

# THE GULF COAST OF TEXAS





THE GULF

OF CALIFORNIA

AND THE PACIFIC



*The*  
**GULF COAST**  
*of* **TEXAS**

*The* **Winter**  
**Vegetable Garden**  
*of* **America**

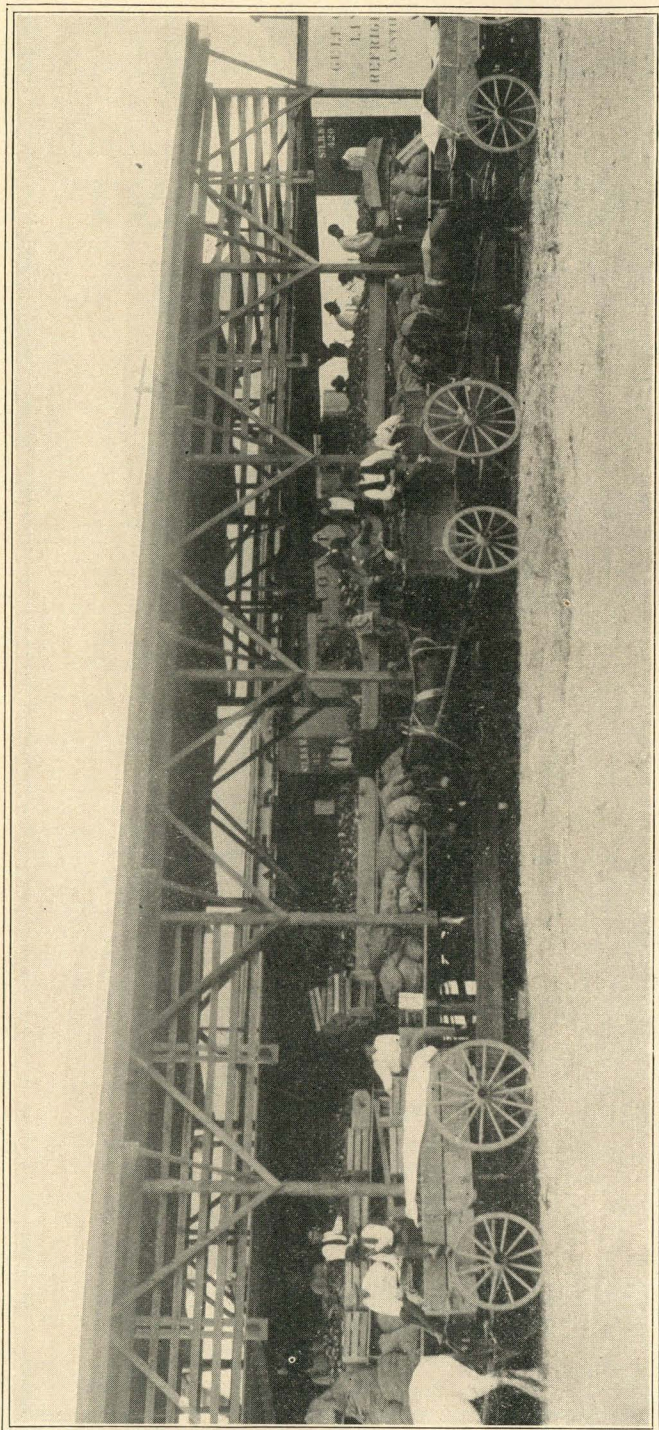
*"In no other place are the climatic conditions and the fertility of the soil so favorable to the support of human life."*

By C. H. Matson

**Passenger Traffic Department**  
**ROCK ISLAND-FRISCO LINES**  
Chicago and St. Louis  
1906

Copyright 1906  
By John Sebastian





Loading, South Texas Products at Corpus Christi.

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## FOREWORD

ONLY a few years ago millions of acres of land in the Great West were open to the homesteader. Today little of it is left that is of value. It has been changed into rich farms and has become the homes of millions of prosperous people. Oklahoma was thrown open to settlement seventeen years ago, and to-day upwards of a million of people in that portion of the new commonwealth are making the land give forth its wealth. An empire has been builded in a wilderness.

Yet the demand for new homes is unabated. Today it is greater than ever. The crowded inhabitants of the cities are anxious for more breathing space. Merchants, mechanics and professional men are seeking new locations. Farmers in the older states have raised families of boys whom they desire to locate on farms of their own, but land is entirely too high in the old home states to think of buying. Comparatively little good homestead land is still open to settlement, and the little that is left is rapidly being taken.

But here and there in this broad land of ours are localities where desirable homes may be made—localities that certain conditions have held back from settlement heretofore. Some of these new regions are localities where irrigation has recently become practicable—localities where a little water turns a desert into a garden and makes it produce riches scarcely dreamed of by those of older regions.

It is to tell something of one of these new localities—new in the sense that it has recently been opened for settlement—that these pages are written.

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## INTRODUCTORY

TURN to a map of the United States in some geography or atlas. Note the point of Texas that extends down between the Gulf of Mexico and the Rio Grande River. The first stream north of the Rio Grande is the Nueces. Place your thumb over this point of Texas so that it will just hide the Nueces and all below it. The territory covered by your thumb is one of the most wonderful agricultural lands on the Western Hemisphere—the future early vegetable garden of the United States.

Up to the fall of 1904 farming was hardly thought of in this lower Gulf Coast country except on a few plantations along the banks of the Rio Grande. It was given over almost exclusively to grazing. Now it is shipping hundreds of carloads of vegetables of all kinds for which it receives the highest prices. In another five years it will be storing up millions of dollars annually from its agricultural products alone, equalling California in many of its fruits, and surpassing every other region of the United States in winter and early spring vegetables.

The territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande under your thumb contains approximately twenty thousand square miles—about half as much as did the Territory of Oklahoma. It was over the possession of this region that the Mexican war was fought—and we are just discovering what wealth we secured when we convinced Mexico that the Rio Grande and not the Nueces should be the international boundary.

Land in this region can be purchased at from ten dollars per acre up, for large parcels, and at from twenty to thirty dollars per acre for small farms, located from eighty rods to four miles from a railroad station; and it will produce two crops each year, which, if grown and marketed judiciously, will bring the producer from one hundred to four hundred dollars an acre—and sometimes even more—for each crop.

These are astounding figures to the average farmer, but they are absolutely true, and you will discover how it is brought about if you peruse the pages which follow.

At the same time the climate is so delightful that it approaches that of the much-sought Southern California in winter, and the Gulf breezes make it comfortable during the summer days when the mercury is hovering around the hundred degree mark in the Middle West.

It is a region where many crops can be grown the year around, if desired; where the climate makes it possible to harvest "roasting ears" for the Christmas dinner, and ripe tomatoes, lettuce, cabbages, beets, and other vegetable delicacies in midwinter.

Therein lies the remarkable value of this land of the South. It is possible to raise a staple crop in midsummer when the

rest of the country does, and in addition it is the regular thing to harvest a crop of winter vegetables at a time when the rest of the country is willing and anxious to pay fabulous prices for them. Bermuda onions, for instance, frequently bring more than \$600 an acre.

It is a land where it is a delight to live and breathe; a land where the climate partakes of the healthful qualities of the semi-arid regions of the Southwest, but where surf-bathing and the salt sea air are only a few miles away. It is a land where the purest of water gushes forth from artesian wells, varying from six hundred to a thousand feet deep, and where fresh fruits may be picked at nearly every season of the year.

It is a land where the sportsman may delight his heart, where wild fowl flock by the millions along the coast during the winter months; where deer, wild turkeys and other game may be found in abundance; and where the tarpon, a prince among game fishes, furnishes the most exciting sport to be found with a hook and line.

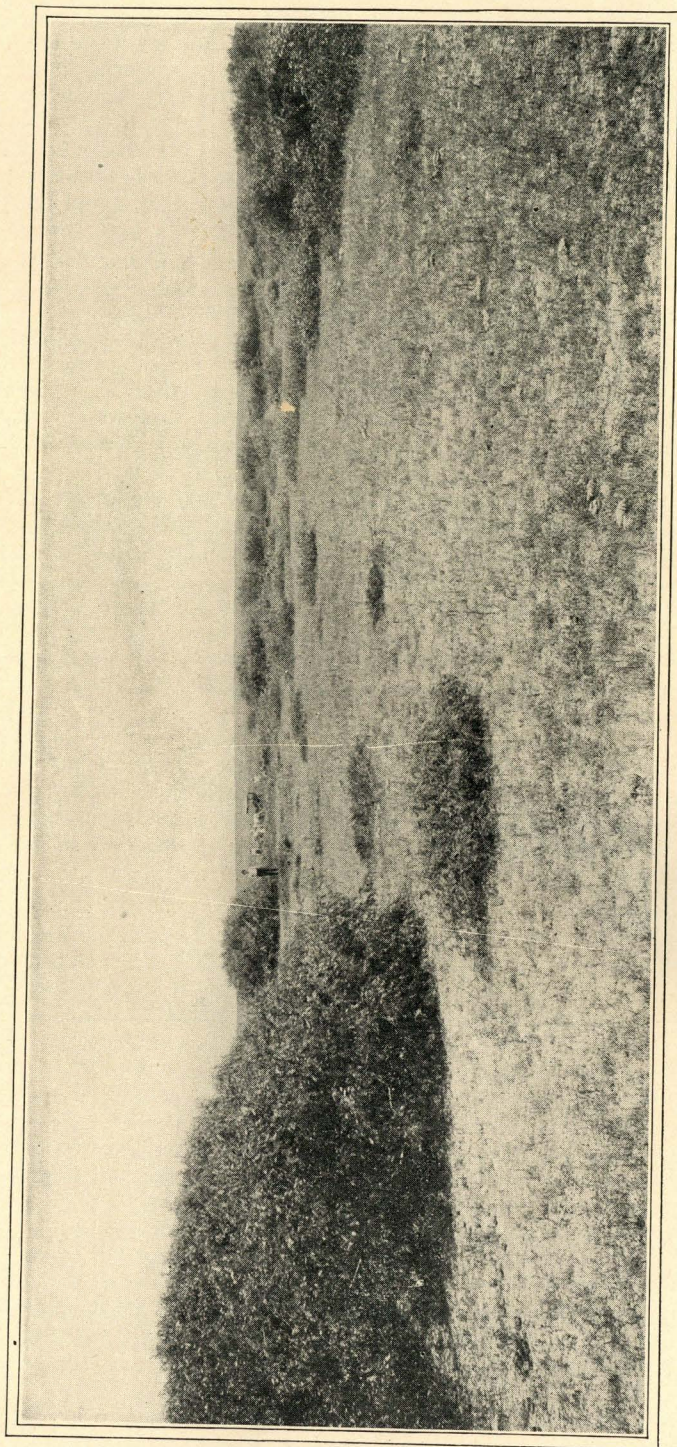
It is a land where the stock-raiser needs no shelter for his cattle—and where the nutritious grasses feed them during the entire twelve months of the year, with almost no thought from the owner.

It is a land that is ripe with promise for the future, a land wherein thousands of homes will be made within the next four or five years, where wealth untold will be taken from the fertile soil. It is a region where land may be worth a \$1,000 an acre ten years hence.

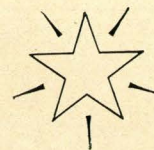
If you are interested in a land of this sort you may find it worth while to peruse the pages which follow. They are intended to describe what has already been accomplished in this new Southland, the conditions that exist, what is needed to make a home there, and what may reasonably be expected in the future.

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The Virgin Soil of South Texas—rich and productive.



### As to Texas

*Texas has almost every variety of Climate, Soil, and Product that is found in the United States.*

Everybody knows that Texas is a great state. It is a matter of common knowledge that if Texarkana were placed on Philadelphia, El Paso would be in the neighborhood of St. Louis. It requires only a glance at the map to show that if Brownsville were moved over to Mobile, the Panhandle would cover the state of Illinois, with Chicago in its northeastern corner.

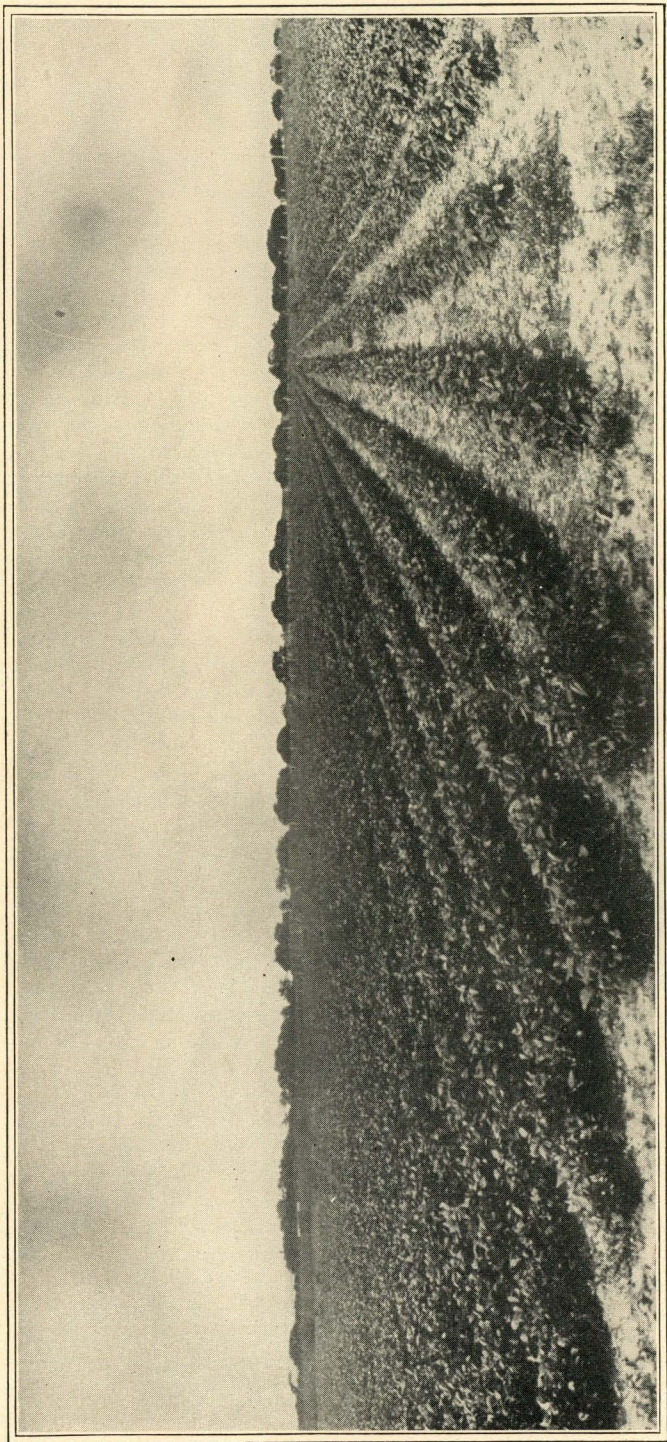
But comparatively few people stop to think what this means. Texas is simply Texas to millions of people, especially to those who live in the North. They think of it simply as a Southern state, but they do not realize that Brownsville is as much further south of Dallas as Dallas is South of Kansas City. Galveston and Houston are counted in Southern Texas, but they are about one hundred and fifty miles north of the South Texas region considered in these pages. The lower Rio Grande Valley is sometimes erroneously referred to as Southwest Texas, and so is El Paso, but they are eight hundred miles apart.

Texas has almost every variety of climate, soil and product that can be found in this great land of ours. It has the swamp and the desert; the ocean and the prairie, woodland and plain. It is winter in Northwest Texas while the Gulf Coast country is enjoying sunshine like that of May. Texas grows wheat like Minnesota or Kansas, corn like Illinois or Iowa, and more cotton than any other two Southern states combined.

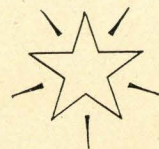
But Texas is great in other ways. It is a great wealth-producer. Few states can show as great gain in the comforts of life to the average of the population as Texas. It is also great in looking after the welfare of coming generations. It has the greatest permanent school fund of any State in the Union—between forty and fifty millions of dollars. And it is great in its economy. Only three other states have a rate of taxation as low, and in all of Texas it is no lower than it is in the southernmost counties. In Nueces County, for instance, it requires only 84 cents on each one hundred dollars of valuation to pay all the taxes, and this rate is divided as follows: State ad valorem, 20 cents; school, 18 cents; county ad valorem, 25 cents; county special, 21 cents. And in Cameron and Hidalgo counties it is only a trifle higher.

Within the past two or three years the world has been awaking to the greatness of Texas, but it does not yet fully realize it. And no part of this great state surpasses in opportunity and possibilities the Gulf Coast country and the region down by the Rio Grande.





A Field of Beans in the Rio Grande Valley.



### South Texas in General

*A wonderful diversity of crops, the always dependable supply of artesian well water, the finest southern climate in America—makes Texas and particularly South Texas, the great objective point for homeseekers.*

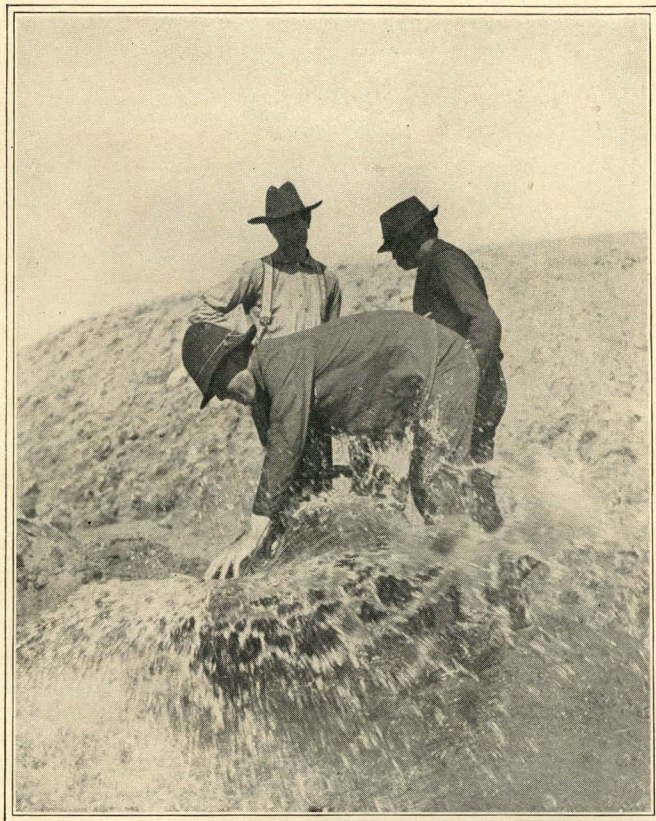
Few people outside of Texas—and not a great many in that state—have a correct idea of the region along the west Gulf Coast and the lower Rio Grande Valley. The general impression is that the Gulf Coast is swampy and reeking with dank vegetation, and that the interior of the South Texas country is barren and fit for nothing save grazing.

