

THE BROWNWOOD REGION.

Facts about a rich and fertile district of which but little is known.

BY W. H. C.

The Brownwood country, which includes all that territory for many miles around the city of Brownwood, in Brown county, has become almost as well known as Texas itself. There are many things that have contributed to make this particular section of Texas far-famed. In the first place, it seems that only the cleverest people from all the country, by a

financial stress, Brownwood grows right along and values increase. Mention is often made of the natural advantages of a place, and while Brownwood seems to have nearly all of these that go to make a city, they do not, as in many places, stand in the way of the hard work necessary to the upbuilding of a country. In its location, Brownwood is particularly for-

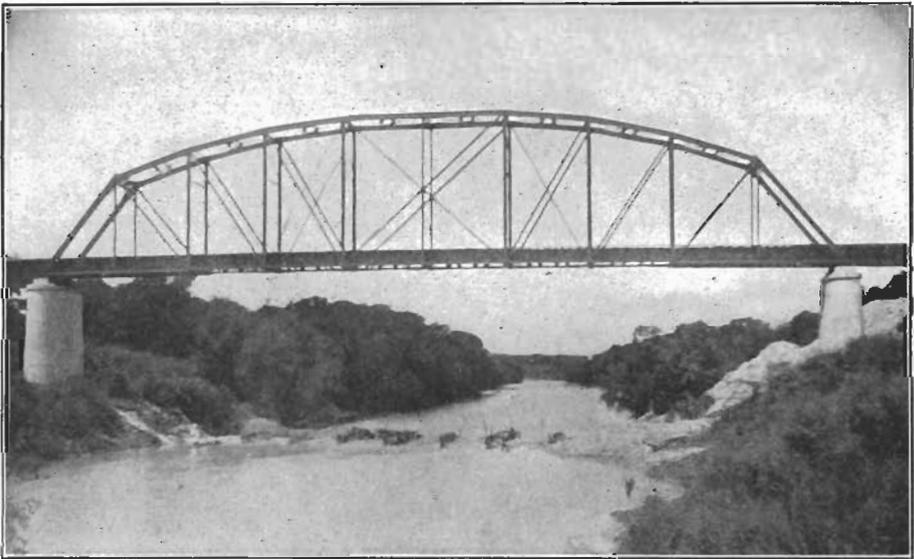


kind of common consent, have located in Brownwood. They are not only clever, but they are enterprising, and never let an opportunity pass to let strangers know the many advantages of their town and country. This spirit of keeping something doing all the time attracts much attention to Brownwood, and keeps the town steadily growing and the country round about developing. In this connection it should be stated that there has never been a boom of any kind in Brownwood; but its growth, year by year, has been steady and permanent. Even in times of the severest

fortunate, it being at the intersection of the Fort Worth & Rio Grande division of the Frisco System with the western branch of the Santa Fe, about one hundred and forty miles southwest from Ft. Worth, and about the same distance from any other commercial center of importance. It is on the Pecan River, and the center of the famous Pecan Valley of Texas, the very heart of the pecan industry of the State, where grow the finest paper-shell pecans offered on the markets of the world. The stream not only furnishes an ample supply for the city, but is utilized quite exten-

sively for irrigation, and its banks are lined with large native pecan trees. Near the city is perhaps the largest cultivated pecan orchard in the world, there being over 11,000 trees in one grove. When it is known that as many as seventy-five cars of pecans have been shipped from Brownwood in a single season, that the cars average 30,000 pounds each, and sell at about six cents a pound, it will be seen what a nice revenue is brought in from this source alone. The business is growing, and a number of small orchards have been planted in the past few years. The water supply of the country is ample for all pur-

tain that land which, in Brown county, averages in cost perhaps \$10.00 an acre now, will produce, one year with another, without any irrigation, as good crops, fruits and vegetables as any land in the State, regardless of value. This is saying a great deal, but the farmers produce figures to prove it. It is no unusual thing for land to net the owners, in a single year, double its appraised value. A few instances are cited to show the productiveness of the soil. A few years ago a well-known agricultural paper offered \$100.00 as a premium for the largest proven yield on a ten-acre field of oats, and Brown



