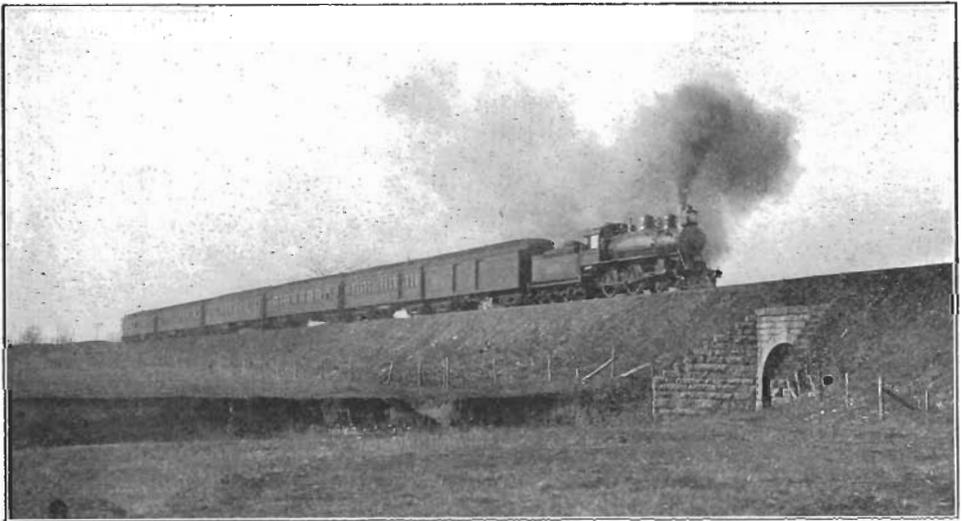


## THE OZARK REGION.

BY J. C. McMANIMA.

No well defined description can be given of the boundaries of the so-called Ozark Mountains. The term so-called is used because the use of the name Mountain is a misnomer, plateau being a better word. In general, it may be said that the Ozarks are a low, wide range of hills extending from near St. Louis in a southwesterly direction through South Missouri and Northwest Arkansas and on into Kansas and Indian Territory, but gradually getting less defined until lost in the prairies and table lands. The Flint

high state of cultivation, but gradually men found that fruit and grass would grow successfully on the roughest, and cultivation is gradually spreading, even to the least accessible portions. Two-thirds of that part of Missouri lying south of the Missouri river are in what may be classed as the Ozark region, the exceptions being the level lands of the southeast and the uplands of the northwest. The big fruit and mineral producing counties of Southwest Missouri and Northwest Arkansas are in the Ozark region and are very rich,



The "Meteor" speeding over the Ozarks.

Hills of Kansas, the Circle Range of Indian Territory and the Wichita Mountains of Oklahoma, all have some characteristics in common, and all trend in the same general direction, suggesting that it may be an arm of the Rocky Mountain system. The altitude of the Ozarks is at no place very great, the highest railroad point being 1,600 feet on the Frisco System, and there are no high peaks as is usual in mountain ranges. The summit of the range is in places a wide, comparatively level plateau or table land, while the slopes are more rugged, and in many places abrupt and precipitous. The table land of the Ozarks was first brought to a

The Ozark region is not without a history that is full of romance and bloodshed, but this is not the place to tell it. The Spaniards were the first explorers of whom we have any record, and it is known that they found and mined gold and silver, but the mines themselves have been lost, and neither metal is found in paying quantities, though it is believed to exist. During the Civil war, the Ozark region was the scene of many hard-fought battles and was considered common ground for the opposing armies. The early settlers of this region were largely from Kentucky and Tennessee and the hardiness and rugged honesty of these pioneers have left

their impress on the country and the people.

It is natural that the investigator should want to know why so much of the Ozark region is undeveloped and the population so scattered, and why it has been passed over by the pioneers of the farther west for so many years. It is natural that he should want to know why a country of such resources should be overlooked so long, but it is easy to understand when the conditions are studied. Let us look back for a moment, and consider. Half a hundred years ago gold was discovered in California and a little later in Colorado, and everybody wanted to get rich quick, and rushed across the plains. A little later the land-grant railroads rushed everybody to the western prairie states where farming was supposed to be all profit and little work. In the plains of the west railroads were easily and cheaply constructed, which was not true in regions like the Ozarks, and few companies had the money or courage to attempt it. Thus the logic of events kept settlement back for many years. In the meantime the early settlers were reinforced by others, and people gradually drifted into this region and settled down to a life of peace and plenty, and progress was steady even though slow. It was discovered that all who went to the far west did not succeed, and thousands drifted back.