You, for instance, may think of the Gulf Coast country as one of swamps and morasses. It may suggest alligators, and marshes overgrown with an almost impenetrable tangle of rank vegetation, breeding mosquitoes and fever. The Gulf Coast region in South Texas is quite the opposite. It partakes of many of the qualities of the semi-arid Southwest. It is dry and elevated from thirty to sixty feet above the Gulf. And the interior, instead of being treeless as you might imagine, is covered with a great variety of shrubs and small trees, and among which grows the luxuriant grasses which fatten the tens of thousands of beeves that come from Southern Texas.

There is no more fertile region in all this broad land of ours than that between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. None will produce a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, or produce them more abundantly; and, what counts for more, the Gulf Coast country will produce them at times when no other region can. Yet up to the fall of 1904 comparatively little was known of this marvelous fertility. A few years ago it was supposed to be absolutely impossible to do any farming in this region, except along the banks of the Rio Grande where water could be pumped on to the crops when the rain-fall was short.

For there is a shortage of rains at certain seasons in the Gulf Coast country. Along the Nueces and north of it there is usually a sufficiency to grow cotton and corn, but it cannot be depended on at all times to grow those crops that require more moisture. There is really an average annual rain-fall of over twenty-six inches, which would be sufficient for most crops if it were rightly distributed, but it is not. Sometimes practically no irrigation is necessary, even in the lower Gulf Coast country, but in other seasons four to five irrigations are needed. And this is why there has been no agriculture in that great region south of the Nueces until recently.





A "Gusher" at Kingsville, South Texas.

### The Discovery of Artesian Water.

But now a change has taken place. Artesian water was discovered five or six years ago on the great King Ranch, forty miles southwest of Corpus Christi. After the first well was sunk, another, and then another, was put down, and each time, up came the pure, sparkling artesian water, flowing in great abundance. As time went on the artesian belt was extended until it now covers the territory from Robstown, sixteen miles west of Corpus Christi, to Raymondville, and is being extended monthly, with every indication that a satisfactory flow will be obtained in all territory not covered by the systems of irrigation on the Rio Grande.

Pure artesian water in abundance means wealth. It makes possible the cheapest kind of irrigation, and irrigation means crop insurance. The owners of most of the 150 miles of ranch land between the Nueces and the Rio Grande realized the boon that artesian water brought to them, but they also realized that without transportation facilities to carry to market the crops, agriculture in that section would be useless. The one hundred and fifty miles of coast country from Corpus Christi

to Brownsville was without a foot of railroad, and so was the lower Rio Grande Valley as far up as Laredo, two hundred miles above Brownsville. There was a demand for a railroad, and the railroad was built.

### Coming of the Railroad.

On July 4, 1904, the first train ran, over the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway from Corpus Christi to Brownsville, and to day it is operating north to Bay City. Within a few weeks it will be running its trains direct from Brownsville into Houston and Galveston, with a branch line seventy-five miles up the Rio Grande.

The railroad has opened this vast region to the possibilities of agriculture, and already it is shipping out hundreds of carloads of cabbages, onions, beets, carrots, lettuce, tomatoes, cantaloupes, cauliflower, potatoes, cucumbers, beans, asparagus and other vegetables.

Rice and sugar cane have been produced along the Rio Grande for several years, but only in quantities to supply the demands of the valley. The coming of the railroad opens the markets of the nation to these products, and sugar especially promises to become a source of great income. In no other part of the American continent can sugar be grown so advantageously as it is in the lower Rio Grande Valley. More cane per acre is raised, it is richer in sugar content, and it will grow twice as many years without replanting as in any other sugar-producing locality of the country. Before many years the lower Rio Grande Valley will be the "sugar bowl of the nation."

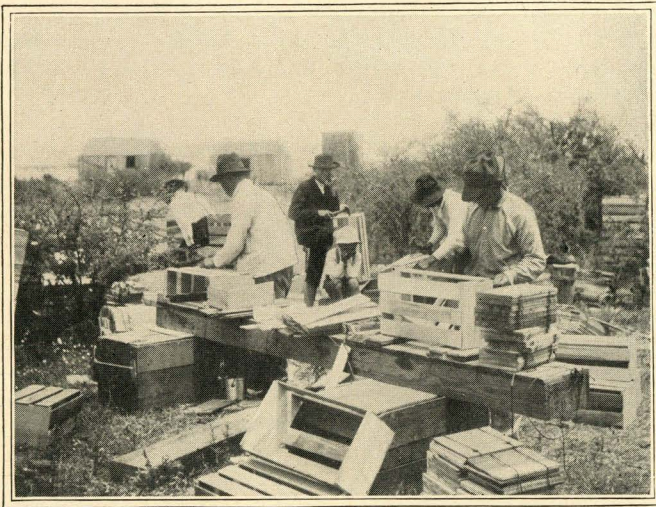
Experiments have shown that a wide variety of fruits of all kinds will grow in this South Texas region. Lemons from the Kenedy Ranch at Sarita were rated higher than any other exhibit of lemons at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Oranges and other citrus fruits have produced abundantly as simple experiments on some of the big ranches. Figs do well there. Grapes thrive with scarcely any care. Strawberries can be grown for the market in January and February. Some varieties of bananas, especially the plaintain, or fig banana, yield profitable returns. Loquats can be placed on the market in February and many other fruits are grown with success.

### Climate—The Great Asset.

But the great variety of crops and fruits that can be grown is not the greatest asset of South Texas. The climate, that makes it possible to place these crops on the market at a time when they will command fancy prices is what gives the Gulf Coast country an advantage possessed by no other region in the United States. It is this climate that makes it the winter vegetable garden of the nation.

Turn to your map again and note the comparative location of the south point of Texas. It lies three hundred miles further south than the southernmost parts of Georgia, Alabama and Mississippi. It is as far south of Atlanta as Atlanta is south of Chicago or Cleveland. It is five hundred miles farther south





The Products require many Crates.

than Los Angeles and the famous orange region of California. Brownsville, you will note, lies in the same latitude as the Everglades of Florida, but, unlike the Everglades, it has a dry, healthful climate.

This renders the tropical possibilities of South Texas far superior to those of any other region of the South. At the same time it has characteristics that make its climate more delightful than that of latitudes a thousand miles to the north.

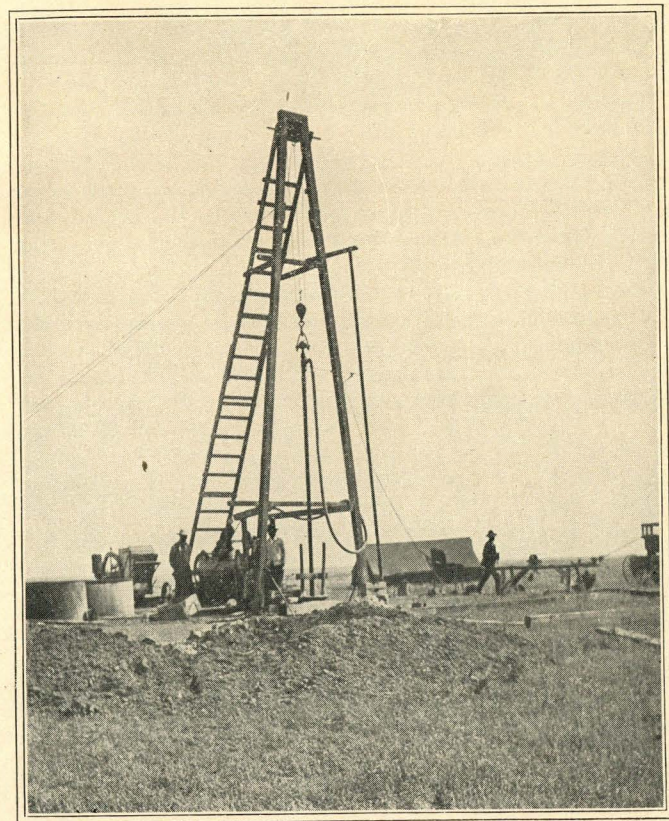
Only three times during the seventeen years that records have been kept has the mercury registered below twenty degrees. Yet it has never gone above 98 degrees in summer in this same region, and only four times in seventeen years has it been warmer than 96 degrees. One hundred degrees is by no means unusual in midsummer in Northern cities. In the Northern states, too, it is usually a soggy, damp heat, which makes it all the more oppressive and produces sunstrokes. South Texas is essentially a semi-arid region. There is little rainfall during the summer months—which necessitates irrigation—and the same dry atmosphere and rapid evaporation that renders 110 degrees fairly comfortable on the Colorado Desert makes the climate of South Texas a pleasure to man. Sunstrokes are entirely unknown. The writer of these lines slept under blankets in that region in the middle of May.

These facts, combined with the fertility and comparative cheapness of the land, makes South Texas peculiarly attractive to the homeseeker who has a little money to invest and who wishes to take up his abode in a pleasant land where he will receive large and quick returns.

### Not Government Land.

There is no government land in South Texas. It was at one time covered by Mexican and Spanish land grants, and the United States government has had no title to it. There are, therefore, no lands open to homestead entry as there have been in most of the new sections of the West. It is held, for the most part, in large ranches, portions of which are now being placed on the market at from twenty to thirty dollars an acre. Unlike prairie land, however, it does not require a quarter or a half section to make a farm. A man can do as well, or better, on forty acres of irrigated land in South Texas as he can on a quarter section of 160 acres on the prairies.

This region between the Nueces and the Rio Grande is rich in history. As has been stated, it was the cause of the war between the United States and Mexico — and its true worth to this nation is just now becoming apparent. It was worth saving. The golden cities for which Coronado searched are now building on the plains of Texas.



Digging an Artesian Well at Sarita, South Texas.



### The Influx of Americans.

During the years succeeding Mexican independence of Spain Americans began to drift into Texas along the upper coast country, and by 1830 there were 20,000 of them in that region. Mexican oppression brought on the rebellion led by General Sam Houston, which resulted in the independence of Texas, but the boundary line was not established for the Mexican frontier. Mexico insisted that it should be the Nueces, while Texas was determined to make it the Rio Grande. This was the situation when Texas became one of the United States and this nation assumed to fix the boundary line. Thus the question at issue was the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, the rich region that has only now been made available for agriculture by the building of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway.

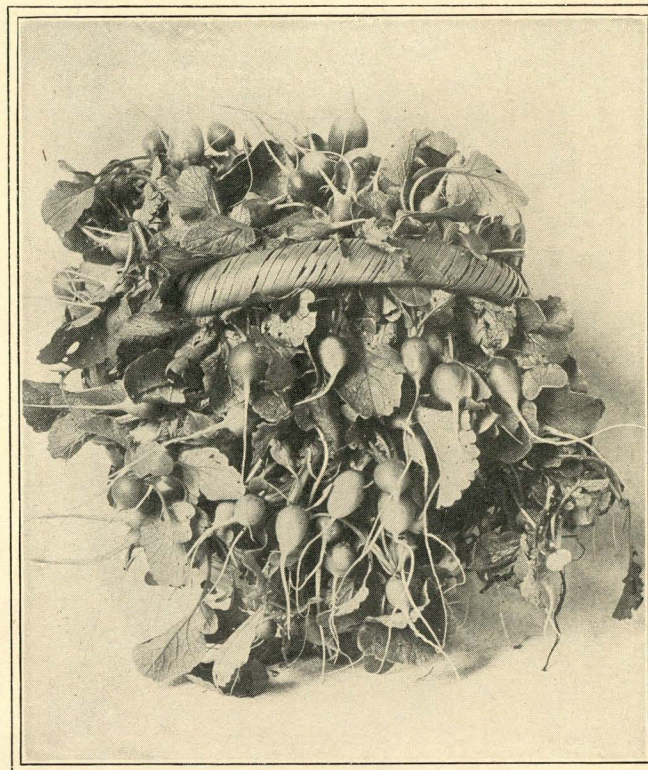
This region had been parcelled out in Spanish and Mexican land grants. At the time of the Texan revolution it was held chiefly by high officials of the Mexican army, whose ancestors had received it in the shape of grants from Spanish kings. With the ascendancy of American supremacy in that region these Mexicans became willing to dispose of their holdings at a very low figure, and it was in this way that some of the big ranches of South Texas were started. When hostilities between the United States and Mexico broke out in 1845, General Zachary Taylor landed his army for the invasion of Mexico at Kinney's Ranch, which was the northeast corner of the disputed territory, and spent the following winter there.

General Taylor's camp formed the nucleus of the thriving town that now stands on the spot. When the army advanced a considerable number of camp followers remained behind, and shortly afterwards the settlement took on the name given the bay by La Salle, Corpus Christi.

General Taylor's next position was just above the mouth of the Rio Grande, where he established Fort Brown, opposite the



A South Texas Onion Field in February, 1906.

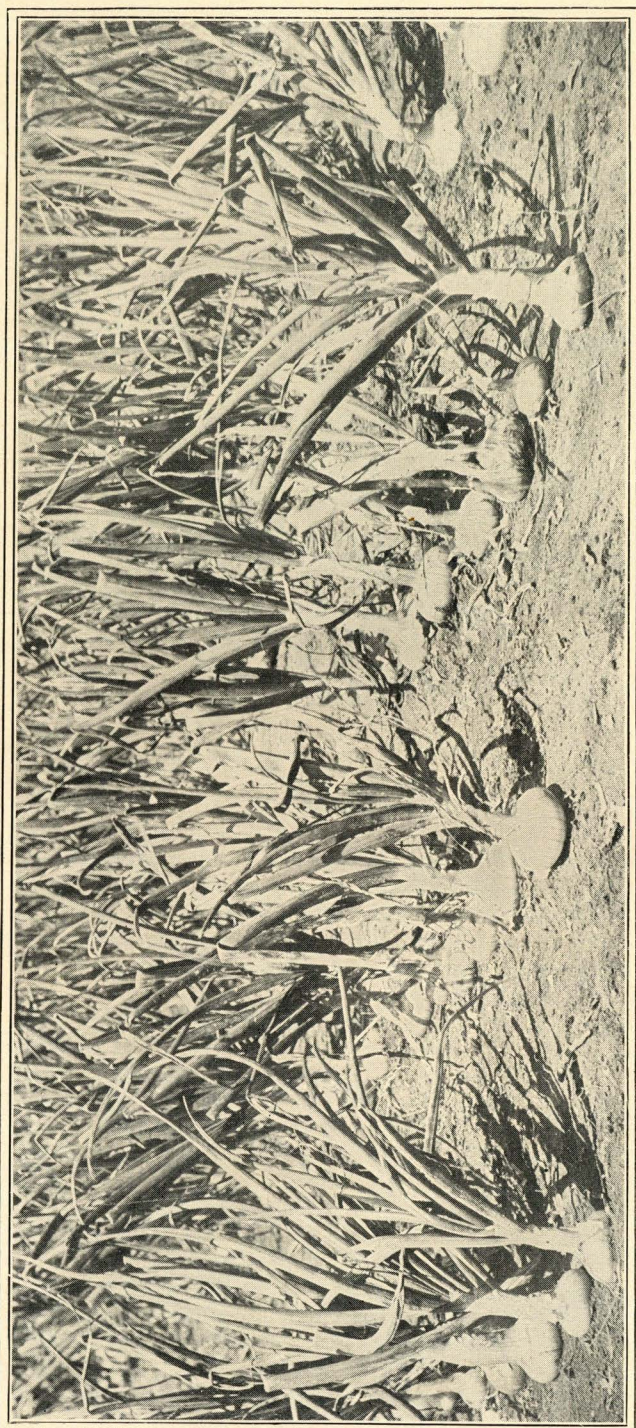


Some Radishes in February, 1906.

Mexican city of Matamoros, where the Mexican army was encamped. When the Mexican war was concluded, the Rio Grande became the boundary between the nations, giving to the United States the rich territory between the Nueces and the boundary, to become "the winter vegetable and fruit garden of the nation."

Where Fort Brown was established the town of Brownsville sprang up and for more than half a century it has been the metropolis of the lower Rio Grande Valley. During the Civil War all of the cotton from the South that was exported to Europe had to pass through Brownsville and Matamoros, all other ports being closed. These being on the border of a neutral nation were kept open and a great trade developed. Both exports and imports were carried by wagons across the same country now traversed by the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway. After the war of course other ports were opened and this traffic practically ceased, although for many years before the building of the great railroad lines to the southwest and across the Mexican border, Corpus Christi, Brownsville and Matamoros were flourishing ports. A great cattle business was established, and most of the trade of this region found its outlet by way of the sea through these towns. But





A South Texas Field of Bermuda Onions.

when the great railroad systems crossed the plains and tapped the Mexican border, this trade was diverted, and Brownsville and its sister Mexican city languished, cut off from the rest of the world by a hundred and fifty miles of plain and prairie. The building of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway brought Brownsville again into touch with the world, and opened to agriculture the rich region around it.

### The Great Ranches.

When General Zachary Taylor landed his troops at Corpus Christi in 1845, one of his transports was commanded by Captain Mifflin Kenedy and piloted by Captain Richard King, who had been engaged in traffic on the Mississippi prior to that time. These two men have been denominated the Lewis and Clarke of South Texas. Much of its development is due to them, and their immediate heirs and successors are now interested in opening this region to settlement. These men served their country during the Mexican War, but as soon as the war closed they began an exploration of the South Texas region, which ended by the starting of a cattle ranch by each in this beautiful region. Today Santa Gertrudis Ranch, with its headquarters forty miles southwest of Corpus Christi, stands as a monument to the foresight of Captain King. On its million acres are pastured, summer and winter, eighty thousand blooded cattle. Something more than twenty miles to the south are the headquarters of La Parra, a ranch established by Captain Kenedy in his later years. It contains 800,000 acres, and to the ordinary farmer is a marvel of organization and achievement.

