

greatest peach orchard in Missouri. It is the St. Elmo Fruit Farm, the property of the United Orchard Company, a corporation headed by John G. McNair, of St. Louis, and capitalized at \$1,500,000. This company owns orchards in seven States. The St. Elmo Fruit Farm covers 2,242 acres, having 103,000 bearing peach trees, 20,000 apple trees and 300 pear trees. It requires at least 1,000 laborers to gather and market a full crop of peaches on this farm and the management of this army is no small task.

Located upon the St. Elmo Farm are four large packing sheds, to which place the peaches are hauled from different points in the orchard. Here the packers, generally women and girls, are congregated, and pack the luscious fruit in boxes and baskets. The secret of peach marketing is in packing, not that the largest fruit should be placed in the top of the box, but it should be of uniform size, snugly fit together to prevent bruising in shipping and the "blush" of the peach always up, so that when the crate is opened it presents a tempting appearance.

The men who work out in the orchards gathering fruit usually have belts to wear. To this belt a hook is attached from which a half-bushel basket hangs. The picker can then pluck the fruit with both hands, gently dropping it in the basket. When a basket is filled it is placed upon a wagon to be hauled to the packing shed. Peach pickers usually earn 15 cents an hour, while packers get 20 cents a crate or 8 cents an hour. Foremen, inspectors and car loaders receive better pay than other laborers.

Besides the St. Elmo farms there are several other large orchards adjoining Koshkonong. Among these are the Oregon County Orchard Company, T. M. Culver, manager, 800 acres; Iowa Fruit Company,

O. L. Meek, manager, 560 acres; Lake Rowland Fruit Farm, Hitt Brothers, proprietors, 220 acres; Eglantine Fruit Farm, Ezra Craig, manager; Koshkonong Fruit Company, W. A. Dean, manager; Elberta Peach and Land Company, W. C. Paynter, manager; Crystal Fruit Farm, A. R. Amos, manager; Big Boulder Fruit Farm, J. D. Wilkerson, manager.

Eight miles north of Koshkonong is Brandsville, a little town where the large orchards and vineyards of the Brandsville Fruit Company are located. This town was founded in 1882 by Michael Brand, a Chicago millionaire, who bought 17,000 acres of land in the vicinity upon which to set out a large orchard and vineyard and to engage in stock raising. A wine cellar was erected and the vineyard and orchard set out after the land had been cleared.

For twelve years the company experimented with grape growing. After a large expenditure of money they learned that for red wine Norton's Virginia excelled and for the manufacture of white wine

the Cynthiana grape was best adapted for culture in this section. The company now has 65 acres in grapes, from which they expect to make 20,000 gallons of wine this year. The orchards of this company contain 16,000 peach 18,000 apple and 2,000 plum and pear trees.

West Plains, the center of the Missouri Peach Belt, is a city of 4,000 population. It is a progressive city of wide-awake people, with schools, colleges, mills and factories. Here are located an ice and cold storage plant, zinc oxide works, flouring mills, machine shops, woolen mill, vinegar and cider factory, fruit evaporator, planing mills and a municipal water and electric light plant.

On the hillsides in the immediate vicinity of West Plains several fruit farms are found



Colonel J. C. Evans, Pioneer Fruit Grower.

The largest grower is G. L. Sessen, proprietor of the Howell County Fruit Farm and Nurseries. He has 471 acres in peaches, apples and strawberries. Other farms are the Lone Pine Fruit Farm, Joe Knoerle, superintendent, 360 acres; Wahldrue Fruit Farm, Forrest Cooper, manager, 173 acres; West Plains Fruit Company, 200 acres; Waveland Fruit Farm, 160 acres; Valley View Farm, 218 acres. Several smaller growers here have swelled the shipments from this place to the markets.

The pioneer fruit farm of Southern Missouri is the Olden Fruit Farm, located at Olden, on the crest of the Ozarks, eight miles north of West Plains. When Colonel J. C. Evans first made a trip through this country in 1880 searching for a favorable spot upon which to plant an orchard, he selected this plateau, naming it Olden in honor of Judge B. L. Olden, who afterwards became an attorney for the railroad which now traverses the country. In 1882, Colonel Evans set out the first Elberta peach trees in Southern Missouri. He also secured other varieties, but none grew and yielded such fruit as the Elberta.

For twenty-two years Colonel Evans has engaged in fruit growing at Olden. Prior to



Packing Peaches on the Olden Fruit Farm.

that time he grew apples and berries in the Missouri river bottoms of Clay County, where he still makes his home. There is no man in the State better posted on fruit growing, as is attested by the fact that Colonel

Evans was for thirty years President of the Missouri State Horticultural Society. Today he is an old man, but hale and hearty as ever, and whenever peach picking time comes he is constantly in the orchards, per-



Missouri Fruit Farm Packing Shed.

sonally superintending the gathering and marketing of the fruit.

The Olden Fruit Company owns 2,228 acres of land, the greater part of which is in fruit trees. Besides engaging in fruit growing, the company conducts a large general store and operates a canning factory and distillery during the fruit season. At this distillery, peach, apple and blackberry brandies are manufactured, which have attained a great reputation for excellence and purity.