In the meantime it was discovered that the Ozark region was full of mineral; it was found that many of our hills were largely composed of iron; that the greatest lead deposits of the world were in the Ozarks; that this region could supply the world with zinc, and the coal and natural gas to smelt our ores. It was found that copper, gold and silver were found in small quantities without extensive prospecting or deep mining, and that in fact the hills and uplands were full of mineral wealth. All the commercial clays, mineral paints, marble, onyx, tripoli and many other things were found in commercial quantities, but all this took time.

While these things were being discovered, other discoveries were also being made of even greater importance. It was found that even our rocky hills would pro-

duce wheat equal in quantity and quality to that of the famous northern wheat. It was discovered that big corn would grow on soil that was the rockiest. The blue grass of Kentucky grew everywhere; melons and sweet potatoes were of the best, and so of practically all of the grains, grasses and vegetables. It was also discovered that all kinds of domestic animals, from the common chicken to the thoroughbred horse, did as well as in any other country on earth. It was discovered that the winters were short, and the climate a happy mean between the extremes of the North and South. It was found that our laughing springs and sparkling brooks produced a life-giving drink to supplement the ozone of the Ozark atmosphere, that make one think that De Leon would not have searched in vain for the Fountain of Perpetual Youth, if he had penetrated the Ozark region. When these and other things finally forced themselves on the public mind there was a reaction and for some years development has been moving forward at a more rapid pace than formerly and it is now gaining headway more and more rapidly. Today several railroad systems penetrate this region, but the Frisco, the pioneer of the Ozarks, crosses and recrosses it and penetrates it in all directions, so that if you wish to see the Ozarks you can only do it by the Frisco System.

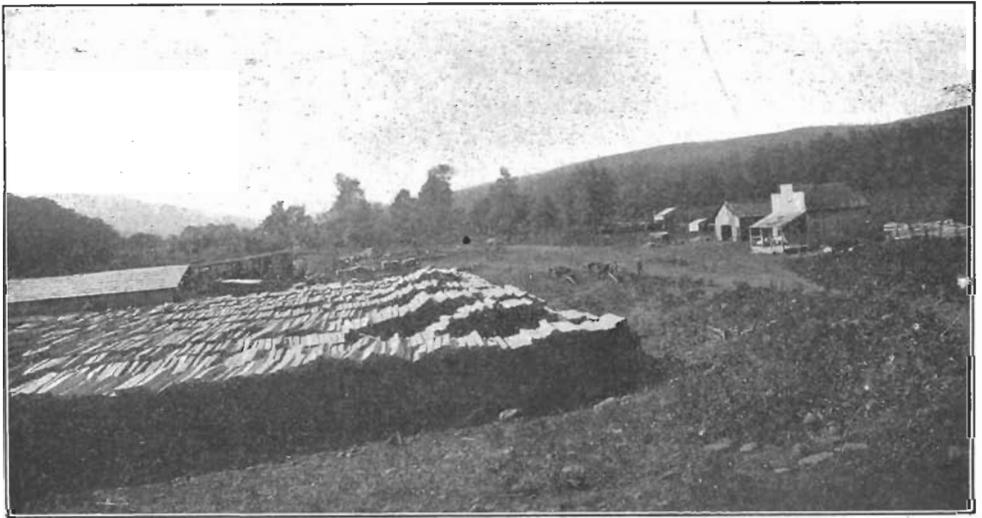
One of the first things to be considered by most people in a change of location is that of climate. Northern people are looking for a climate that is mild and has short winters, but do not want to get entirely beyond the frost belt. Southern people look for a climate with frost enough to kill the fever and malaria germs, but are fearful of the long winters of the North. Both classes can be suited in the Ozark range. These are some of the considerations that have made the Ozark region so popular as a place of residence. The growing season is long, but the temperature seldom reaches a height that makes the atmosphere oppressive and it is always pleasant at night or in deep shade. As far as healthfulness is concerned, it is believed to be one of the most healthful localities on the continent.