For many years these two men, fast friends throughout their entire careers, were associated in the cattle industry together, and later their push and enterprise gave Corpus Christi railroad connections with the outside world. Captain King departed



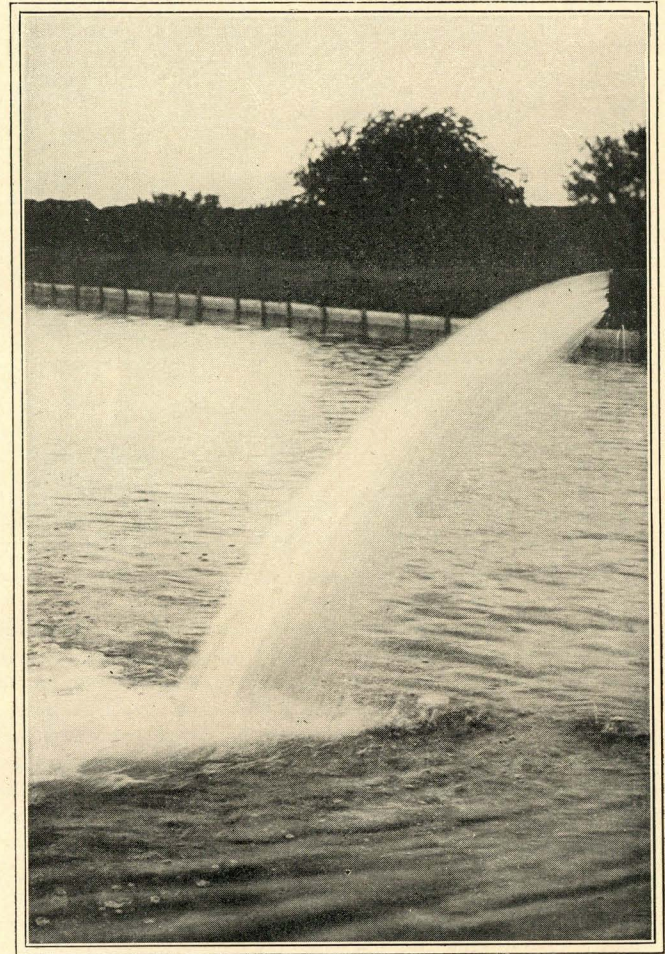
Bananas—La Parra Ranch.



this life many years ago, leaving his property to his widow, but he was succeeded in the active management of Santa Gertrudis, by his son-in-law and attorney, Robert J. Kleberg. To Mr. Kleberg belongs the honor of instituting modern ranching in Southern Texas. It was he who eliminated the Texas long-horn and substituted for him the high-grade, blooded "white face" and Durham. This was accomplished only by overcoming many difficulties. The Texas fever killed the first imported full-bloods. Mr. Kleberg was told that the climate had done it and that it was impossible to raise anything but the acclimated, bony long-horns in that section. He knew better. He made a study of the subject, discovered the Texas fever tick, and invented a successful method of overcoming the tick and acclimating imported cattle. Now high-grade animals costing thousands of dollars, the winners at the great stock shows at Chicago and Kansas City, are taken to South Texas without



New Potatoes, in February, 1906.



A Well Flowing 1100 Gallons per Minute.

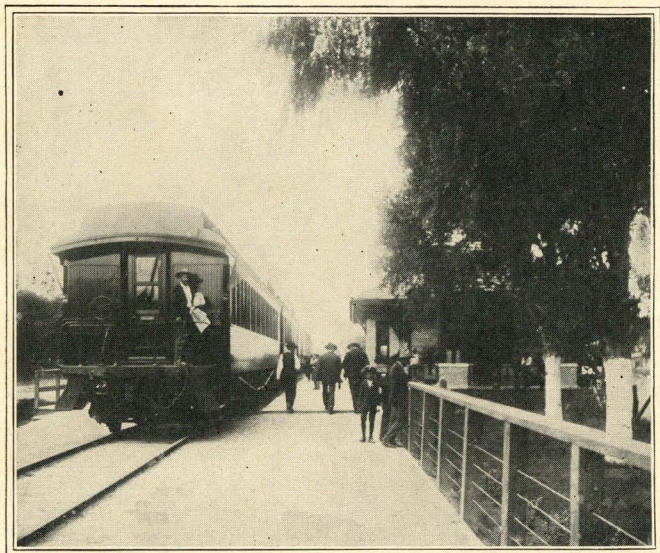
fear of loss. Today not one of the eighty thousand animals bearing the brand of the King Ranch is less than a half-blooded Hereford or Durham, while many are three-quarters and full-blooded. The long-horn has been entirely eliminated.

Captain Kenedy began the weeding out of the long-horns many years ago, and today nothing but Short-horns, Herefords and Devons—from half-bloods to full-bloods—are found on the Kenedy Ranch.

#### **The Artesian Belt.**

It was on the King Ranch that artesian water was first discovered a few years ago through the enterprise of the manager of the ranch, Mr. R. J. Kleberg. The discovery was followed by the boring of scores of wells all over the surrounding country, and in each instance there came an abundant flow of pure arte-





Train at Brownsville Station, St. L. B. & M. Ry.

sian water. There are about seventy such wells on the King Ranch alone, and about one hundred on the Kenedy Ranch. The artesian belt extends from Robstown to south of Raymondville, a distance of one hundred miles, and perhaps nearly as far inland. The depth of these wells varies from 617 feet to 1,058 feet—that is, these figures represent the extremes of the shallowest and the deepest wells. The flow of the wells varies from 100 to 1,100 gallons per minute. The first well that was brought in on the King Ranch flowed 250 gallons per minute, and has never diminished. The expense of boring the wells is a dollar a foot, and the casing costs half as much more. The cost of the wells, therefore, varies from \$1,000 to \$1,600 approximately for a six-inch well.

### Building the Railroad.

Realizing that artesian water in such abundant quantities meant that the fertile soil of that region could be utilized for the production of a multitude of crops at immense profit, Mr. Robert J. Kleberg, the manager of the Santa Gertrudis Ranch, began to plan for the production of such crops. But first of all were needed transportation facilities to get the produce to market after it was raised. Without means of swift transportation to paying markets, crops of vegetables would be valueless, no matter how prolific. The region in which these crops were possible varied from fifteen to a hundred and fifty miles from a railroad. Mr. Kleberg interested Mr. B. F. Yoakum, who is a native of Texas and who had attained much prominence as a railroad builder, in the project of giving a railroad to the Gulf Coast country. Mr. Kenedy joined with them, with the result that the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway

was built. On July 4, 1904, the first train ran over the line from Corpus Christi to Brownsville. Then the road was pushed on north up the Gulf Coast to Refugio, then to Bay City, and by the time this book reaches its readers the road will be operating its trains into Galveston and Houston.

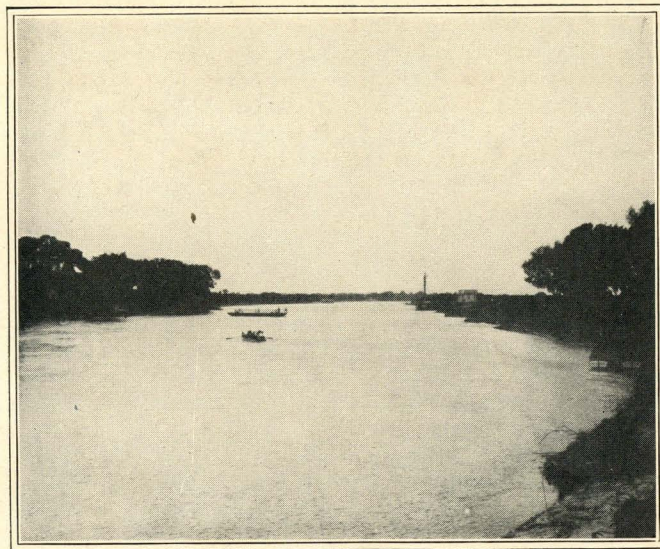
But this was not all. The building of a railroad into the lower Rio Grande Valley made possible the development of agriculture in that region. The plantations along the banks of the river had proven the feasibility of irrigating with water taken from the Rio Grande, but before the coming of the railroad there was only the market furnished by Brownsville and minor towns in the valley, which was insufficient to support much of an agricultural industry, particularly when the returns per acre were so prolific as they are in the fertile soil along the Rio Grande.

The belt of alluvial soil produced by the overflow from the river, extends from ten to forty miles back from the river banks, and can be irrigated by raising the water from the river with pumps, and allowing gravitation to do the rest.

### Down by the Rio Grande.

One of the most successful planters on the Rio Grande is Mr. John Closner, who owns six thousand acres near Hidalgo, fifty or sixty miles above Brownsville. Notwithstanding the limited markets which were available before the coming of the railroad, Mr. Closner has made an immense success of agriculture. Sugar, alfalfa, cotton, corn, bananas and truck crops have been grown by him.

About ten years ago Mr. Closner secured enough Louisiana sugar cane to plant ten acres as an experiment. As a result of the experiment he now has in 300 acres of cane, he operates



The "Silvery Rio Grande."





A South Texas Oat Field—February.

a six-roller sugar mill with a capacity of 250 tons every twenty-four hours, and in 1905 he turned out 350,000 pounds of sugar from less than two hundred acres. This year he expects to nearly double that output.

Mr. Closner has proved a number of things concerning the production of sugar in the Rio Grande Valley. One is that the soil, fertilized as it is with the silt with which the waters of the Rio Grande are laden, produces from 35 to 40 tons of cane to the acre, while in most other sugar-raising sections in the United States, 20 tons is considered a good yield, and constant fertilization is necessary to secure that. In addition, Rio Grande cane yields considerably more sugar to the ton.

In other sugar-growing regions of the United States it is necessary to replant the cane every three or four years, while in the Rio Grande Valley it is not necessary to replant under eight or nine years. It does not require a wise man to see that the Rio Grande Valley has tremendous advantages over every other section of the country in the production of sugar.

Of alfalfa Mr. Closner has several hundred acres, from which he cuts a crop every thirty or forty days during almost the entire year. In other words, he gets from eight to ten crops a year, while Northern farmers are well pleased with four. In the Rio Grande Valley several crops are cut within six months after the alfalfa is planted, while the Northern farmer is satisfied if he gets a good stand the first year. Mr. Closner cuts from a ton to a ton and a half per acre at each cutting, and he has always found a ready market for it at from ten to twelve dollars a ton.

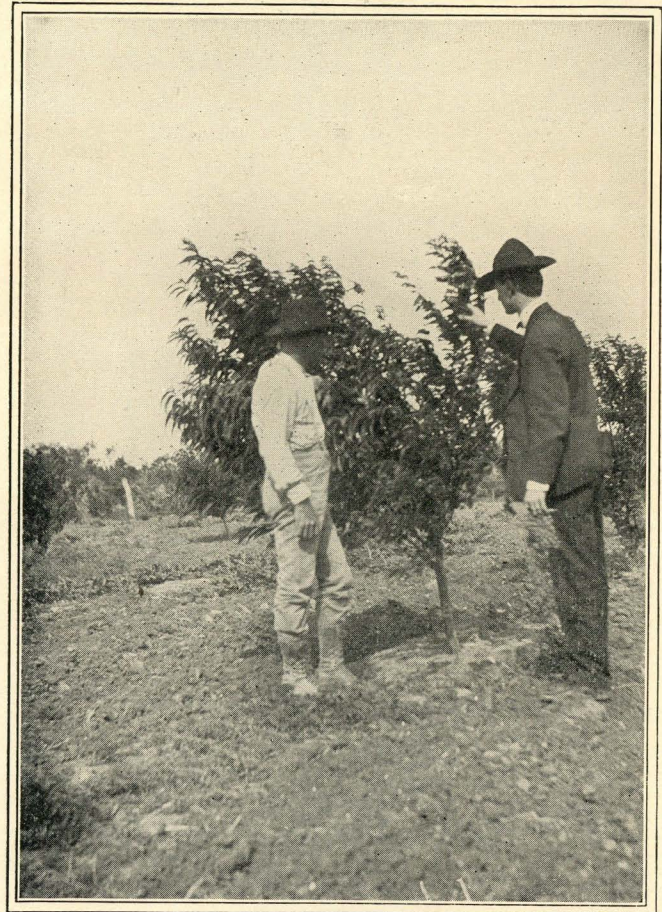
From thirty-three acres of Bermuda onions Mr. Closner last year shipped thirty-five carloads of as fine onions as were ever grown. This crop alone netted him \$15,000.

Two crops of corn can be grown on the same land each year along the Rio Grande. In fact on the Closner plantation three

crops have matured in fourteen months; but three crops cannot, of course, be depended on as a regular thing. Rice, cotton and numerous other crops can be grown just as successfully.

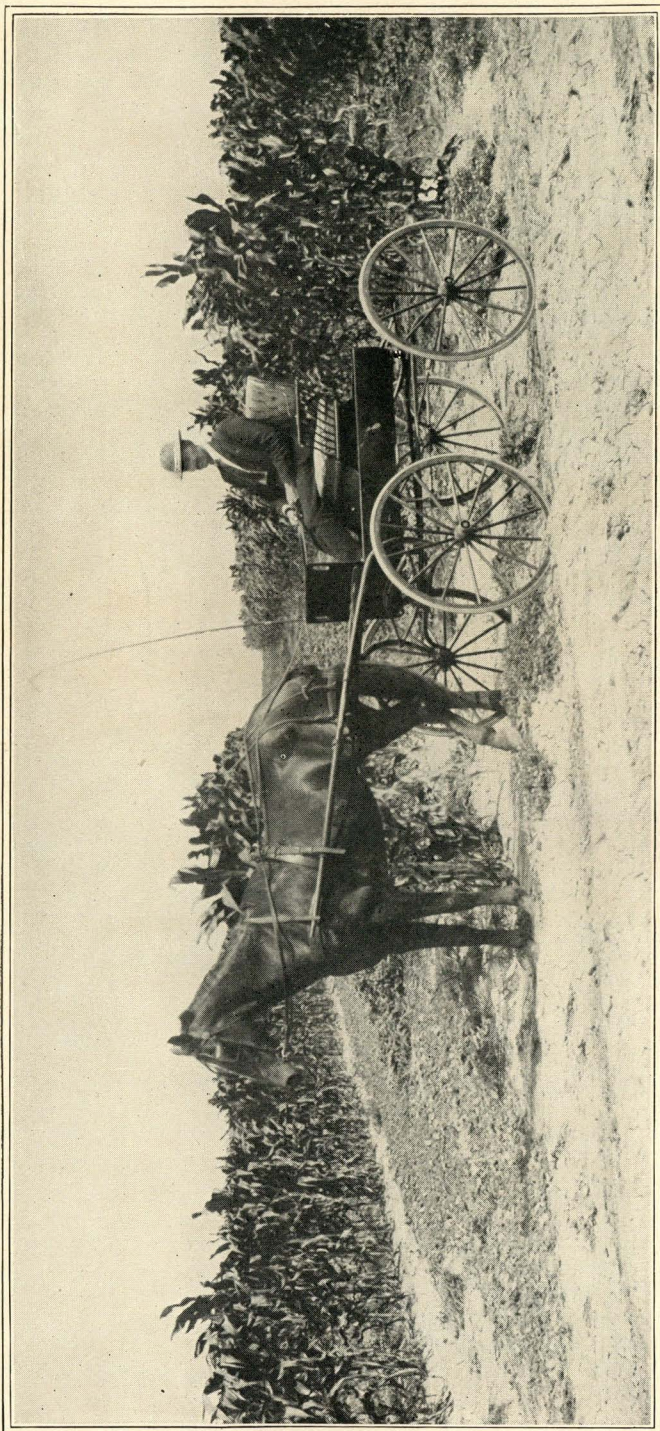
Other planters along the Rio Grande have had just as remarkable success as has Mr. Closner, and it is little wonder, therefore, that when the building of the railroad promised transportation facilities which would make it possible to have more than a local market, there should be a demand that more land be made available for irrigation. It is necessary to raise the water from fifteen to twenty-five feet by pumping it from the river. The pumping plant on the Closner plantation raises the water eighteen feet and has a capacity of 10,000 gallons a minute.

Few individuals can afford to put in a pumping plant and carry water any great distance, and for that reason a number of companies have been organized to place extensive areas under irrigation. Some of these projects are already completed and



Peach Trees like the Soil.





A Crop of Sugar Corn, Near Brownsville.

their lands placed on the market; others are under construction at this writing and still others are planned. These will irrigate a large amount of valuable land, and at no distant day the lower Rio Grande Valley will produce a tremendous tonnage of the most valuable crops.

A branch of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway has been built up the Rio Grande from Harlingen to Fordyce, a point seventy-five miles above Brownsville. This branch is built several miles back from the river, making it convenient of access to the alluvial territory along its entire length.



A Street in Corpus Christi.

### The Coming of the Settler.

With the opening of the railroad along the Gulf Coast, towns naturally began to spring up as market places for produce, and homeseekers began to flock in to take advantage of the great opportunities offered to secure extremely profitable farms. The old towns, Corpus Christi and Brownsville, have felt the tremendous impetus of the new development. In the artesian belt Kingsville, forty miles southwest of Corpus Christi, has taken the lead, not because the land around it is any better than in other localities, but because more attention has been attracted to it. Within eighteen months from the time it was started, Kingsville was the center of a progressive community which ships several hundred carloads of produce annually. There is none of the roughness about Kingsville that is usually apparent in new towns. There are no rough "shacks" in the town, but the homes are well-built cottages. In clearing the land mesquite trees have been left here and there for shade, and small parks have already been started.