Pomona is a station three miles northwest of Olden, from which much fruit is shipped.

The Pomona Fruit Growers' Association, composed of the growers of the surrounding country, directs the marketing and shipping of all the fruit from this point. The membership of this Association is over fifty, mostly small orchardists, but who are increasing their acreage of fruit trees each year.

The largest fruit farm in the vicinity of Pomona is the Missouri Fruit Farm, owned by D. C. Givens, of Evansville, Ind. This farm covers 820 acres and is located in a most favorable place for peach growing. Other fruit growers are Colonel H. D. McKay,

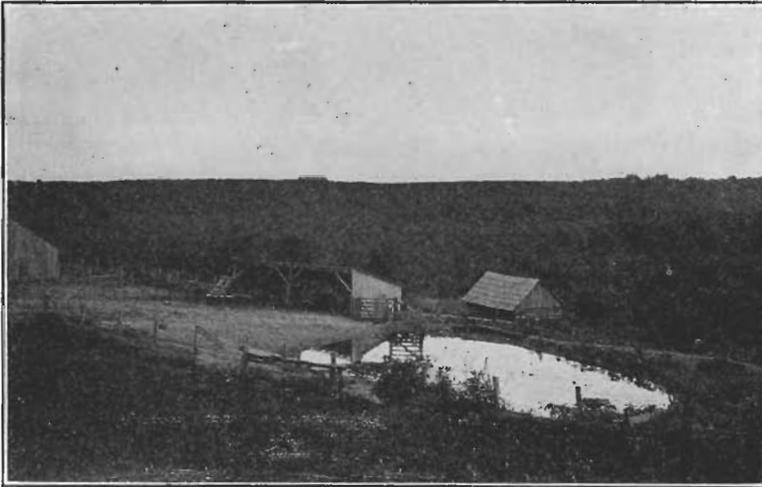
W. J. Kreybill, F. N. Richards, Mrs. Mary E. Scammon, Arthur Ferns, W. D. Scruggs, C. C. Heard, W. J. Hudson, Wm. Richards, Warren Pullis, James Stanley, Henry Swearingen, Walter Davis, W. B. Hamilton, J. T. Cadill and Wm. Pitts.

In the northern part of Howell county are Willow Springs, Burnham and Mountain View, which are coming forward with rapid strides as fruit shipping points. Willow Springs, where the Current River railroad branches from the Frisco to extend eastward into the timber country of Southern Mis-

souri, fancy stock were placed on the ranch this year.

Within the past six months over 500,000 peach trees were planted in this territory. Equally as many will be set out in the fall. When this immense number of trees get in bearing, Southern Missouri, with her already large producing orchards, will be able to supply the United States with peaches. The shipments of fruit from this section this season is estimated at about 500 cars.

The Armour Refrigerator Car Line handles every car of peaches sent out from this district. Every car is iced at Springfield and Willow Springs, where icing stations are maintained, and then rushed to the station where peaches are to be loaded into the car. The Armours control 16,000 refrigerator cars, which go to every part of the United States and are operated in a manner highly satisfactory to fruit growers.



A Peach Orchard in the Missouri Peach Belt.

souri, is the market place for many berry growers. Blackberries are the principal fruit grown here, although quite a few are engaged in peach and apple culture.

At Mountain View some Cleveland, Ohio, capitalists have bought several thousand acres of land from which the timber has been cut and converted into lumber. Upon this land a great many peach and apple trees are now flourishing, some being in bearing. This is a great apple section, and the crop is larger at Mountain Valley this year than at any other point in this section.

Between Willow Springs and Mountain View several St. Louis capitalists headed by W. H. Moore, President of the National Good Roads Association, have bought 2,000 acres of wild land, which is being converted into a fruit farm and stock ranch. The fruit is not yet in bearing. Six carloads of

section Southern Missouri affords a splendid field for investors. The land is low in price, labor is not high and is plentiful, orchards mature after two years planting and the peaches reach the markets when fruit from other sections do not compete with it. **A peach crop once every four years will pay big dividends upon the money invested in an orchard in this section, and taking into consideration that the country has had four good crops in the last six years, the receipts from fruit farms have been large.** Capitalists are becoming aware of this fact and many new companies are being formed and fruit farms started in the Missouri Peach Belt.

Leave the crowded city and get a farm in the southwest, at some point along the Frisco System.

THE PROSPEROUS SOUTHWEST.

BY J. C. MCMANIMA.

That this is a period of unrest is manifest to all thoughtful people. This unrest is manifested in many ways, but the one symptom that is unfailing is the constant moving about from place to place. Conditions change and people change with conditions. People from the east go to the west, and many in the west long for the childhood home in the east. People from the farms flock to the towns and cities while those in the cities want to get back to the farms, and thus it goes.

One great element in creating this unrest is the uncertainty of making profits in so many localities. Another important element is that of health, and closely associated with it is that of climate. The long winters of the north are discouraging, and especially so to those who know of the milder climes farther to the south. Farmers who have been accustomed to working very hard for a few months to provide feed and fuel for the greater part of the year, are learning that both the comfort and the labor can be more evenly distributed through the year by going further south.