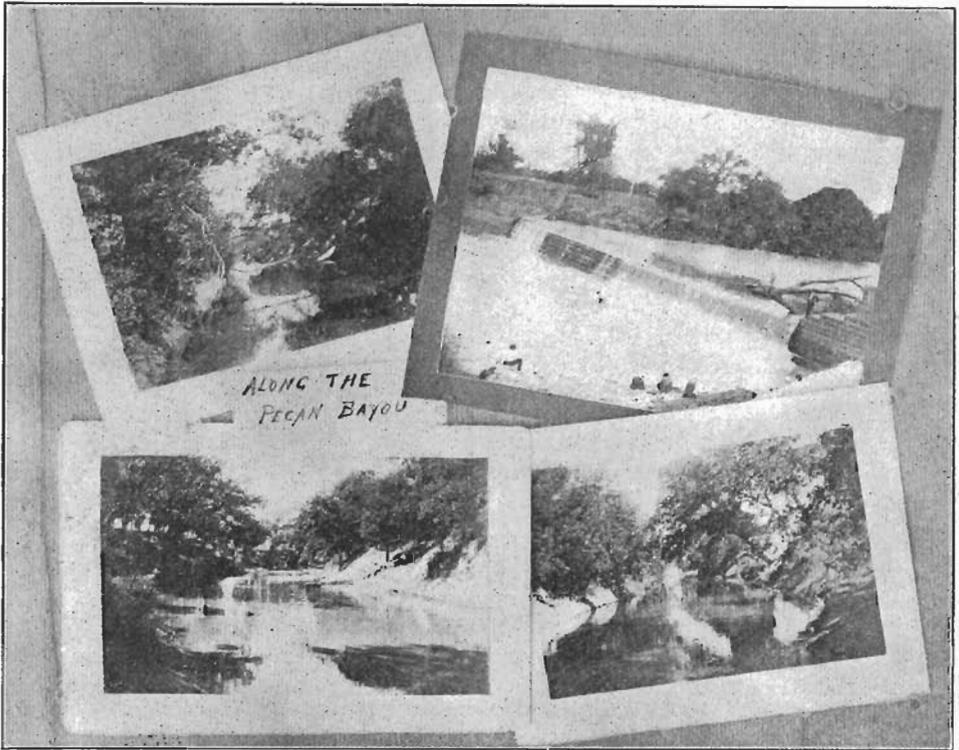
Colorado river bridge on the Brownwood-Brody line of the Frisco System.

poses, besides the Pecan river, which runs diagonally across the county, and the Colorado river, which forms the southern boundary, there being some fifteen or twenty smaller streams. Wells of good water are easily had anywhere from ten to one hundred feet below the surface. There is now a considerable acreage irrigated in the county, and this is being increased every year, the water being supplied from streams, wells and reservoirs. But farming is being done successfully, and has been for years, without irrigation, many dry land farmers contending that, in proportion to expense and labor involved, the unirrigated lands pay best. It is cer-

County captured the premium over the United States, without irrigation or fertilization. This year a prominent farmer of the Bangs country, in Brown County, threshed 124 bushels of oats from a measured fifteen-sixteenths of an acre, and sent a sample of the oats, with a statement to that effect, to the Farmers' Congress. Forty-five dollars an acre was netted from barley this season after the field had been heavily pastured. Another substantial farmer is authority for the statement that his potato patch grew potatoes at the rate of 252 bushels to the acre. Wheat sent from this county to the agricultural department has been pronounced equal to