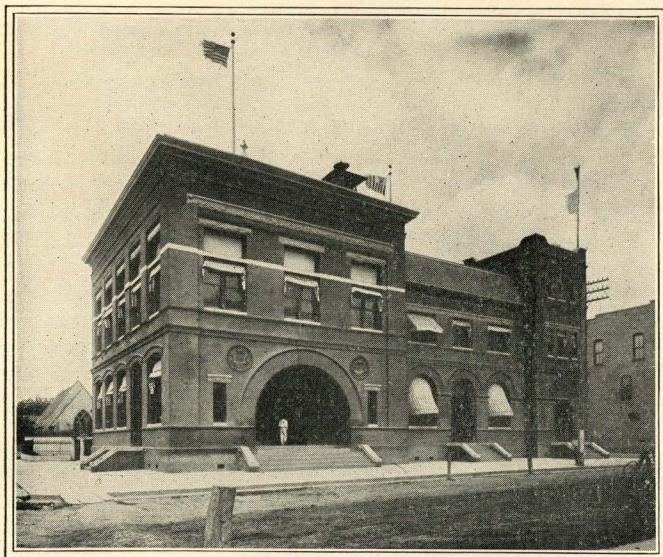
Before it was a year old Kingsville had a water works system, carrying in its mains the purest of water—artesian; a hotel which is acknowledged to be the best south of San Antonio; an ice plant; a fire department; two newspapers, several first-



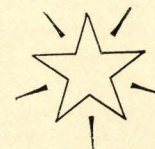
class mercantile establishments, schools and churches, and a population of twelve hundred people. The shops and general offices of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway are also located at Kingsville.

Other towns in the artesian belt which will become important centers of trade are Robstown, Sarito, Katherine and Raymondville; with Driscoll, Julia, Caesar, Richard, Spohn, Mifflin, Turcotte, Norias, Rudolph, Yturria, and Lyford scattered along between.

In the Rio Grande Valley are Olmito, nine miles north of Brownsville, and Harlingen, where the Fordyce branch of the Gulf Coast Line starts up the Rio Grande Valley, both growing towns; while Lonsboro, Donna, MacAllen and Fordyce will become places of importance on the branch. Minor towns in the valley are Sebastian, Combes, Bessie, and Barreda, on the main line, and Tiocano, Ebenezer, Mamie and Closner on the Fordyce Branch. Six miles south of MacAllen, on the river bank, is Hidalgo, the county seat of the county of the same name. It is a place of considerable importance, and is connected with the railroad by a stage line running daily to MacAllen.



New U. S. Postoffice, Brownsville.



## What the Land Is Like

*"The party was particularly impressed with the richness of the soil and its uniform quality, in some cases running to a depth of over twenty feet."*

—Extract from diary of recent investigating party.

South Texas is not a prairie country in the sense that Western Kansas and Nebraska, or Oklahoma, or the Dakotas are. Most of it has to be cleared. There was once a time when it was open prairie, but during the past twenty-five years mesquite and other trees and shrubs have spread over the broad Texas plains. The early settlers in Southern and Central Texas found it as open as any land in the West. But when the cattle came across from Mexico a half century ago, the old settlers say they brought the seed of the mesquite with them. It was years in getting started, but it has spread until it is now found throughout Southern and Central Texas, and as far north as the Red River. So rapid has been this spread over the fertile plains that as late as fifteen years ago there were open prairies where now is a dense growth of wood. Some ebony, hackberry, palmetto and other trees grow with the mesquite. The latter prevails, however.

The mesquite grows to a height of from twenty to forty feet, with low-hanging branches and foliage resembling the willow. From a distance much of the partially-open, uncleared land in South Texas resembles an old apple orchard. In some localities, however, the vegetation is so thick that a horseman would have difficulty in riding through it.

## The Wood Growth Is of Value.

But this growth of wood is not as great a hardship as might seem on first thought. During these recent years the mesquite and other trees have been covering the already fertile prairie land with a thick layer of humus, storing up in the soil those qualities so much sought by the experienced farmer, in addition to what already existed in the rich prairie land. The wood is valuable, too, for fence posts and fuel, and it often happens that the cost of clearing land is more than offset by the value of the wood secured from it. Wood, for instance, is worth two to three dollars a cord in Kingsville. Labor is exceedingly cheap, and the cost of clearing the land is not great. All the Mexican labor that is desired can be had at from 37½ to 50 cents a day in American money, which is double that amount in Mexican currency.

There is some land on which the trees are scattered and which can be cleared with no great amount of trouble. Most land,



however, necessitates grubbing, and that where the trees are largest and stand the thickest will pay the most towards clearing itself. In some instances it will pay a profit over and above the expense of clearing.

The surface of the country is level or slightly rolling, with an occasional arroyo or ravine to give drainage. Near the coast the land rises abruptly to from thirty to fifty feet above the water. In some places the bluff extends right to the water's edge. From the coast it rises gently to an elevation of a hundred feet or more seventy-five miles inland.

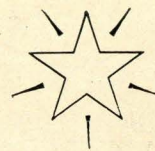
The soil varies greatly in its composition, but it is all rich. Along the Nueces it is black and heavy. Further south it becomes lighter and more sandy, until midway between the two rivers it becomes distinctly sandy. Then the percentage of sand decreases until the land is black and waxy again at Raymondville, and then comes the deep alluvial soil of the Rio Grande Valley, grayish-black and of great richness, mixed with sufficient sand and shell to render it porous and easily cultivated.

The depth of the soil varies from eighteen inches to twenty feet or more. In most places the depth is so great that the subsoil is a matter of little moment.

Each of the many varieties of soil is excellent for certain crops. In some places one crop flourishes best, and in another neighborhood some other crop may surpass it. In the vicinity of Sarita, for instance, the sandy soil is remarkably well adapted for cantaloupes and olives, neither of which might do as well as some other crops and fruits in the heavier, blacker soils.



The Third Crop this year: Beans, Onions, then Corn—  
Cotton Next! Raymondville.



## Crops and Their Returns

*"The wonderful diversity of crops to which the soil and climate are adapted, makes possible the raising of nearly all kinds of tropical fruits practically all of the Vegetables, and at the same time growing the great staples—Corn, Sugar, Aljalja, Rice and Cotton."*

—Extract from diary of recent investigating party.

The real test of a region is its products and their prices. No matter what its climate and other advantages may be, if it will not afford its inhabitants a living there can be no inhabitants—unless they are rich enough to draw their support from other sources. So the important question with practically all homeseekers is, "What will the land do?" Here is what it will do in some known instances in South Texas.

### Corn.

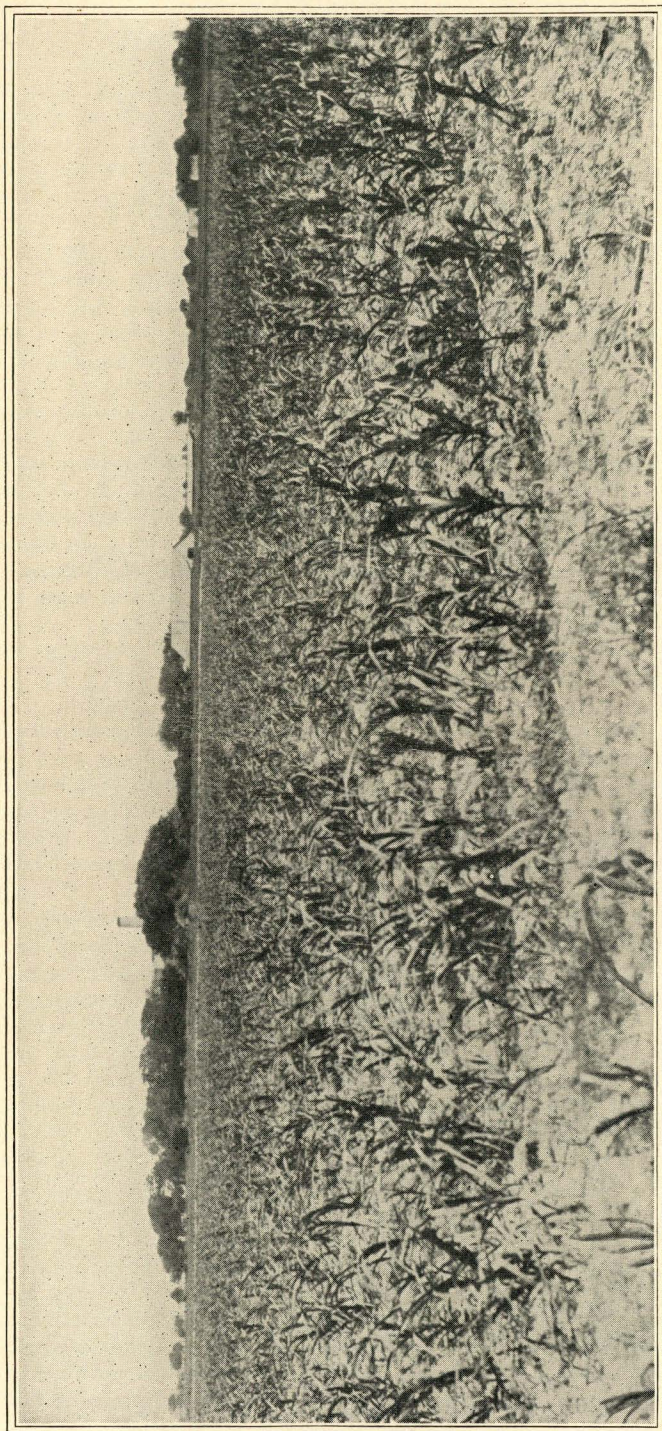
Corn is a staple Texas crop. Texas is one of the great corn-producing states of the nation. But in South Texas corn is twice staple; that is, two crops are easily grown each year. How does that strike the Iowa farmer, whose corn is sometimes caught by early frosts before it is thoroughly matured. What would the Illinois farmer think of getting two big crops of corn off his land every summer, instead of one?

That is what can be done in South Texas. Corn makes from forty to seventy bushels per acre with very little irrigation. At Raymondville this spring a field of corn attained a height of eight feet without rain or irrigation, simply from the moisture that was stored in the soil. After that it required irrigating. In South Texas the ears are setting on the stalks when the Iowa farmer is planting his crop. "Roasting ears" are in the market in that region in the early spring, as well as in the late fall, and at Christmastide.

### Cotton.

Another Texas staple is cotton, and it does exceedingly well in the extreme south. It is exceptionally poor land, in fact, that will not produce a bale to the acre, and, with irrigation, it will do much better than that. Irrigated cotton has been known to produce over eight hundred bolls on a single plant. Along the Nueces and further north it is possible to raise both cotton and corn without irrigation; but neither is as certain, of course, as where irrigation is practiced.





Sugar Cane—A Plantation Adjoining Brownsville.

### Alfalfa.

The writer of these lines, having lived in Kansas for years, has always highly praised alfalfa as a money-producer, but he confesses that he knew little of its possibilities until he visited South Texas. The Kansas or Nebraska farmer, who is satisfied with three or four cuttings a year from his alfalfa field, will with difficulty believe even the conservative facts about alfalfa in the Gulf Coast and Rio Grande region.

The Northern farmer works industriously the first year securing a good stand of this crop. Often he fails, and has to sow some of it over the second year. The South Texas farmer harvests seven or eight cuttings from his alfalfa the first year. Mr. S. M. Tracy, a special agent of the United States Department of Agriculture for grass and forage plant investigations, writes that he saw a field of alfalfa in the Rio Grande Valley that was seeded April 7, 1904, and on April 5, 1905, it had yielded its eighth cutting. It is not unusual to get three or four crops within six months after the seed is in the ground. These are hard things for the Northern farmer to believe, but they are facts.

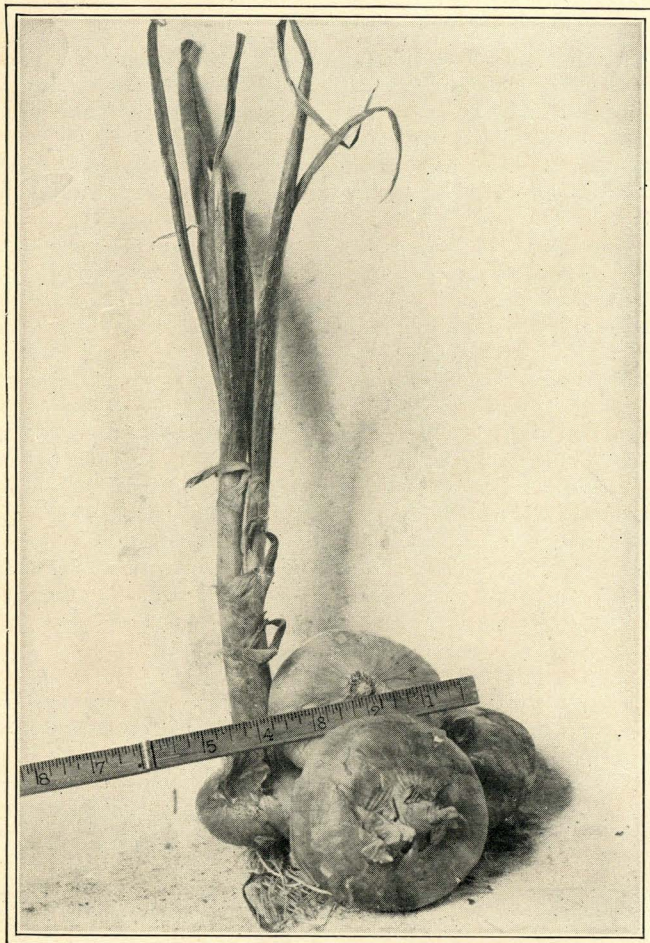
The yield runs from a ton to a ton and a half per acre at each cutting. As high as ten cuttings a year are sometimes made from mature alfalfa. It is not unusual to cut a ton from an acre every thirty days during a greater part of the year, and sometimes this yield will run considerably more.

Alfalfa finds a ready market at from ten to twelve dollars a ton. Growers estimate the total cost of producing it in the Rio Grande Valley at four dollars per ton, which includes the cost of irrigation and of baling. This leaves a net profit of at least six dollars a ton, and with a yield of from ten to fifteen tons per acre each year, the net returns from alfalfa culture can be easily calculated.



Cotton, Corn in Background, near Harlingen.





A February Onion—note Its Size.

### **Sugar Cane.**

As has already been stated in these pages, there appears to be little doubt that within a very few years the lower Rio Grande Valley will be "the sugar bowl of the nation." Sugar cane from this region was awarded the gold medal at the St. Louis Exposition, in competition with Cuba and Havana products.

Nowhere else on the American continent can sugar be produced in such abundance from the same acreage as on the irrigated plantations along the Rio Grande. It has passed far beyond the experimental stage, for a sugar mill has been in operation on the Brulay plantation, near Brownsville, for about thirty years, and another and larger one was installed six years ago on the Closner plantation at Hidalgo, sixty miles above Brownsville. These mills have found a market for their total

product locally, but owing to the lack of transportation facilities, the industry has grown little beyond the local demand. But now that the Gulf Coast Line furnishes an outlet to the markets of the entire country, the sugar industry along the Rio Grande will necessarily become one of great importance. The United States now imports nearly all of its sugar, so that the domestic demand will furnish a strong market for the product.

Sugar cane, as is generally known, is grown by planting the stalks themselves in furrows, but this does not have to be done every year. In Louisiana and other sugar-growing regions of the United States, one planting will grow profitable cane for three or four seasons. But in the Rio Grande Valley a single planting will last for eight or ten years. This alone is an extremely important item.

Another item, still more important, is that Rio Grande cane contains about thirty per cent more sugar than that of other localities. It was this fact that won the gold medal at the St. Louis Exposition for cane from the Closner plantation.

Added to both of these important items is the fact that the yield of cane along the Rio Grande is from thirty-five to forty tons per acre, or from twenty-five to forty per cent more than most other sugar-producing localities of the United States.

And a fourth important item is that the waters of the Rio Grande, that are used for irrigation, are so rich in silt that they act as a natural fertilizer, making other fertilizers unnecessary; while elsewhere the fertilization of sugar lands is an absolute necessity if they are to be kept productive. The Brulay plantation, near Brownsville, has been cultivated for thirty-six years without the use of a particle of applied fertilizer, and last year the yield of sugar was nearly 2,500 pounds per acre, and it sold at an average of five and a quarter cents at Brownsville. The fertilization all came from the silt in the waters of the Rio Grande.

With these advantages over other sugar-growing sections of the United States, and with the total domestic production of sugar only a very small part of the demand, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the lower Rio Grande Valley is bound to become a great sugar-producing region, where the industry will pay tremendous returns on the investment.

### **Cabbage.**

The greatest cabbage-growing region in America, if not in the world, is that around Corpus Christi. It is a common sight to see great loads of cabbage hauled to market there, just as wheat is hauled to the elevators in Kansas and the Dakotas. Last year cabbages netted the truck-growers in the vicinity of Corpus Christi over \$100,000. It is a crop that can be grown at all seasons of the year, and big profits are made by growing it for marketing in January and February. It nets the grower from one hundred to five hundred dollars an acre, according to the season of the year and the yield.

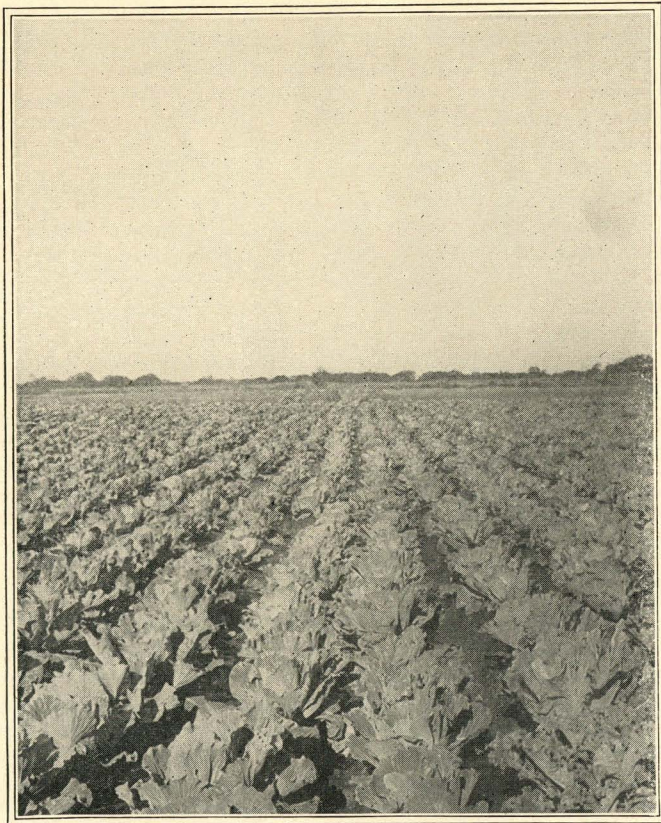


There is a field of eleven acres near Corpus Christi that has been used for growing cabbages for ten years, and not once has it netted the owner less than \$1,100 on each crop.