Never before has any section of our great country held the attention and interest of homeseekers for so long a period as has the Great Southwest, and yet there is no cessation of interest nor in the movement in that direction. Those who go to the Southwest to investigate or locate are practically all missionaries to urge others to go and do likewise, and thus it is like an endless chain that keeps on and on as if there were no end. This endless chain work as to the Southwest has been going on for years, and like the rolling snowball keeps increasing as it progresses. There is a reason for this condition, and the reason is not hard to find.

The man of affairs knows that no section can continue to grow and prosper year after year unless there is a good reason why it should do so. He knows that merit, and merit only, will win during a series of years,

with a section of country as with an individual or a business concern. He knows that time is the unerring test of a country, and this southwest has now had that test fully applied.

"What is the Southwest?" is a question that has often been asked and as often answered, but not always are the same boundaries given. Some would restrict it to the Ozark mountain region; others would broaden it to include Arkansas and Indian and Oklahoma Territories, while still others would say Texas. Opinions differ in this as in other things, but I would include all that portion of the United States lying between the Mississippi river and the Rocky mountains, and South of the Northern line of Missouri and Kansas. Just take a map and look what a wealth of resources are to be found in this area.

Here is the great agricultural and mining state of Missouri; there is Kansas with her wheat fields, her ranches, her oil fields and her coal mines; Colorado is in the list also with her gold and silver mines and other resources without limit; New Mexico, a close second to Colorado, must not be overlooked; Oklahoma is in the list, and who is there who don't know something of the "Land of the Fair God?" We have also Indian Territory with her matchless agricultural and mineral resources; we also have Arkansas, a State that could easily support ten times its present population, and her neighbor, Louisiana, on the South; last but not least there is the Lone Star State, the great State of Texas, a State so large and with such varied resources that it could support and satisfy a nation. What a list this is, and why should not this area be prosperous?

Prosperity in the southwest is not a question of one year, for it is perpetual; it is not a question of one crop, for all crops are found here; it is not a question of locality, for the whole southwest is prosperous.

One crop may fail in a locality one year, but there is some other crop to take its place. If it is too dry for wheat and corn to thrive, alfalfa and cotton will fill the void. If it is too wet for the best results in cotton, the ground will be in such order that winter pasture of wheat will mean millions, and thus it is all over the southwest. All the conditions including the atmosphere, are optimistic and call constant attention to the bright side of life.

For many years there has been a constant flow of immigration into the southwest, while the outflow has been small. Wheat has not always been good in all localities; corn has at times been almost a failure; the weevil has at times cruelly devastated the cotton plantations and floods have come and drowned or washed out crops; but through all these things this section has steadily gone forward, meeting disaster with the cheerful optimism of well-balanced minds, knowing as these people did that the reverses were but temporary and the failures much fewer than the successes.

When the dark shadow of a financial panic hung over the nation and industries lagged and languished, the southwest was the only section to get capital to build more railroads and develop her resources. When other sections were enveloped in gloom because of impending disaster, the southwest was serene and hopeful because of the consciousness of its own invincible position and exhaustless resources.

Nature has indeed been lavish with the southwest. Here she has planted and nurtured her greatest forests. Here she has hidden her greatest wealth of coal, lead, zinc, gold, silver and other metals and minerals. Here she has deposited her greatest subterranean lakes of oil and deposits of gas. Here she has smitten the earth and caused the greatest springs to gush forth. Here she has marked the way for the greatest rivers to flow in their courses onward to the greatest waters of the earth. Here she has provided a climate that gives life, strength and comfort to man and beast. Here she has built up a soil that will produce

luxuriantly the products of the earth. In fact nature has done more for the southwest than for any other portion of the known world.

For many years the southwest was neglected while the central and northern west was being exploited. Then came a new set of railroad men into the field, and they discovered that the southwest was teeming with undeveloped wealth, and they turned their energies into the development of it. The result has been that several magnificent railroad systems have been built up in the southwest, one of the greatest of which is the St. Louis and San Francisco, or, as it is familiarly known, the "Frisco System."

It has long been recognized that "If the Frisco is there, it is a good country" and the management have prided themselves on the choice of country through which the various arms of this system have been built. South Missouri, South Kansas, Arkansas, Oklahoma, Indian Territory and Texas all owe much of their prosperity to this railroad system, and on the other hand the "Frisco System" would be impossible were it not for the magnificent resources of these states and territories, so that they are dependent on each other.

Yes, the southwest is prosperous; it has been prosperous many years; it will always be prosperous because it has the natural resources that would force prosperity under any circumstances; it will continue to be prosperous because it is peopled with a class that would not know failure if they met it on the highway; it will continue prosperous because it is gridironed with railroads which are using all the legitimate means in their control to make it and keep it prosperous.

With all these conditions, could the southwest be other than prosperous? With opportunities for investment and labor on all sides, is it any wonder that prosperity perches continuously on the banner of the southwest? With homes for the industrious poor, and a sure reward for labor, it is but