the finest Genessee Valley wheat of New York, and, in favorable seasons, forty bushels have been grown to the acre. The past season a great many farmers grew twenty-five bushels and over. Two large flouring mills at Brownwood are kept busy day and night, an evidence of the large wheat interest of the Brownwood country. All cereals grow equally as well as wheat, oats and barley. Hays and all forage crops produce so abundantly that a simple statement of some yields would sound so large that the average reader

feed country there is no surprise when a person is informed that the cattle interests and general stock interests of the country alone are enough to keep the people prosperous regardless of other things. The mild winters decrease the expense of caring for stock, making this one of the largest feeding grounds in the State for finishing stock for the markets, which are now easily accessible at Ft. Worth; where parties do not care to ship farther north. Diseases among stock are almost unknown, the climatic condition being favor-



might discredit it. Corn this year will yield thirty or forty bushels to the acre, and Mexican June corn, which is extensively planted as a second, or catchcrop, after the cereals are harvested, produces about the same quantity. The sorghums, milo maize and Kaffir corn are also being extensively grown now, and produce enormous yields. A great deal of attention is being paid to alfalfa now, and as a consequence the interest in hogs is increasing. With such an ideal grain and

able for both stock and people. The cotton conditions are most favorable every year. Brownwood has marketed over 30,000 bales of cotton, and this year will exceed over 20,000. The decrease is largely due to diversification idea which has taken such a hold on the people of the county. Perhaps the average crop will be a third of a bale, though individual cases are cited of over a bale to the acre. There is seldom too much rain for cotton, never enough to damage it materially, and

such things as boll weevil or boll worms are unknown. It is claimed, and with much good reason, too, that at this altitude, 1,500 feet, the boll weevil has never done any damage, and, consequently, his depredations are not feared. Fruits and vegetables do as well as anywhere. Brown County apples have taken the blue ribbon repeatedly in State Agricultural contests. The best horticultural authorities say that the fine plums mature on the trees more perfectly here than anywhere else in Texas, and one man near Bangs, in Brown County, is preparing to plant eighty acres this fall to plums alone, and one man southeast from Brownwood, about twelve miles, is preparing a three hundred acre farm to plant in fruit orchard. Peaches grow to just as great perfection as in East Texas, and all the berries do as well. One leading Texas horticulturist, who has made a careful examination of conditions here, says that the Brownwood country is bound to become famous as a fruit country in the next few years. Potatoes and other vegetables will be planted on a large scale next year, and will, in a short time, be in all the markets of the country. In healthfulness the country is

all that could be desired, there being absolutely no local causes for diseases of any kind. The climate builds up most people who are run down in health, and many come here for that purpose. With such a productive surrounding country, with its advantageous location with reference to other large places, with its public-spirited citizenship, with the low prices on lands and city property, when compared with other sections, with the cordial welcome that is extended to new-comers and new enterprises, it requires no prophet to foretell that Brownwood, already the metropolis of a large section, will soon take its place in industrial enterprises and in population with cities now much more pretentious. Brownwood is already a city of some 6,000 people, has the usual enterprises of such places, is noted for its two fine colleges, its schools, its churches, its manufacturing industries, its large commercial interests and many other things that need not be enumerated in this article. There are exceptional opportunities in Brownwood for many manufacturing enterprises, and in the county for the farmer, stockman or horticulturist who wishes to better his condition.

CHICKEN MONEY IN DADE COUNTY.

A farmer who purchases forty acres of ground in Dade county, Mo., is sure to get the worth of his money, for he is delivered just twice the number of acres that he bargains for. This is due to the fact that Dade county runs from one hill into another and all farms have two sides to them, up one hill and down another.

This does not deter the farmers from making money, in fact the hills are the aiders and abettors of this feature of the Dade county man's existence. It is a very pleasant feature also. Dade county lies on the western slope of the Ozark range, in southwestern Missouri, but that side of the range has decided creases in it. The elevation of the county above sea level, at its lowest point, is 1,300 feet, while the

highest parts sometimes get into the lower cloud line.