Not only around Corpus Christi, but all along the Gulf Coast Line, cabbages are an exceedingly profitable crop when rightly handled.

### Rice.

Another staple that will yield two crops from the same land in a single season is rice. It has been raised with success for a number of years. An average yield is twelve barrels per acre for the first crop, and a little less than that for the second crop each year, but often the yield is larger. Under favorable conditions twenty-six barrels per acre have been grown in the two crops, selling for \$3.50 per barrel. The second crop alone, usually pays the expense of cultivation for the entire year, leaving the first, or larger crop, as clear profit. Nowhere else in the United States, it is said, is it possible to raise two crops of rice each year on the same land.



A Cabbage Patch, March, 1906, Kingsville.

Rice is a wealth-producer, and it adds to the diversity of the staple crops that can be profitably grown in the Gulf Coast country.

### Bermuda Onions.

A very popular truck crop is the Bermuda onion. Returns from it are phenomenal. William Johnson, a Kingsville farmer, harvested a carload of onions this spring from approximately an acre of ground. His returns from the car, after the freight and commission charges were paid, amounted to \$627. This from land that less than two years ago was covered with mesquite.

Mr. George Hoffman, another farmer of the same locality, harvested 24,000 pounds of onions from one acre, which he sold for 2½ cents a pound on board the cars at Kingsville, bringing him \$600 from the one acre.

Down on the Rio Grande, a grower harvested thirty-five cars of onions from thirty-three acres, and the crop netted him about \$15,000.

These are, of course, above the average, but they are instances that are quite common. An average yield of onions is 15,000 pounds per acre. The price, too, depends somewhat on the time of the year and the handling of the crop. While it was 2½ cents a pound early in the season, it came down to a cent and a half two months later, which is about an average price. But even at this rate, an acre of 15,000 pounds will net \$225.

### Potatoes.

Potatoes are such a common crop all over the country that it may be thought it is not a profitable one in a region where other rarer crops can be grown to great advantage. But the reverse is true.

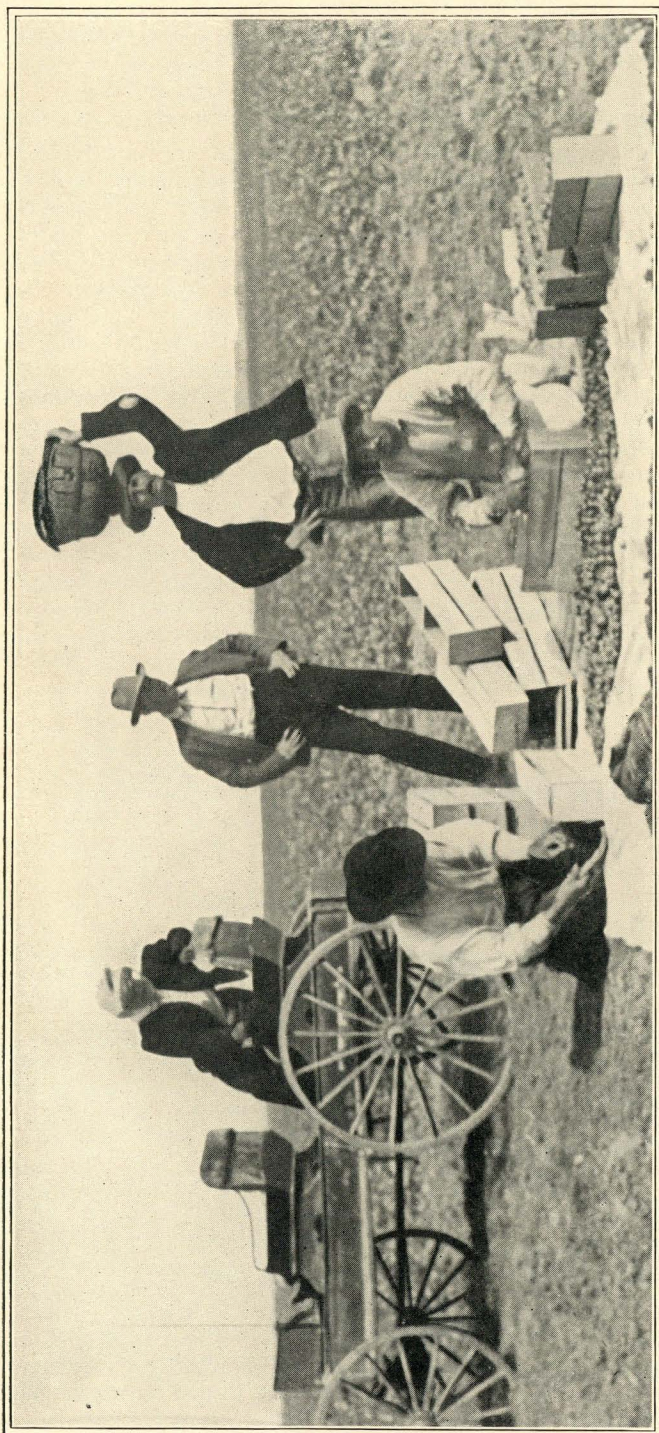
The first carload of potatoes shipped out of Texas to the North in the spring of 1905 were on the market just three weeks ahead of any other potatoes. They were "new" potatoes, and everyone knows what large returns are received for the first "new" potatoes on the market. That first shipment, which went from Raymondville on April 27, brought fabulous prices. Those three weeks mean wealth for South Texas potato growers. A Sarita truck farmer this spring sold new potatoes on the Eastern market for \$3.30 a bushel.

The Gulf Coast country can dispose of a big crop of new potatoes before any others are on the market, and they will therefore bring the highest prices. This is simply one of the many illustrations of the advantages which the climate of South Texas gives the farmers of that region over those of other localities.

### Cantaloupes.

The same conditions that have made the Rocky Ford cantaloupe of Colorado famous throughout the United States, prevail in the Gulf Coast region. There is the same dry atmosphere,





New Potatoes in March!—near Sarita, South Texas.

allowing irrigation at the proper time for the crop and preventing rain at a time when it would injure the melons. There is the same abundant sunshine that gives the fine flavor to the fruit. And the sandy soils midway between the Nueces and the Rio Grande are particularly adapted to raising cantaloupes.

Mr. Fred Warren, of Kingsville, last year raised a crop of cantaloupes that was marketed six weeks ahead of the Rocky Fords. The vines were then plowed under and the land left idle during the summer. When Mr. Warren went to prepare it in September for a crop of mid-winter vegetables he found another fine crop of cantaloupes in the field. They had grown from the seed plowed under.

South Texas has the same advantage in marketing cantaloupes that it has in other crops. It can place them on the market the first of May, from six to eight weeks ahead of the Rocky Ford growers, thereby commanding fancy prices for this fine fruit.

### Tomatoes.

Mid-winter tomatoes are another delicacy that South Texas can furnish the rest of the country in abundance. They can be raised not only for the holiday market, but they can be shipped during January and much of February. This is a crop to which not as much attention has been given as might have been done profitably. Growers realize from \$200 to \$400 per acre from tomatoes, and they are easily grown.

### Cucumbers.

One of the most prolific crops is cucumbers. Large shipments are made all during the spring to the Northern markets, and they bring excellent prices. A Sarita grower realized \$1.80 a dozen on shipments sent to Denver early this season. In the Rio Grande Valley cucumber growers made from \$100 to \$150 an acre this spring. Last winter they contracted their entire crop at fifty cents a bushel delivered at the station, the purchaser standing the expense of crating and loading. Seed planted on February 12 yielded cucumbers on April 10, far earlier than any other portion of the country. The purchaser also made a big profit on these cucumbers, as they were bringing \$3.00 a bushel in the Eastern market well along in May.

### Other Vegetables.

Not only the ones enumerated heretofore, but practically every other variety of vegetables can be produced in abundance along the Gulf Coast in South Texas. String beans are boxed and shipped North in the early spring at a good profit. A Kingsville truck-grower realized a net profit of \$320 per acre from a crop of common carrots this spring. Beets grow prolifically and bring high prices when shipped with the tops on in the spring. Last year a truck-grower cleared an acre of land of the tree





Map of the  
**Texas  
 Gulf Coast**

and  
**St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Ry.**



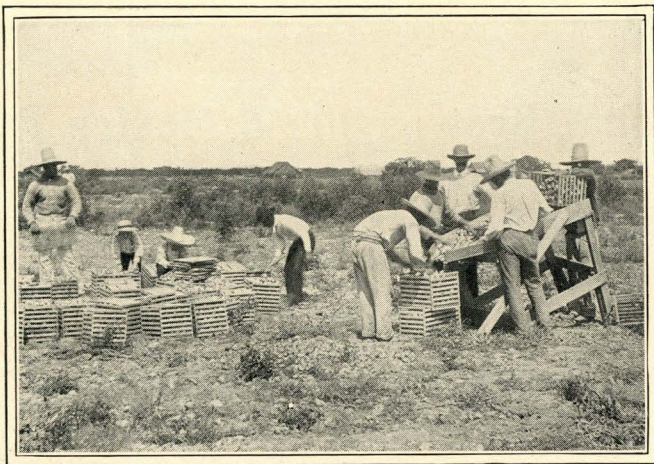
The Gulf means much to South Texas.



and shrubs growing on it and planted it to potatoes on the first day of March. By the middle of the year, only four months later, he had not only sold his potato crop at a profit of \$120, but he had also raised a crop of watermelons on the same ground that brought him \$160. A gentleman by the name of Landrum last fall purchased a little less than five acres of land near Olmito, for which he paid fifty dollars an acre. He planted lettuce on one and a half acres of it, and by spring the lettuce had not only paid for the entire purchase, but it had given Mr. Landrum a surplus besides.

From one-fourth of an acre of cauliflower near Brownsville was harvested a crop that brought \$225 on the St. Louis market.

"Roasting ears" can be grown in abundance for the Christmas market, as has already been stated, and radishes and other vegetables can be kept on the market most of the winter, as well as the rest of the year, if desired. Sweet potatoes, asparagus, celery, peas, turnips—in fact, practically every vegetable crop—can be grown in abundance. It is doubtful if there is another region in the United States that will profitably grow such a great diversity of crops as South Texas.



Crowd them in and Nail the Lid!

### Fruits.

South Texas is too "new" to tell from actual experience and performance the full extent of its resources in the production of fruit. The fruit that has been grown thus far has been on the ranches and plantations incidental to other matters, and no special efforts have been made along this line.

Sufficient has happened—"happened" is the proper word in this connection, because the fruit production thus far has been as stated, quite incidental to the production of crops on the farms and plantations, and of live stock on the ranches—



Sicilian Lemons in South Texas.

sufficient has happened, however, to demonstrate something of what South Texas can do in the way of fruit-growing.

On the Kenedy ranch near Sarita are some lemon trees that grew voluntarily from seed thrown out from lemons used on the table. Mr. Kenedy made a display of lemons from these trees at the St. Louis Exposition, and they were given the highest rating. Oranges and other like fruits are also successfully grown, but as the subject of citrus fruits in South Texas is treated elsewhere in these pages it will not be dwelt upon here.

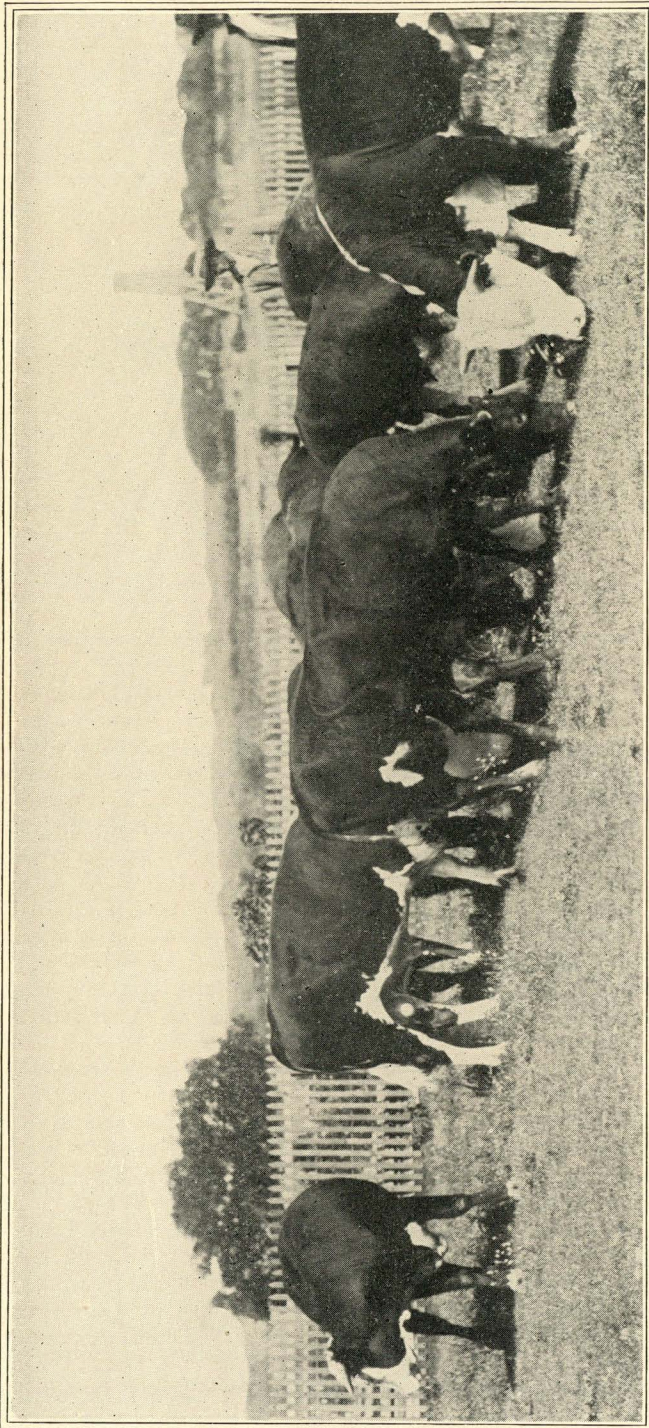
On the Brulay plantation near Brownsville grapes have been grown for many years. They require comparatively little care and yield abundantly. Mr. Brulay says he has never seen an insect or a sign of a disease injurious to the grape in the Rio Grande region. He also says that no cultural attention has been given his vineyard, but so easily is the grape grown that he proposes to go into the business more extensively.

The plantain, or fig banana, is another fruit that is produced with little expense. From a two-acre patch near Hidalgo Mr. John Closner has sold the crop of a single season for \$500, and there was almost no cost entailed in its production. From a quarter of an acre planted to bananas on the Brulay plantation over \$150 net is frequently made in a year.

Figs, dates and pineapples can also be grown to advantage in South Texas. Strawberries can be raised not only for the earliest spring market, when fancy prices are easily secured, but some varieties can be raised and marketed in mid-winter when epicures are willing to pay fabulous amounts for such delicacies.

Localities where the soil is sandy are especially adapted to the growth of the olive, and there is no reason why olive





Hereford and Devon Bulls—La Parra Ranch, near Sarita.

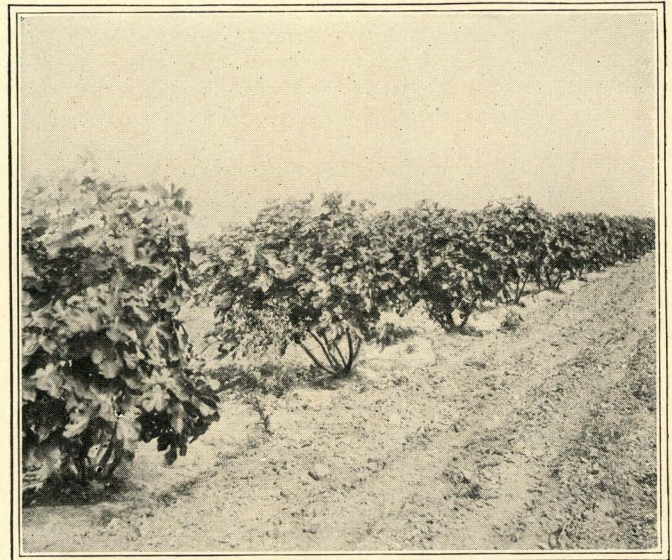


Fig Trees, near Brownsville.

groves should not become common in South Texas. They are easily grown; there is a great demand for them in the United States, and already a considerable number of trees have been set out in the Gulf Coast country.

Within the past two years, since farmers from other parts of the country have begun to settle in that region, peach and other orchards have been started and are doing extremely well.

Little attention was paid to horticulture as a commercial proposition in the region now traversed by the Gulf Coast Line prior to the building of that road because of the lack of transportation facilities. Most fruits require speedy transportation to market, and that has now been afforded by the building of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway, and its connections through the Rock Island-Frisco lines with all parts of the North, East and West.

#### Live Stock.

In this connection attention might be called to the ease with which live stock is cared for in South Texas. For half a century cattle have been the chief source of income, and they will continue to be so on the great ranches for some time to come, or until there is a demand for the millions of acres of ranch land for agricultural purposes.

It is a sound economic principle that the raising and fattening of stock should accompany crop-production to get the best and most lasting results for the farmer, and nowhere can this be done more advantageously than in the Gulf Coast country. In the corn belt of the North, the farmers make their greatest

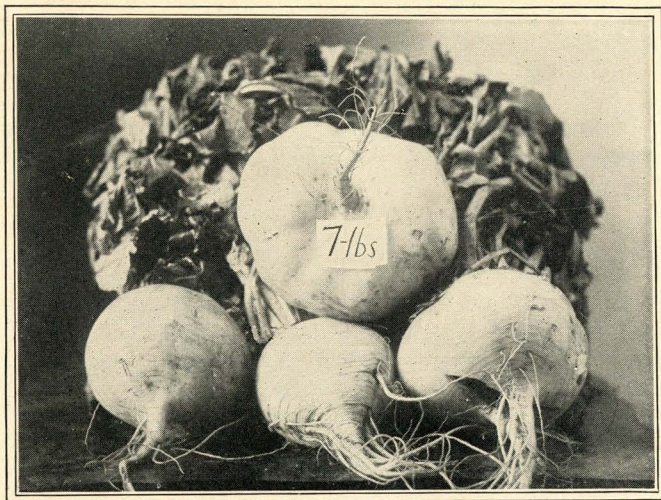


profits by raising corn and turning it into beef or pork. Corn and forage crops can be raised advantageously in South Texas during the summer months when there is the least demand for vegetables, and the same land can be utilized during the winter and early spring for the production of the money-making vegetable crops.