Next to climate, there are probably more who must be satisfied as to the quantity and quality of the water supply than on any other point, and in this respect the Ozark region has few equals and no superiors. Some of the springs of the Ozarks are looked upon as wonders of nature because of their immensity and grandeur. There are springs in this region that pour forth a volume of water sufficient to supply a large city for all purposes, not even excepting manufacturing purposes. The springs, abundant and fine as they are, are not all, for the Ozarks are traversed by many beautiful streams, so clear that a pebble may be seen at the bot-

more, while natural gas and petroleum are found in abundance to the south and west and no portion is far removed from fuel.

Wheat is a sure and profitable crop in the Ozarks and the quality is of the best. This is a winter wheat region, and in addition to a good yield of grain, is an excellent winter pasture for stock. Other small grains also do well.

Corn is raised extensively and is a safe crop, even on rocky land, and the yield is usually satisfactory, even if hardly equal in quantity to that of the best prairies of Iowa and Illinois. Broom corn, Kaffir corn and sorghum are also all raised pro-



Railroad tie mill near Chester, Ark.

tom, and the best of water can usually be found at a moderate depth by digging. Springs of great medicinal properties are also abundant and health resorts are springing up in various localities. Another never-failing source of water supply is the rainfall, which never fails to do its part towards maturing crops for those who have the industry to till the ground intelligently. There is no bad water among the Ozarks.

Fuel is another important consideration and in this we are peculiarly fortunate, as the greater portion of the Ozark region is covered by a natural growth of timber. The north slope of the Ozarks is almost a solid coal mine for a hundred miles or

fitably. Timothy is the favorite hay crop, followed closely by clover. In much of our soil alfalfa has proved very profitable and is growing in popularity. Blue grass grows naturally wherever it has an opportunity, and all the various cultivated grasses, such as millet and orchard grass, do well. Melons of the various kinds are cultivated extensively and our cantaloupes are not far behind the Rocky Fords of Colorado. That tomatoes are profitable is evident to the person who sees the scores of canning factories. Both sweet and Irish potatoes are grown extensively, as are onions, turnips, peas, beans, and in fact all kinds of vegetables. Every family may have a garden.

The Ozark region is justly called the "Home of the Big Red Apple," for it is here that the apple reaches the highest state of perfection in size, color and flavor. Many thousands of acres of orchards can be seen from the cars on any of the lines of the Frisco traversing this region, and every year adds many thousand more acres, and the market for our apples is world-wide and an over supply is practically impossible. The peach is a close second to the apple in productiveness, and consequently in profit. This is particularly true of the South slope where there is less frost than on that of the north. Grapes are grown successfully and much interest is being developed in wine making. Cherries and plums seldom fail to yield profusely and their flavor is fine. Strawberries are produced in immense quantities and shipped to all parts of the country in carload lots. All the ordinary berries are grown extensively.

An article of this kind would not be complete without reference to live stock. The pure water, good grass and healthful climate are sufficient to insure successful stock growing, and this industry is one of our most important. The Missouri mule is known wherever there is civilization, because of his endurance, strength and beauty, if a mule may ever be said to have beauty, and the Ozark mule heads the list. This is a horse country, as all will admit who take the trouble to investigate. Heaves and some other diseases so common in many states are almost unknown here and horses are unusually hardy.

The abundance of pure water and mild winters assure a fine cattle and dairy country here, and in this connection it is well to state that thousands of families can find good homes and profitable employment, with small capital, by coming to the Ozark region and engaging in dairying and stock raising. The Angora goat has proved himself well suited to our hilly districts, and the goat industry is growing. Sheep are at home in this region and can hardly fail to be profitable if given proper care. The diseases that are so disastrous to sheep in many states are nearly unknown here.

It will not do to forget the hog in this

connection, for he is always with us. The "razor back" has about disappeared and in his place is found the sleek, round, short nosed hogs, like you see at the fairs. The hog is the standby of the average family, here or elsewhere. Poultry is another thing to speak about, for go where you will in the Ozarks you will see chickens, turkeys, ducks, geese and other fowls in evidence. You will see them everywhere, and everybody will tell you that a family can easily make a living on a very few acres by raising poultry.

