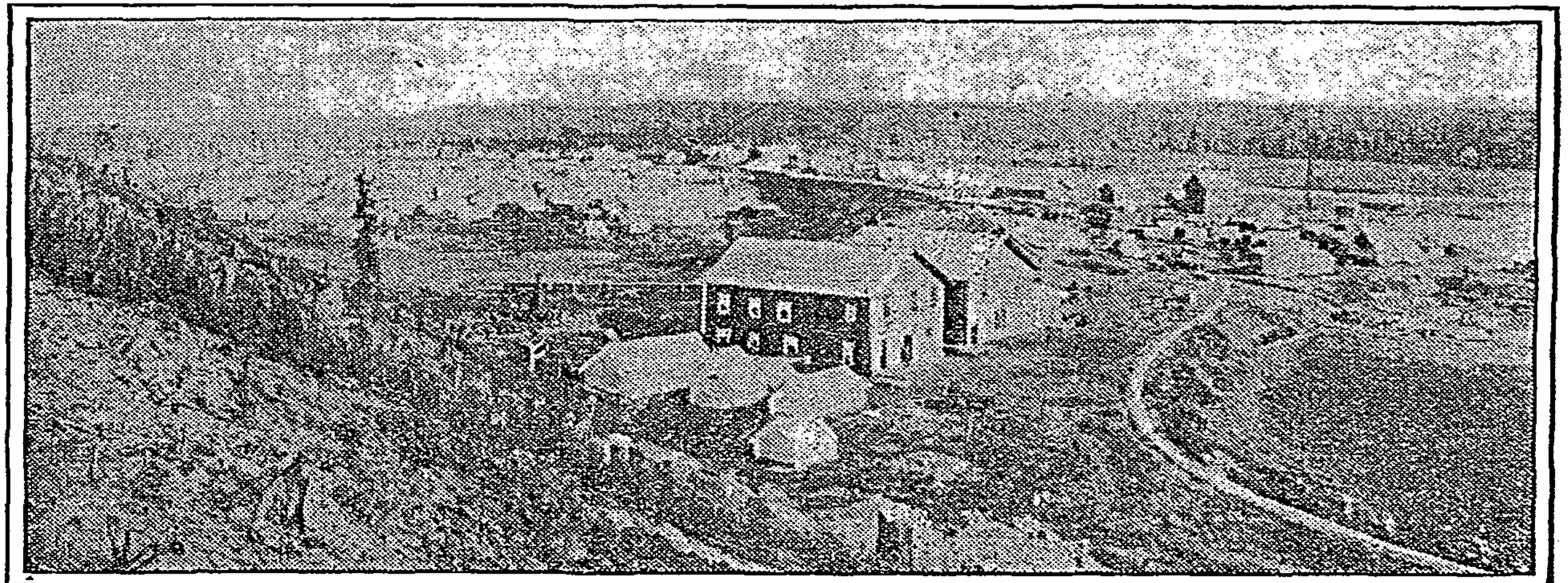
**A** NEW Philippine health law creating a service similar in organization to that of the States Public Service went into effect July 1. The administration of the health laws of the respective provinces and medical, surgical, and sanitary work of a public nature will be under the supervision of the new body.

A motor cycle street sweeper is a new American machine. It is mounted on a side-car chassis of peculiar design, and in front of the sweeping mechanism is a steel brush that loosens the dirt so that the broom may easily remove it.

A census of the Netherlands taken this year shows the population to be 6,331,000, there being 45,000 more females than males. The population in 1910 was 5,898,000.

The value of railroads and their equipment in the United States is placed by the Federal Census Bureau at \$16,148,000,000; of street railways, \$1,596,000,000; of telephones, \$1,081,000,000.

There is a high infant mortality in China. The English authorities in Hongkong have endeavored to keep statistics, and the results indicate that only 72 Chinese children in 1,000 survive the first year.



The Tent City of Anchorage. The Buildings in the Foreground Are for the Government Hospital.