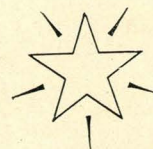
But the great item about live stock raising in South Texas is the fact that cattle, horses and all other stock can live in the open the year around. No shelter is needed for them in January and February any more than it is in April in the North. On the great ranches the cattle and fine horses never see the inside of a barn or a shed, and they scarcely know the taste of grain, yet they are always fat and sleek.

The Kansas farmer has paid off many a mortgage by pasturing hogs on alfalfa, fattening them for the market on it. In South Texas alfalfa grows during the entire year, so that hogs can be pastured on it continuously.

In the Gulf Coast country the farmer can do everything with live stock that the Northern farmer can do, and more, and in addition he can use his corn and forage land in winter for the wealth-producing vegetable crops.



Some Heavy-weight Turnips from South Texas.



## Is South Texas a Citrus Region?

*Successful orange culture in South Texas is merely a question of the selection and grafting of the proper varieties. The proximity to eastern markets is a most important consideration.*

Mention has been made in the foregoing pages of the exhibit of lemons from the Kenedy Ranch near Sarita, made at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition at St. Louis, which was awarded the gold medal over similar exhibits.

The exhibit made at St. Louis from these trees by Mr. Kenedy so attracted the attention of the California Commissioner of Horticulture that he made a visit to the Kenedy ranch in order to personally inspect the soil and climatic conditions of the Gulf Coast country relative to the production of citrus fruits. Among other things he said:

"The lemons produced on Mr. Kenedy's Ranch are higher in citric acid than any lemons I ever knew, and this is the true test of the lemon's commercial value. Another noteworthy characteristic is the unusual leathery quality and thinness of the skin, so desirable in shipping to distant markets. In California we can only approach this very desirable quality by means of a prolonged curing process. South Texas is certainly a second California."

The Bureau of Pomology of the United States Department of Agriculture also passed on lemons from the Kenedy Ranch in much the same commendatory terms, so that there can be no doubt as to the high quality of lemons produced in South Texas.

Oranges, grape fruit, limes, and other fruits of the citrus family have also been grown simply as experiments, so that citrus culture as a commercial success depends on the confidence that can be placed in the climate.

The writer of these lines confesses that he was exceedingly skeptical concerning the statement that the Gulf Coast country would be a second California, but an investigation into conditions convinced him of the great possibilities of that region for the production of oranges and kindred fruits for the early, or fall, market.

### Proof by Experiment.

In order to aid in the development of the Gulf Coast region and the Lower Rio Grande Valley, the management of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway secured the services of Mr. H. C. Stiles, a horticultural and irrigation expert, to direct





Oranges in a Corpus Christi Yard.

and conduct experiments in the South Texas region, and for the past two years Mr. Stiles has been making a study of the Gulf Coast country and its resources and possibilities. Mr. Stiles has behind him nearly twenty years of experience in horticultural and irrigation work in California, having served as a deputy commissioner of horticulture in that state, and being acquainted with the conditions of every region in it, he knows the citrus industry thoroughly.

It is the belief of Mr. Stiles that while South Texas will not compete with California in the production of oranges from February on through the late winter, spring and summer, it can produce Washington navels that can be marketed from six to ten weeks in advance of the bulk of the California crop, in the fall and early winter, at a time when good oranges are bringing exceedingly fancy prices; at a time, in fact, when even the not fully matured California product is giving returns of from \$500 to \$1,000 per acre, in spite of the long haul to market necessary over two or three mountain ranges.

Successful orange culture in South Texas is merely a question of the selection and grafting of the proper varieties. The only danger to citrus culture in that region comes from possible frosts in February. These frosts do not always come, but there is danger of occasional damage to the growing fruit from them, the same as there is in Florida.

Mr. Stiles' idea is to secure a tree by selection and grafting that will not only be impervious to all frosts, but one that will yield its fruit in time to be marketed from October to January, when there are almost no oranges on the market from other sections. In California that grower is exceedingly fortunate who can market any oranges for the holiday trade, and the bulk of the fruit does not begin to move till February. If there is a glut of the market at all, and consequent low prices, it comes during

February and March. These are the famous navel oranges. Later, California markets its St. Michaels, Valencias and other spring and summer oranges, with which South Texas does not at this time expect to compete.

### The Texas Orange.

After making a thorough study of the climatic and soil conditions of the Gulf Coast region, Mr. Stiles has adopted the Japanese orange as the stock with which to commence. The Japanese orange is an extremely hardy variety that can stand a low degree of temperature. These trees will also remain partially dormant for a month or two during the latter part of the winter. The same sort of advantages and safeguards can be secured for lemons, grape fruit and similar citrus products.

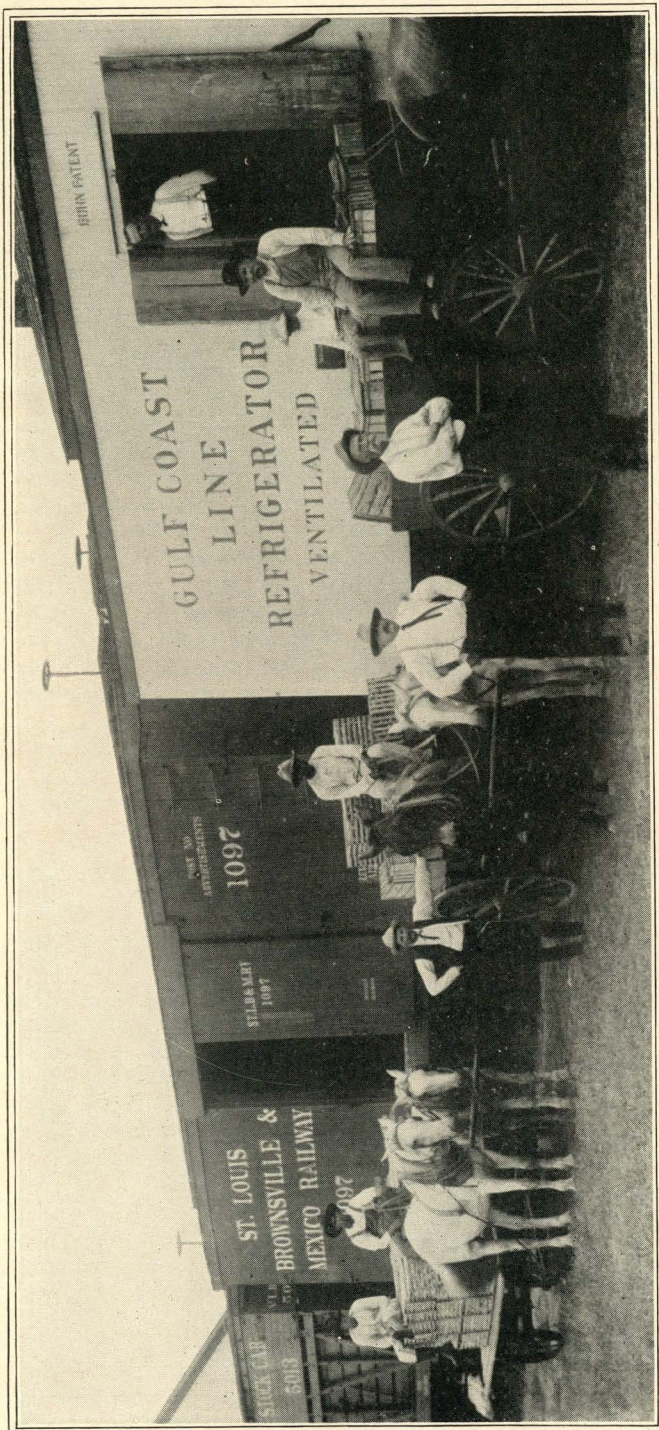
One hundred and fifty orange trees set out by Mr. Stiles at Raymondville this spring sent out shoots six inches long within ten days after they were planted, so well was the soil and other conditions adapted to them. At Kingsville also Mr. Stiles is experimenting with a number of varieties of citrus trees, and they are doing remarkably well.

Good California orange and lemon groves are worth from \$1,000 an acre up, and return satisfactory profits on those values. There seems to be no good reason why the land that is now being placed on the market in the Gulf Coast region at from \$20 to \$30 an acre, should not be worth just as much or more when it is transformed into orange and lemon groves a few years hence, as is similar California property.

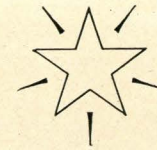


Peach Trees, 14 Months Old—Will bear next Year.





From the Farm to the Car—Kingsville, South Texas.



## The Important Question of Markets

*The railroad facilities of the Gulf Coast Country will place its products in the markets ahead of every other section of the country. A gain in time and a saving in freight rates.*

One of the chief problems in any business is to sell the product at a good profit. How great the product may be makes little difference unless it can be advantageously sold—in fact if it is sold at a loss, the greater the product the greater the loss.

In agriculture and the live stock industry the farmer usually has to take what is offered him. He hauls his products to the local market and sells them for whatever some dealer chooses to give him. He has little to say about what the price shall be. The truck and fruit grower formerly had to consign his products to some commission man at a distance, and unless he was experienced the chances are that he would not realize what he ought from his crop.

But the management of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway is interested in the prosperity of the people along its line, not alone for their sake, but for its own. It realizes that if the farmers of the Gulf Coast country do not make money they will become discouraged, and the more money they make the more land they will be able to cultivate, the greater tonnage they will produce to haul to market, and the greater will be the demand for merchandise which the railroad will have to haul back to them. The prosperity of any railroad depends on the prosperity of the people whom it serves.

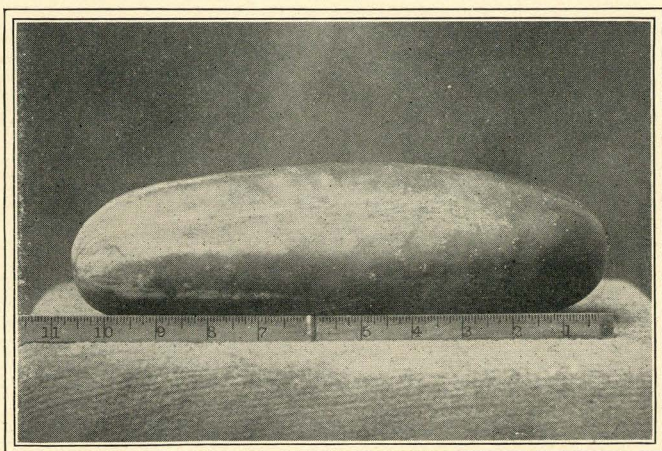
For that reason the Gulf Coast line is not only interested in bringing new settlers to its territory, but it is also interested in aiding them to get the best possible prices for their products—to reach the best markets and to make as large profits as possible.

Although it has been only about two years since the Gulf Coast Line was opened between Brownsville and Corpus Christi and settlers were invited in to clear off the chaparral and begin raising crops, truck-growers' associations have been formed at Kingsville, Raymondville and Brownsville, which are aiding greatly in satisfactorily marketing the crops. Similar organizations will be formed at other points in the not distant future.

### Truck-Growers' Associations.

These associations serve several purposes. First, they prevent a congestion of any one product in any certain market, which would cause the bottom to drop out of prices. Second,





A 10½-inch Cucumber from South Texas.

they make it their business to know the most dependable buyers and commission merchants in all cities and markets, so as to prevent loss to the growers by reason of sharp practices by buyers. Third, they educate newcomers and inexperienced growers in preparing their products for market. It is to the interest of all that the reputation of South Texas products be maintained as high as possible. Reputation counts for a great deal in farm products, as in anything else. For instance, the name, "Rocky Ford," in connection with cantaloupes, adds to their value, simply because the quality shipped from that locality has usually been kept high.

The "knowing how" in preparing vegetables for market is an important item. Early this spring two Kingsville growers made shipments of beets. One man, to save space, cut off the tops before crating the beets. The other crated tops and all. The beets with the green tops sold for double the price of the others. They brought fancy prices as new beets, while the others had to be sold as old beets, although they were just as good as those with the tops on. The green tops made the difference.

These various local truck-growers' associations affiliate with a general organization known as the South Texas Truck-Growers' Association, which includes all the territory south of San Antonio to the Rio Grande and east to the Gulf. Mr. Fred Warren, secretary and executive officer of the Kingsville association, is also vice-president of the general organization.

As to the markets themselves: The Gulf Coast country and the lower Rio Grande Valley can place cabbages, tomatoes, lettuce, "roasting ears," radishes and other truck products on the market during most of the winter, and they are also about three weeks in advance of any other part of the United States on early spring vegetables. Those three weeks mean a great deal to the farmers of South Texas. It means that they are first in the

markets of Galveston, Houston, San Antonio, Dallas, Fort Worth and other Texas cities. These furnish a market close at home for a tremendous amount of produce. As the season advances and the growers in those regions get into the market, the South Texas producer extends the zone of his market further north. He reaches Denver, Kansas City, St. Louis, Chicago and all intermediate points in that latitude, as well as St. Paul and Minneapolis, and the extreme east.

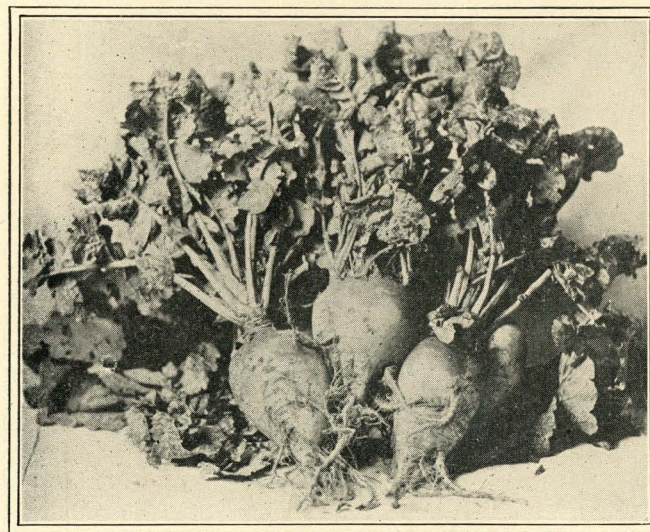
All this time he can be the first in these respective markets when all truck products bring fancy prices; and long before the prices get too low to yield a good profit he has sold his entire spring crop and has sown some staple as a summer crop. He will harvest that in time to put in a crop of winter vegetables.

The problem of markets is therefore practically worked out in advance for the man who now goes into South Texas. All he needs to do is to be guided by the advice of those who have had experience, and to use a little common sense and good judgment in connection with it.

### Advantage of Diversity.

An important point to remember is that the South Texas farmer not only has the benefit of time in marketing his products, but he can always raise two, and sometimes three or four crops in a single year. When it is stated that cabbages and onions bring from \$100 to \$500 an acre, it should be remembered that that is just for one of two or three crops a year from the same land—not necessarily the same kind of crops, for it is usually wise to diversify and rotate them.

For instance: A truck farmer living near Corpus Christi harvested a crop of cabbages from his land in January. He followed with a crop of peas, and by July he had also marketed a



Rutabaga Turnips, from South Texas, too.



crop of cucumbers from the same land. Then he planted a crop of sorghum, which was cut in time to put in more cabbages for the winter market. All this was done without irrigation.

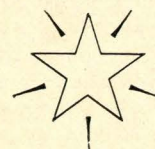
Down in the Rio Grande country three crops of corn have been matured on the same land in fourteen months.

These stories may sound preposterous to a Northern farmer who worries for fear the frost will catch his single crop of corn before it is fully matured, but they are true nevertheless.

At this writing the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway is in operation only from Brownsville to Bay City, but by the time this booklet reaches its readers its trains will be running direct from the Rio Grandecountry into Galveston and Houston. There connections are made by which the Rock Island-Frisco Lines are reached, so that speedy transportation can be secured to all markets of the North.



Beets, February, 1906—A fair size!



## Some Specific Performances

*"At the dinner, one of our party could not resist the temptation to note down the names of the FIFTEEN delicious vegetables set before us."*

—Extract from diary of recent investigating party.

What may be done can be judged by what has been done. Therefore the possibilities of agriculture in the Gulf Coast country and the lower Rio Grande Valley are indicated by what has already been accomplished in the two years since the country was opened for settlement by farmers.

Mr. George Hoffman this spring harvested 24,000 pounds of Bermuda onions from a single acre, for which he received 2½ cents a pound f. o. b. Kingsville, a return of \$600 an acre from the one crop.

William Johnson and Caesar Kleberg did approximately the same. They also live in the vicinity of Kingsville.

P. E. Blalack, of Brownsville, shipped the product from a quarter of an acre of cauliflower to St. Louis and received \$225 for it in that market.

Mr. Landrum, of Olmito, purchased 4.7 acres last fall at \$50 an acre. Inside of six months he had paid for the land from the sales off of 1½ acres of lettuce that he planted on the land, and he had money left from the crop besides.

A Sarito truck grower received \$1.80 a dozen for an early shipment of cucumbers to Denver. The same man received \$3.30 a bushel for early new potatoes shipped to the eastern market this spring.

Rio Grande truck growers last winter contracted to sell cucumbers at their local stations at fifty cents a bushel net. The seed was planted from the 10th to the 15th of February, and on April 10th the growers commenced to harvest the crop. Their returns were from \$100 to \$150 an acre.

Late in February last year a truck grower near Brownsville cleared the mesquite and other growth from one acre of new land, and by the first day of July he had raised and marketed \$120 worth of potatoes and \$160 worth of watermelons from that one acre.

