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RETROSPECT AND FORECAST

THIS (Christmas) issue marks the end of the calendar year, and almost the end of the first year of existence of the new FRISCO SYSTEM MAGAZINE. In the rehabilitation of this publication, which commenced with the February issue, we announced the intention of placing before our readers a magazine of real facts and figures—one that would appeal to the searcher for information in regard to the constantly enlarging territory traversed by the rails of the Frisco System. This we have endeavored to do, in some instances even to the sacrifice of literary attainment. Many articles bearing the stamp of real literary merit have been rejected, in the belief that they would appear out of place in a publication, the announced intention of which was to promote the interests of the communities served by our lines, and to interest the homeseeker and investor in a new and fast-developing empire—"The Great Southwest." While we have, from time to time, employed writers of practice and known ability, to exploit in these columns the merits of certain localities and industries, there is traceable in most of our work, during the year now closing, the pen of the man who writes, not from attainment in literature, but from direct and intimate knowledge of the subject treated of. The men who write our articles on farming are men who understand, from practical experience, the subject they are handling, and the same rule has, with few exceptions, been followed in the other subjects treated of.

We have only one complaint to make of the treatment accorded us in the conduct of this work—we have not received as many letters of advice and criticism as we could have wished for. It should be borne in mind that this, like other magazines, is conducted for the enlightenment of those perusing its columns; and we are, at all times, glad to investigate and describe in detail the resources and promise of any locality or industry reached by the Frisco System. On the other hand, our columns are open to those interested in the development of any portion of our territory, who desire its capabilities exploited to the homeseeker or investor.

"Motion means money." The pith and point of this axiom was realized by the builders of the southwest years before the man to whom it is attributed achieved prominence. But it is a slogan that may well be adopted by the promoters of an empire that is now drawing to itself the attention of the civilized world. The Southwest today offers greater and more substantial advantages than ever before in its strenuous history. The same may be said of that great territory lying south of Mason and Dixon's Line, which is now enjoying a degree of trade activity and prosperity unknown before.

Taken all in all, the readers of the FRISCO SYSTEM MAGAZINE have every opportunity to familiarize themselves with a territory offering inducements to the most active promoter, and not less to the most conservative investor. The results achieved by this publication during the year now closing, lead us to look forward to another year of still greater usefulness in the conduct of a work calculated to attract attention to a territory deserving of much more than even the world-wide comment its substantial prosperity is now attracting.



Frisko System Magazine

.....ISSUED BY THE.....

Passenger Department of the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad.

*Devoted to the Development of the Resources and the Promotion of the Mercantile,
Manufacturing and Agricultural Interests in the Territory of the FRISKO SYSTEM.*

Publication Office, Third and Locust Streets, St. Louis. E. P. O'Fallon, Manager.

Vol. 1.

DECEMBER, 1902.

No. 11

A LITTLE JOURNEY INTO ARKANSAS.

BY JOHN H. RAFTERY.

It has been my fortune during the past year to spend some months in the famous fruit regions of Michigan and therefore to know, at first hand, something of the native resources of that district and something of the incessant endeavor which has made it famous. The climate is rigorous in spring and winter, often harsh even in summer, and in the autumn as whimsical as a woman's moods. Its beauty—and it IS beautiful—has in it the sting, the poignancy, the threats of the moist winds that whip from the great inland seas which almost surround the state, teasing the nights with chilly shrillings even in summer, and withering the face of nature in the autumn before the Indian summer days of more southerly states have felt the tang of the first frost.

And yet the huddled farmers of that widely praised fruit region of Michigan cling to their small holdings of land with jealous devotion. Something of the Dutch thrift is in their blood; they toil and figure and lay awake o' nights, but they seldom sell out. They have at times pests of insects and visitations of blight which destroy some of their profits, but they stick manfully to their tasks and hold values high. Living is costly, for lumber and coal, cattle and corn are scarce and there the winter bites with fangs of steel. Fifty dollars will not

buy a good acre of fruit land in the Michigan belt. The canny husbandmen are wedded to their homes, their farms. They have through the generations and through years of harsh experiences, adapted themselves to the hard accessories of their northern climate and they are happy, prosperous and contented. I think it is well for them that they are a home-keeping race.

I left Michigan in September, when the winds that rush hither and thither across the peninsula have in them those buffeting that make the bones ache and numb the fingers that would dally with rod and reel. And within a few days I was on the southern slope of the Boston mountains, in Crawford county, Arkansas, with a pungent south wind blowing in my face and the wine of a matchless autumn day stirring my blood. I have lived in Colorado, where the mountains, vast and cold, in winter look like the rust-brown fragments of iron desolation; I have fished in Tahoe in the Sierras in the fall when the whole world seemed plumed with mourning timbers, scarred with rushing mountain rivers and innocent of drill or plow. I have stood at the measureless rim of that "inferno, swathed in soft celestial fires," in Arizona, where veteran travelers are mute and terrified in the presence of such pitiless immensity. And in all of these mountains, in

all the splendors of their titanic size, in all the mysteries of their wan abysses, I have never said "Here could be my home!"

But that is what one says, standing upon the verdure-clad mountains of Northwestern Arkansas, looking across the billowing plateaus of Crawford, Washington, Benton and Sebastian counties. There is a winsome tenderness about that region that is not all of the atmosphere, nor all of the magical beauty of the scenery, nor yet all of the bourgeoning sod, but, I guess, some subtle blending of all these, some feat of Nature's necromancy, some spirit of the earth, the sky and air that springs, sun-

and grains that are ripening before the frost is melted in the backward regions of the north.