Dade county, despite its rough surface, is one of the richest counties in the state, and its people are supremely happy. I spent a day in Greenfield recently and here around the court house square met many folk who had never seen any other train than those of the Frisco System running through the county, and who had never been fifty miles from their birth place in their whole life. To them a two-ring circus was the greatest thing that ever happened and yet they were far more content than the people I have met in the lobbies of the high-class amusement places of the biggest metropolis.

Greenfield is the county seat of Dade

and the town is perched majestically upon a high hill, while in the valleys below are rich wheat and corn fields and upon the hillsides are numerous orchards, each covering several hundred acres. In places where the land is too rough the farms are turned into melon patches, poultry farms, etc. Dade county is also rich in mineral. An accurate idea of the wealth of Dade county is given in the official report of the government issued in 1900. The total number of farms in the county at that time was 2,732, of which all were improved with buildings except eighty-three. The total acreage of these farms was 294,434 acres, of which all but 86,847 acres were improved. The value of the land and improvements, excepting the buildings, was \$4,676,280, the value of the buildings being \$814,410; the live stock in Dade county is worth \$1,181,211, while the value of the products not fed to live stock, for 1900, was \$1,218,000.

The live stock industry of Dade county is not a small item. On June 1, 1900, there were 4,712 calves under one year, 2,717 steers under two years and 2,257 steers under three years. The number of dairy cows amounted to six thousand or over. At that time there were 29,000 hogs and 277 goats in the county. But now the goats are increasing and the hogs are increasing also. Fat hog shows are getting "faddish" with the farmers and they are even making up purses to send some of the best to the fat stock shows at Kansas City and St. Louis. From the goats in 1900 there was shorn 17,850 pounds of mohair and from the sheep as much wool.

But Dade county is primarily a county gone to chickens. With them it is not a side issue, but as Mr. Willis King, a well known newspaper correspondent who traveled through that region recently, wrote his paper, "they clothe the children with chickens." If Sal or Sue or brother Will wants a new pair of shoes, or a new hat or something of that sort, the parents take in a coop filled with fat pullets and bring back the desired articles. It is just like finding it, they say. The value of all poultry in the county on June 1, 1900, was \$50,336, while the year previous \$89,000 worth had been sold. In addition 746,000

dozen eggs were marketed from Greenfield and other smaller towns in the county.

The egg shipping business has received a great impetus of late, however, and this year one million dozen eggs were shipped from South Greenfield on the Frisco System, to Kansas City and St. Louis. Packers are establishing branches all over the county. Poultry raising is a great deal a matter of fashion anyhow, for anywhere in Missouri can poultry be raised with profit, but only in those counties where one neighbor tries to outdo the other does the business become of gigantic proportions. At Springfield, the "queen of the Ozarks," the chicken and egg shipping business is one of the most extensive industries of that town.

Greenfield is a model town, inasmuch as its people are moral, religious and happy. There are signs carved into the stone walks along the main streets advising the passersby to "get right with God," and there are no saloons in the county. Dade county has no town over 2,000 inhabitants and can therefore make liquor selling prohibitive by high license. The people are not in for a change, either, as they say drunkenness begets idleness and idleness is likewise prohibited in Dade county. I never witnessed such activity in a Missouri town so small as Greenfield. Even the old Missouri mules seemed in a hurry to get home. Speaking of mules, it seems that the buyers of mules for the Boer war forgot to come to Dade and that there is a surplus on hand. The hitching rack around the court house square on a Saturday afternoon is lined with teams, and five-sixths of the teams are mules. The implement stores prosper in Dade county because of the fact that the farm machinery is quickly worn out in the rocky soil. A hardware drummer told me that he did more business in Greenfield than any other town in the state twice the size. But a failure in the valleys is seldom known and the farmers are all getting rich. One is impressed at once upon reaching Greenfield by the substantial appearance of the homes and business houses. The stores are of fine white native stone and the houses are newly painted. The farm