Last year Mr. John Closner secured nine cuttings of alfalfa from his 220 acres of that forage plant. The total yield was 2,475 tons, or 275 tons at each cutting, which made an average yield per acre of 1¼ tons at each cutting. The crop sold at \$11 a ton, bringing \$27,225 gross. Deducting the cost of production, it gave Mr. Closner a net profit of \$17,445 from the 220 acres.



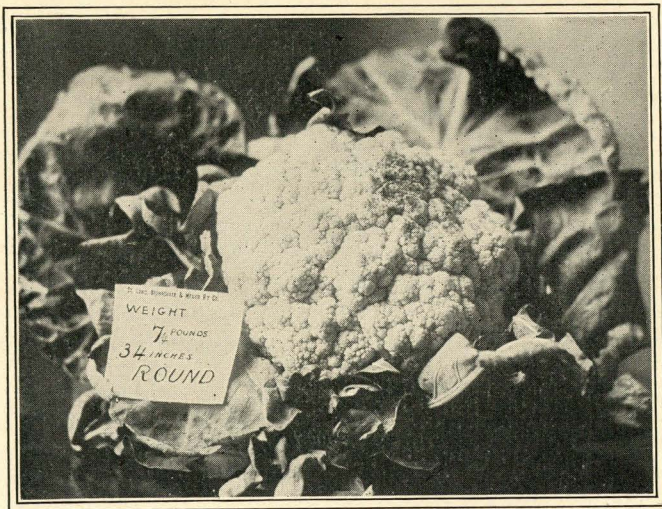
From a two-acre banana grove Mr. Closner has sold \$500 worth of fruit in a single year.

Mr. Closner also made 350,000 pounds of sugar from less than 200 acres of sugar cane, which he sold at an average of five cents a pound. This crop has to be planted only once in eight or nine years.

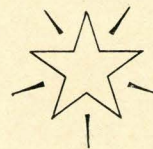
From 104 acres of cane on the Brulay plantation near Brownsville, 223,754 pounds of sugar was made, and a break in the machinery of the mill caused the loss of a large amount in addition. This brought an average of 5½ cents a pound on the local market.

Mr. C. S. Morton, who lives on the Rio Grande near Run post-office, six miles south of Donna station, last year cut 360 tons of alfalfa from 45 acres. He sold it at \$11 a ton, yielding him a gross return of \$3,960. After deducting all expenses connected with it and paying the cost of living of himself and family, Mr. Morton had \$1,000 left from that one crop.

Last September the Piper Bros. went to Brownsville from Racine, Wis. They bought 823 acres of land at \$17 an acre, and established their own pumping plant. The cost of clearing the land was about nine dollars an acre, but the wood paid for most of it. They employed Mexicans to do the work at 75 cents a day, Mexican money, and 350 acres were cleared by the middle of March. Their first crop was cabbage, which yielded 20,000 pounds to the acre, and which they sold in March at \$1.50 and \$1.60 a hundred pounds. They say their land is as valuable as that which sells in Northern communities at \$100 an acre, and that they like the climate much better than in the North.



A Rotund Cauliflower from the Gulf Coast.



## The Question of Cost

*South Texas is no place for a man without some capital, but it is possible for those who cannot buy land to lease both land and water rights on favorable terms.*

It must be stated that South Texas is no place for a man without any capital whatever. There may be places in other states where a poor man can secure a homestead of government land or some other raw land at very little cash cost, but in such cases the real cost is paid in the privation and struggle that comes with pioneering. There must be a cost in some shape. If it is not in money it must be in hardship.

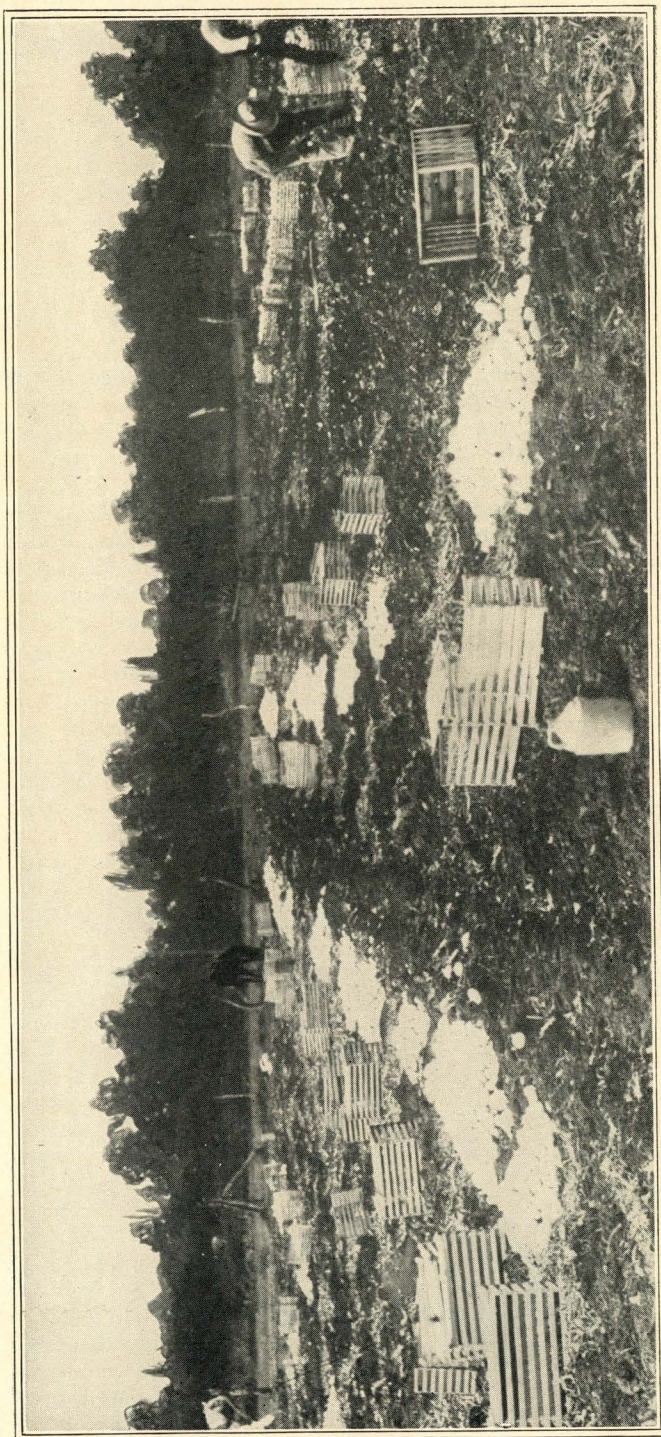
But there is no pioneering to be done in South Texas. There are no more hardships to be undergone than there are in long-settled communities. Kingsville, for instance, is not yet two years old, but it is prepared to furnish the people of that vicinity with all the accommodations of most towns of four or five thousand inhabitants in the Middle West. The improvements are the best, and the little farms in that community bear the appearance of having been cultivated for several years. Yet only twenty months ago they were covered with a more or less heavy growth of chaparral.

It is necessary for a man who wishes to make a home in the new Gulf Coast country to have at least a small amount of capital. He must make a partial payment on his land, it must be cleared, and in the artesian belt he must provide himself with an artesian well. However, the cost is extremely small when compared with the value of the land when this is once done, and it frequently happens that the wood and the fence posts secured from the land will pay for the clearing.

The price of the land itself runs from \$20 to \$30 an acre, and it is platted to be sold in tracts of forty acres each. A purchaser may buy one or more tracts, as he desires. The terms are usually one-third cash, and the balance in one, two and three-year payments, with interest at six per cent.

The difference in price is accounted for mainly by the difference in location and not in any difference in the quality of the land. At Kingsville, for instance, land near the town may be purchased at \$25 an acre, while equally good land may be purchased at \$20 from three to four miles from the town.





Texas Bermuda Onions Ready for Crating.

In the artesian belt there were the following amounts, approximately, on the market on May 1, near the towns along the Gulf Coast Line:

Kingsville.....	43,000 acres.
Sarita.....	6,000 "
Mifflin.....	5,000 "
Turcotte.....	11,000 "
Yturria.....	6,000 "
Raymondville.....	37,000 "
Combe.....	2,000 "

For these lands artesian water must be provided. The cost of boring an artesian well is one dollar a foot, and casing it costs fifty cents a foot additional. The wells vary from 600 to 1,000 feet deep, so that the cost of the flowing well complete will be from \$900 to \$1,500.

One well will irrigate from 40 to 100 acres, dependent upon the flow and the season. An earthen reservoir should also be constructed, the cost of which depends upon its size, but it is not great. This is for storing the water from the flowing well at times when irrigation is not necessary. The reservoir is not absolutely essential, but it increases the amount of land that can be irrigated from the well. In the case of artesian irrigation the well represents a permanent investment and there is no more expense attached to it.

Mr. H. C. Stiles, the expert employed by the Gulf Coast Line to aid and advise new settlers, recommends putting in pumping plants to aid the flowing wells. He estimates that a well with sufficient flow to irrigate 80 acres will irrigate 300 acres if aided by a pump. The pumping plant necessary would cost about \$1,000. By this plan four or five farmers could combine and put in a single well and pumping plant at a cost of \$2,000 to \$2,500 that would serve all of them. The pump could be run just when needed and the cost of operation would be extremely small.

Almost all of the land has to be cleared. With Mexicans doing the work at from 75 cents to a dollar a day Mexican money, or half that in United States coin, the expense is from five to ten dollars an acre, not counting the income from the wood and fence posts.

In the Rio Grande Valley the best propositions for the farmer of limited means are those offered by the big companies which have constructed irrigation works and are selling land to purchasers and then furnishing the water with which to irrigate it. This does not require so great an original investment as in the artesian belt, but there is an annual outlay for water that does not occur with artesian irrigation.

It is possible to lease both land and water rights from some of the irrigation companies along the Rio Grande, and this will attract men who have not the capital to buy the land outright.

The largest of the Rio Grande irrigation companies—in fact, it is one of the largest private enterprises of the kind in America—is the American Rio Grande Land and Irrigation Company. It owns 120,000 acres of land surrounding the new towns of



Lonsboro and Donna, on the Fordyce branch of the Gulf Coast Line, perhaps thirty miles above Brownsville. This is a new enterprise and the main canal is now under construction. Two big pumps are to be installed on the Rio Grande. They will be operated by electricity, and the water will be pumped into a reservoir two miles long and a quarter of a mile wide, covering 350 acres. The plant will have sufficient capacity to irrigate 200,000 acres.

The Brownsville Land and Irrigation Company controls 30,000 acres just west of Brownsville, which it is selling. It has a pumping plant with a capacity of 100,000 gallons per minute, and furnishes water not only for the lands which it has for sale, but it will also sell water to other farmers along its canals. It has sixty miles of main and branch canals.

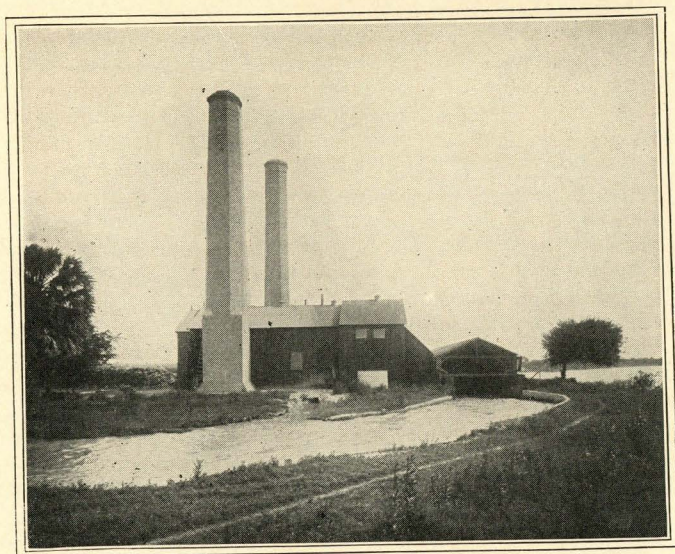
Five miles south of Lonsboro the Santa Maria Company controls a comparatively small tract, renting lands to tenants, or selling both land and water to settlers.

A plantation of 7,000 acres belonging to Mr. Frank Rabb, lying just east of the Santa Maria Company's lands, has been opened for settlement, and will be supplied with water from the Santa Maria plant.

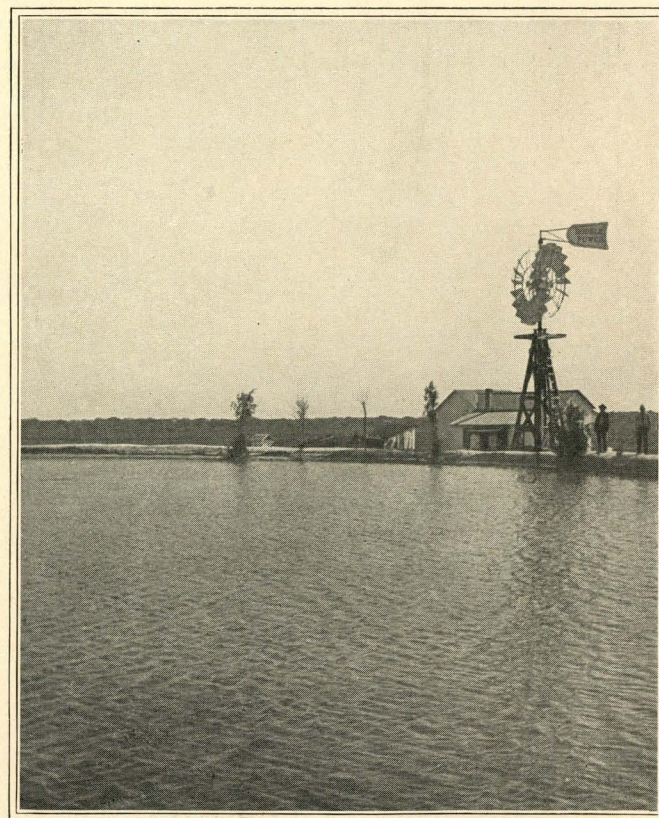
The Hidalgo Canal Company, operating south of MacAllen, is selling its lands at \$25 an acre.

There are a number of minor projects now in operation and others are planned for the future.

The prices at which water is furnished vary with the requirements. The Hidalgo Canal Company, for instance, sells water at the flat rate of one dollar per acre for each watering. The Brownsville Land and Irrigation Company has the following general schedule for furnishing water by the year:



Waterworks at Brownsville.



Lake Formed from Artesian Well, Kingsville.

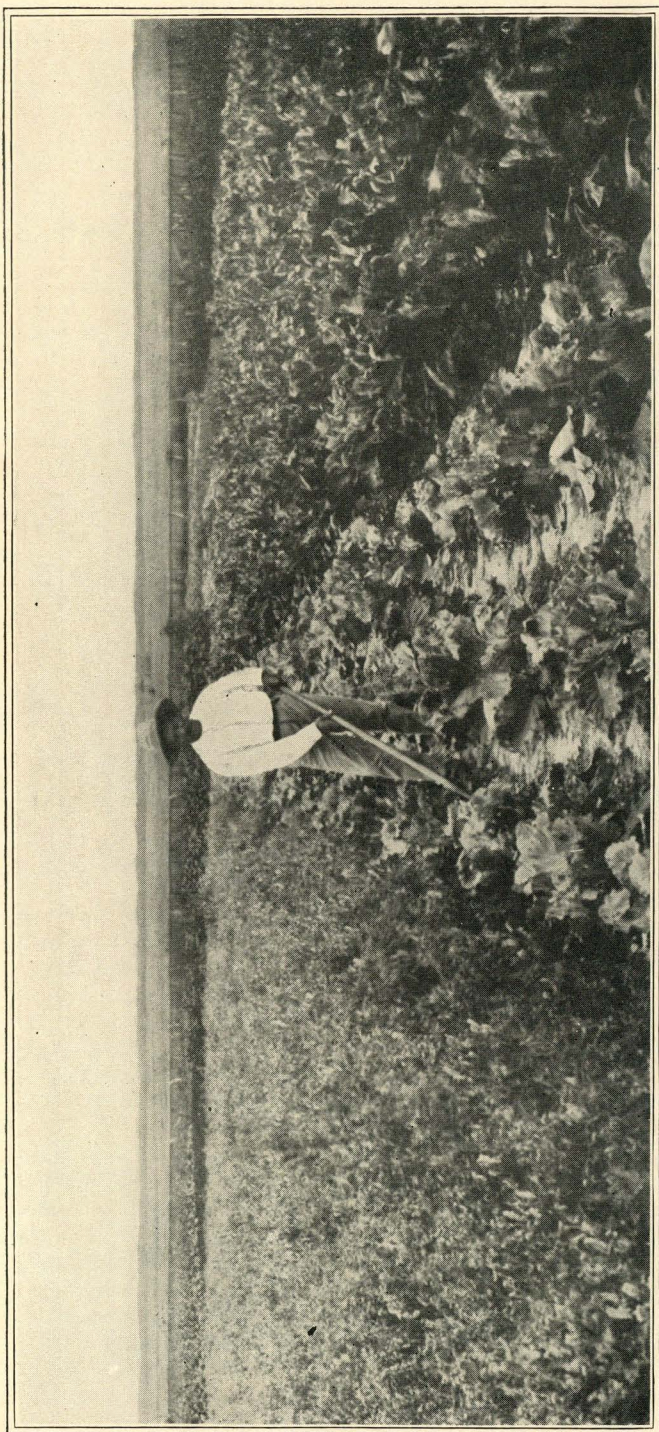
Truck.....	\$10.00 per acre per year.
Cane.....	6.00 per acre per year.
Alfalfa.....	6.00 per acre per year.
Corn.....	4.00 per acre per year.
Cotton.....	4.00 per acre per year.

Irrigation with a sure supply of water, is the same as crop insurance. There is no danger of crop failure. Neither floods nor drought can do damage.

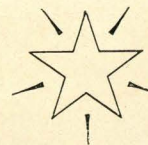
In the vicinity of Corpus Christi and north of the Nueces where corn and cotton and similar crops can usually be grown without irrigation, there are numerous opportunities to purchase land, the same as there are in more Northern communities. Near Corpus Christi, for instance, there is a tract of 8,000 acres known as the Great Northern Colony, which is on the market.