Land is yet cheap, but is gradually going up. Well improved, level farms can be purchased at from \$25 to \$50 per acre within reasonable distance of towns. Farms with poorer improvements or farther from market can be bought for much less. Unimproved land can be purchased in small tracts at from \$5 an acre up, and in many cases the standing timber will more than pay for the land. As in all hilly countries, there is a great difference in the land. There is much level upland that has little or no stone to interfere with cultivation; there is bottom land where the soil is loamy and deep; there is soil where the land is strewn with loose rock, but produces well and is lasting. With the exception of an occasional outcropping ledge of rock, there is but little of the land that will not produce good crops, and especially is this true of grass and fruit.

There are thousands of renters on the farms of the North and East and thousands of industrious families crowding each other out of jobs in the cities, that could secure homes in the Ozark region and in a short time be independent, healthy and happy. It might require some self-denial at first, and would require work, but both would be rewarded. The person who has been accustomed to farming land where a stone is seldom seen might find it hard to get accustomed to the rocks, but he would get accustomed to that after a time, and then he would enjoy the change. He would find that he could make a living here with less work than where he had been. He would find that he could get more comfort out of life than had ever before been his lot.

## CHANCE FOR CITY MAN IN THE COUNTRY.

By CHAS. W. BECKER.

This paragraph, usually accompanied with a good deal of comment, has been going the rounds of the newspapers lately:

"Every farmer boy wants to be a school teacher, every school teacher hopes to be an editor, every editor would like to be a banker, every banker would like to be a trust magnate, and every trust magnate hopes some day to own a farm and have chickens, cows and pigs and horses to look after."

And this is not only true of the trust magnate but of thousands of people in every city in the land. Tired of the turmoil of the strenuous life which daily saps their strength and leaves them mental and physical wrecks in the end, there is a longing in their hearts for the country—for a place where they can rest their weary souls. They have a few hundred dollars on deposit in the bank but they do not know how to get a farm with it. Used to reading of what big farms produce, they have come to believe that a man must own many acres and a big stock of implements and many horses and mules before he can succeed. They do not realize that it takes only a few acres, if well cultivated, to support a family. If the doubter will take the time to investigate he will be astonished at the income of the truck gardener in the suburbs from only an acre or so, or, maybe, only half an acre.

A farmer boy may go to the city and make a fortune in business enterprises as he develops but when old age begins to creep upon him you will generally find him stowed away in some snug cottage on a few acres of land in the country. He has learned in the city what he never believed while he was a boy feeding stock and plowing—that the farm is the best place after all. Many farmer boys have gone to the city and acquired business habits and then returned to the country later on in life, and by applying business principles, transformed the old run down home farm and made a great success as farmers.

It is the city man with business training who is needed in the country. The great need of agriculture is the application of exact business principles on the farm.

The man who has spent years in a city office knows the importance of accurate bookkeeping for success. If such a man goes to the country he will not guess at everything like the majority of the farmers do. He will farm according to business methods, knowing what each article costs him to produce. In this way he will soon learn to plant so as to economize on labor and get the most profit.

Success in agriculture as in any other business depends on the man. The farm offers lots of room for development. The day is passing when a farmer thought it was necessary to cultivate large tracts of land. He has learned that the more land he cultivates the more will be his expenses, without a proportionate increase in profits.

The country needs small farms and lots of them. Big farms, with tenants, can not be said to be profitable. What has been and is yet a great draw back to agricultural progress in Mexico is that all the good farming land is held by a few big landlords. The tenants on these big haciendas are reduced to serfdom. In England where the land is divided among titled estates, the evil effects of such an arrangement are most noticeable. For years the country population kept gravitating to the towns at such an alarming rate that the land owners became greatly alarmed. The matter was looked into and after the investigations the conclusion was evident that if the population was to be retained in the country, the big estates would have to be divided into small farms and sold to the tenants on reasonable terms. Many big land owners are doing that now.

There are in the United States, as every one knows, no estates similar to those in foreign empires. One often hears the city man say: "I would go to the country if I knew where to go. All the land is taken up."

True, most all the good farming land is