Now, if I happened to be a Michigan fruit farmer, or any kind of a farmer, I'd be tempted to sell out, pack up and come to Arkansas, and the wonder of it all is that, in spite of its almost unequaled climate, its rare beauty and absolutely incomparable fructivity, these northwestern counties of Arkansas have not yet reached the tenth part of their possibilities, have not known one-seventh of the population which their teeming fields, ore-charged mountains and matchless fruit lands could well sustain.



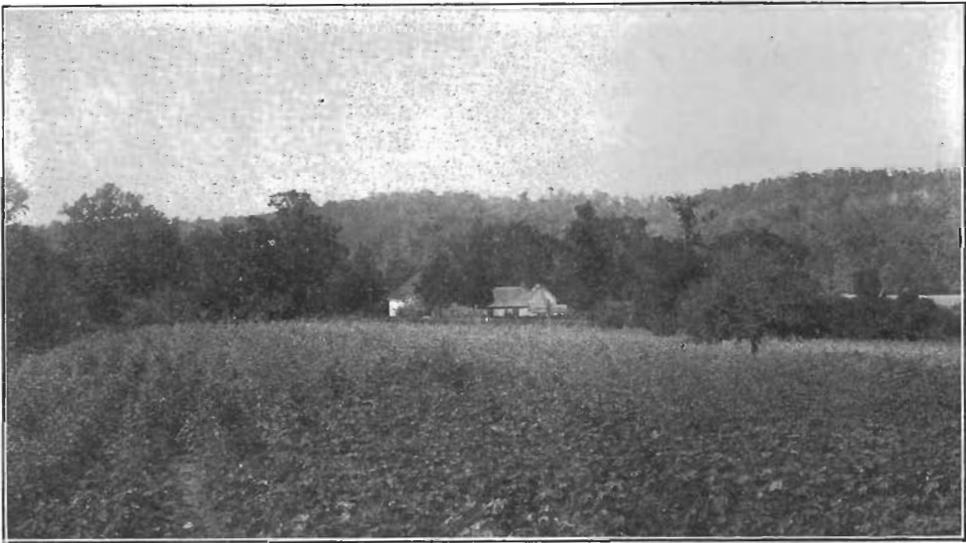
North Arkansas Farm Scene.

touched, from the matchless alembic of those hill-encinctured vales. Here could be my home, you say, looking from hill to hill through the gold-gray haze of the gentle Indian summer; here could be my home, you think, when the frost is in the dry, brisk air of winter like courage in the nostrils of a boy, and the hills stand 'round about the sheltered valleys so that you forget the blight of the blizzards in the northern states; this could be my home, you say again in spring, when the sap is stirring and again when the golden days of summer come crowding on with fruits and flowers

In Crawford county alone there are 400,000 acres, and if the 22,000 people living within its borders were scattered equally throughout its expanse, there would be but one person on every twenty acres. Similar conditions prevail in the other counties of this singularly beautiful region, and even now the great volume of emigration which passes annually over the Frisco System to the western and southwestern wonderlands of Oklahoma, Texas and Indian Territory pauses not for the no less salubrious, equally fertile but far more beautiful farm and orchard lands of Northwestern Arkansas.

It has been said that in Southern California they sell climate by the acre and certainly they get good prices for it. In the rich farming districts of the north you buy land without reference to atmospheric conditions. In the semi-arid regions you must supply water for agriculture by artifice. In the cold regions you must combat the rigors of nature by artifice, too. But in Arkansas, especially in those upper altitudes, those radiant reaches of the hill-district, you will find a climate that is not surpassed in America, a soil that has no superior for fruit, for grain and for every flower, forage, feed or fabric plant that grows in the

for instance, is said by fruit experts to be capable of producing more apples of a uniformly high quality, than any similar area in the United States. And yet it has not attained more than one-tenth of its limitations in this single particular! Last year the county marketed 9,000 crates of strawberries, delivering them in northern markets from two weeks to two months earlier than rival sections of even the South, and at a profit not excelled in any berry-raising district. The county might just as easily have marketed ninety thousand crates, because the demand for the early strawberries of Arkansas is unlimited, their fame



Cotton Field on Boston Mountains, Ark.

temperate and semi-tropic zones. When you buy an acre of land, the cubic acre of atmosphere that is "thrown in" is neither the brass-blue rainless air of the desert nor the storm-laden, marrow-piercing climate of the north.

I'm not sure that the average farmer "figures" much on climate. The masculine fruitraiser is apt to be satisfied if he flourishes either by the sweat of his brow or the frost-bite of his ears. But if he can flourish with less labor and without encountering the frozen face, what's the use of remaining a martyr? Benton county, Arkan-

is established and the accessible markets are expanding more rapidly than the supply. Land is more than fifty per cent cheaper, on an average, than the fruit lands of Michigan; the natural precipitation of moisture is greater than in the fruit belt of Texas, the number of rivers and springs of pure water is greater than in any other Southern state, and yet the climate is as equable and as healthy as in the sun-bathed valleys of the Red river.

The railroad, educational and social progression of this portion of Arkansas are already years ahead of the tributary popu-