In some localities north of the Nueces speculators are getting hold of land to hold it for the inevitable rise in values that is sure to come. A few miles northwest of Corpus Christi one syndicate has obtained control of 160,000 acres which it is bringing under cultivation and otherwise developing.





Forage Grass, Cauliflower and Cabbage—Santa Gertrudis Ranch.



## The Question of Labor

*In South Texas there is an abundance of (Mexican) farm labor awaiting employment. Cheap, yet quick, active and remarkably clever at adopting new methods.*

In most "new" countries labor is extremely scarce. In this respect South Texas is different from any other localities newly opened for settlement. The rule elsewhere is that the newcomer has work of his own to look after, and he works for his neighbor only when necessity compels him to do so, and then only for big wages.

But in South Texas there is an abundance of farm labor awaiting employment as well as rich new land awaiting the plow. For half a century this region has been populated more by Mexicans than by people of the United States, and they can be employed at wages which seem extremely low to an American, but which usually satisfies the Mexican.

This fact greatly simplifies the problems that would otherwise confront the farmer who goes into South Texas to make a new home. His land probably needs clearing. It costs so little, with Mexican labor, that the wood probably pays for the work. If he raises vegetables in large quantities he will need labor to help him. He has an abundance at hand, and it is good labor for the purpose.

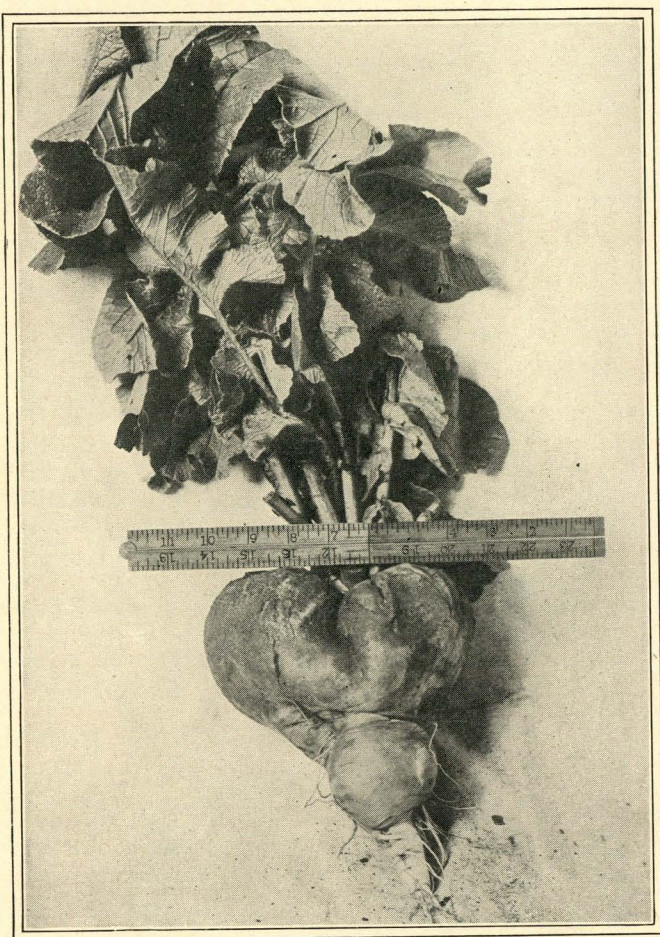
The Mexican laborer is an individual of simple needs, and his ambitions are not great. He is satisfied, as a rule, if he earns enough to supply his few wants. While he may not be as strenuous as his employer, he compares favorably with many farm hands in the United States. He is not strong on initiative, and therefore he will not become a progressive farmer himself, but he is a finished imitator, and when once shown what to do and how to do it, he will work at his task without asking questions. He has no curiosity as to why he does a thing—it is sufficient for him if he is told to do it.

The writer hereof saw a Mexican operating a mowing machine on the Santa Gertrudis Ranch near Kingsville.

"That's a ten-dollar-a-month man on that machine," said Mr. Caesar Kleberg, who has charge of the details of the ranch, "but he never saw a mowing machine till I put him on that one a few months ago."

Northern farmers who are constantly having difficulty in securing satisfactory farm hands at any price will appreciate what this abundance of labor means to South Texas. Every summer there are farmers in the North who lose thousands of

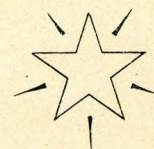




A South Texas Radish.

bushels of wheat because they cannot get sufficient help to harvest the crop before it is lost. In nearly every agricultural state there is such a shortage of good farm hands that the really capable and willing ones command high wages. This condition of affairs does not prevail in South Texas for the reasons stated.

But the very abundance and cheapness of labor in the Gulf Coast country emphasizes the fact that it is not a good place for an Anglo-Saxon who is entirely without capital. In most "new" regions the man without money can work for his more fortunate neighbors from time to time and earn enough to keep him going until he has acquired some means of raising crops of his own, but he cannot do that in South Texas—unless he is a skilled workman. There is a growing demand, of course, for artisans and skilled mechanics in that region as in every newly opened country.



## As to Health and Comfort

*A home of great comfort for the incoming settler, where it is possible for him to surround himself with Nature's luxuries at smallest cost.*

As suggested heretofore, the popular Northern idea of the Gulf Coast is a swampy, torrid, miasmatic region, oppressive with moist heat, and productive of malaria and fevers.

But nothing could be farther from the truth as to conditions along the Gulf Coast in South Texas and down by the Rio Grande. The waters of the Gulf keep the temperature up in winter and down in summer. There is just sufficient frost in February, as a rule, to make the atmosphere invigorating, yet in midsummer, when people a thousand miles further north are sweltering with the heat, with now and then a sunstroke, the inhabitants of South Texas are enjoying a temperature several degrees lower, and sunstrokes are absolutely unknown.

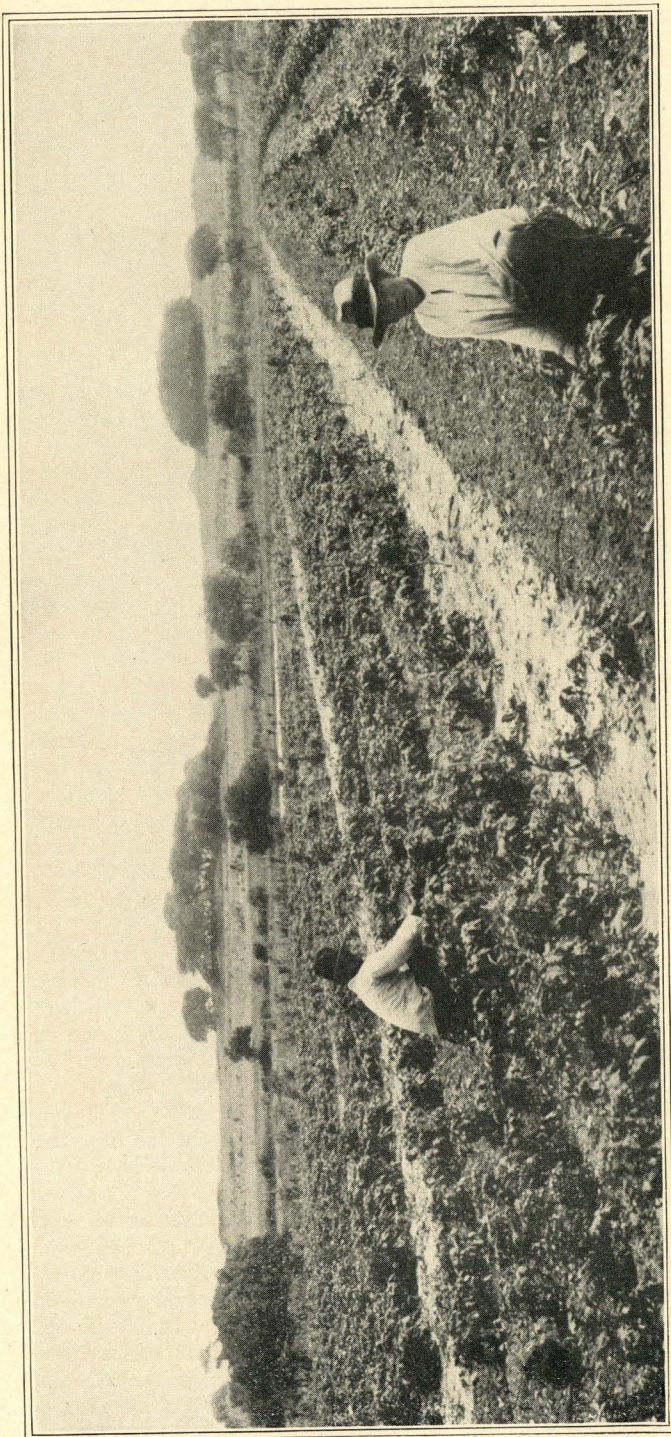
In addition to this, the country between the Nueces and the Rio Grande is as conducive to health as are the plateaus of New Mexico. It has approximately the same semi-arid conditions and atmosphere—the same conditions that render irrigation necessary at times. There are no swamps to breed malaria, and health conditions are such that physicians have little to do in attending fevers and kindred ills. The artesian water is exceedingly pure, and coming from the depth it does, it is of course, untainted by any possible drainage.

The nights, too, are always cool and pleasant in summer, at a time when people in less favored localities away from the coast are sweltering with the heat.

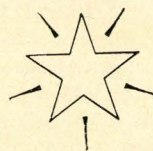
The figures showing the extremes of temperature in various parts of the United States, as recorded by the weather bureau, indicate better than any other manner how South Texas compares with other regions.

Not only are there less extremes in maximum and minimum temperatures, but the monthly mean temperature for 17 years shows a variation of only 26 degrees. The coldest month on an average is January, which has a mean temperature of 55.9 degrees, while the warmest are July and August, during which the mean temperature is 81.9. There is a greater variation during February than in January, for in February come the light frosts, but the mean temperature is 58.1. The mean temperature for December is 70.2 degrees, which is warmer than either November or March. The latter months are 64.1 and 63.9 respectively. These figures explain why vegetables can be grown in the Gulf Coast country all the year around.





A Field of Tomatoes, near Corpus Christi.



## Towns of the South Texas Coast

*The new towns are settling with people who have money with which to supply their needs, and offer excellent openings for business enterprises.*

There are two classes of towns in the Gulf Coast country of South Texas—those that date back more than a half a century and have two generations of history behind them, and those that have been born within the last twenty months, as the result of artesian water and the coming of the railroad. Two of the former class are especially noteworthy—Corpus Christi and Brownsville.

### Corpus Christi.

The former is, next to Galveston, the most important point on the entire Texas coast. Its modern existence dates from the time when General Taylor's army encamped there prior to the invasion of Mexico at the beginning of the Mexican war, and while there were times years ago when it was the center of a vast trade that came from far to the West, it is doubtful if it ever had such a period of substantial growth as it is now enjoying.

Corpus Christi is an enterprising little city of about 7,500 people. It is the center of the greatest cabbage-growing region in the world, and other vegetables are produced in abundance, besides the staples, corn and cotton. Irrigation is not essential in the vicinity of Corpus Christi, and a large amount of land is farmed without it.

The business portion of the town is only a few feet above the water front, but the beautiful residences of the little city, many of them magnificent homes, are on a bluff overlooking the bay, 50 or 75 feet above the water.

A bright future is undoubtedly ahead of Corpus Christi. It is already a place of considerable commercial importance, and that importance will be greatly enhanced in the near future when the United States government completes its efforts to build a deep water harbor nearby.

In addition to that, Corpus Christi cannot fail to become the great seaside resort of South Texas. Already the Texas Epworth League Encampment is located there, bringing in 7,000 visitors every summer. Its fame as a seaside resort is spreading over that portion of the South. The waters of the bay, without an undertow, afford absolutely safe sea-bathing, and fish can be caught in abundance. As South Texas develops, Corpus Christi cannot fail to become a great seaside resort, not only in summer, but all the year around.



### Brownsville.

In point of population Brownsville, the southernmost city of Texas, is larger than Corpus Christi. It is the home of about 9,000 people, but more than half of them are Mexicans. Located seventeen miles from the coast, on the Rio Grande, it is opposite the old Mexican city of Matamoros, and the Mexican population floats back and forth between the two cities.

Like Corpus Christi, the founding of Brownsville dates back to the time of General Taylor's invasion of Mexico, when he built Fort Brown here at the beginning of the Mexican war. For a time during the Civil War, when other Southern ports were blockaded and before the federal troops took possession of Brownsville, it did a tremendous business in exporting cotton, and during the years after the war both it and its sister city across the river in Mexico attained commercial importance as the outlet for a large trade from up the Rio Grande and in Northern Mexico. But the coming of the great railroads from the North to El Paso, Eagle Pass and Laredo turned this trade northward, and Brownsville, left for years without railroad facilities, went to sleep.

But since the building of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway, this southernmost city of the United States, excepting Key West, is awakening, and now that through train service will shortly be established to Galveston and Houston, the development of Brownsville will doubtless be rapid. It has heretofore been a town of the past, but a telephone system was inaugurated some time ago, and other projects are well under way to make it a modern, wide-awake city. Below it in Mexico lies a rich territory from which a considerable trade will doubtless come through the Brownsville gateway, now that first-class transportation facilities have been opened to the north.

It was at Brownsville that the now famous Mexican drawn-work industry had its inception. A number of years ago there was a famine among the Mexicans in the lower Rio Grande Valley. Improvident, and depending upon the almost unfailing natural foods of the region to provide for their simple wants, there came a time when these finally failed and the poorer



Bathers in the Bay, Corpus Christi.

Mexicans became destitute. Most of the Americans were, of course, well-to-do, and the good American ladies of Brownsville sought to aid the destitute Mexicans. They decided, however, that it was better to give them some sort of employment than to provide for them by direct charity, and so they taught the Mexican women to do drawn-work. The latter, adepts at imitation as they were, speedily became experts in this class of needlework. The women of Brownsville having more drawn-work than they could use personally, began to send it to their friends in other parts of the country. It was greatly admired and soon a demand for it sprang up. Today the industry has spread over a considerable portion of Mexico, and it is estimated that not less than \$100,000 annually goes through Brownsville to the Mexican families of the lower Rio Grande Valley alone.

Notwithstanding its isolation from the rest of the state by reason of a lack of railroad facilities, Brownsville did not neglect the question of education, and it has a splendid public school system. It spends \$20,000 a year in maintaining its public schools, and is the seat of a Catholic college for boys and a convent besides.

In religious matters, the Catholics, Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists and Episcopalians have organizations in Brownsville. It has a federal building that would be a credit to a large city, and the court house of Cameron County, located here, is another fine building.

It is a city that is bound to become more and more important commercially, as the surrounding country and its trade with the Mexican territory to the south develops, and the wise investment of capital will yield handsome returns.

### The New Towns.

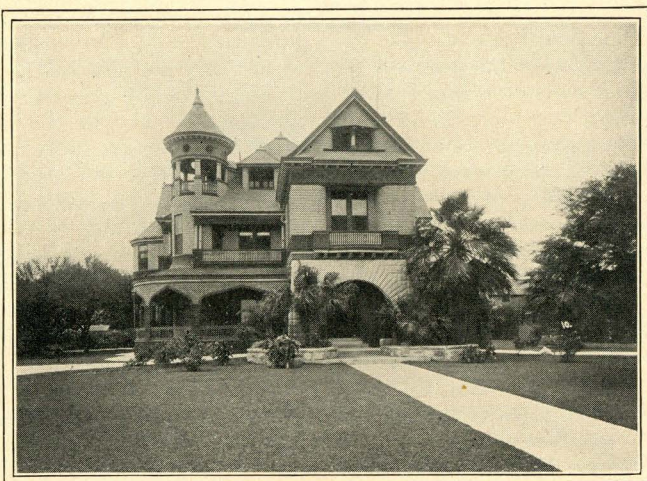
Entirely different in some respects from the older towns are the new ones that have sprung up along the line of the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway. They are modern and progressive in every respect. More advantages can be found in them than are found in similar new towns in the North.

Perhaps the most representative of these is Kingsville, forty miles southwest of Corpus Christi. It lies in the midst of the Santa Gertrudis Ranch. Twenty-two months ago the town site was covered with chaparral—mesquite, cactus, ebony and other small trees and shrubs. Today it has a population of about twelve hundred, and it is the center of a region that is rapidly being taken up for truck farms of from 40 to 160 acres. It has a bank, a big lumber yard, several large mercantile establishments, two newspapers, and other lesser enterprises. King's Inn is the finest hotel south of Galveston and San Antonio.

At Kingsville are located the shops and general offices of the Gulf Coast Line. A modern system of waterworks supplies artesian water through its mains to all parts of the town. An ice plant adds to the comfort of both town and country residents and furnishes means of refrigeration for the shipment of perishable fruits.

The Presbyterians have erected a commodious church building, at a cost of \$3,500, which is now used also by the Methodists,





A Corpus Christi Residence.

Baptists and Episcopalians, each of which have organizations there. A Swedish church has also recently been organized by the newcomers of that nationality. To each of these organizations the town company has given two lots on which to erect a church building whenever they desire to do so, and it is likely that additional churches will be built at no distant time. A school district was also organized about as soon as was the town, and a commodious school building was erected. There are no saloons, and the moral tone of the community is high.

A park system has also been provided. Here and there are beautiful date palms. In one park, a quarter of a mile long, adjoining the railroad right-of-way, is a broad avenue of bananas, flanked by a large number of citrus trees. Handsome specimens of the native mesquite have been left here and there to furnish shade. In another small park are growing 65 varieties of palms, and in pens may be seen specimens of native deer and peccary.

Lots are for sale at from \$50 up.

What has happened at Kingsville is happening, or will happen, at numerous other new towns all along the main line of the Gulf Coast line and up the Fordyce branch. Kingsville was simply first in the market. Everything is new and modern in all these towns.

Among the more important of these new towns are Robstown, 23 miles north of Kingsville, the center of a region of particularly rich soil; Sarita, twenty-three miles south of Kingsville, in the midst of La Parra Ranch; Katherine, twenty-one miles south of Sarita; Raymondville, the center of a rich and rapidly settling locality, thirty miles south of Katherine, where citrus fruit culture will probably become more important than at any other point in Texas; Lyford, Sebastian and Combs are between Raymondville and Harlingen. Plans for these new

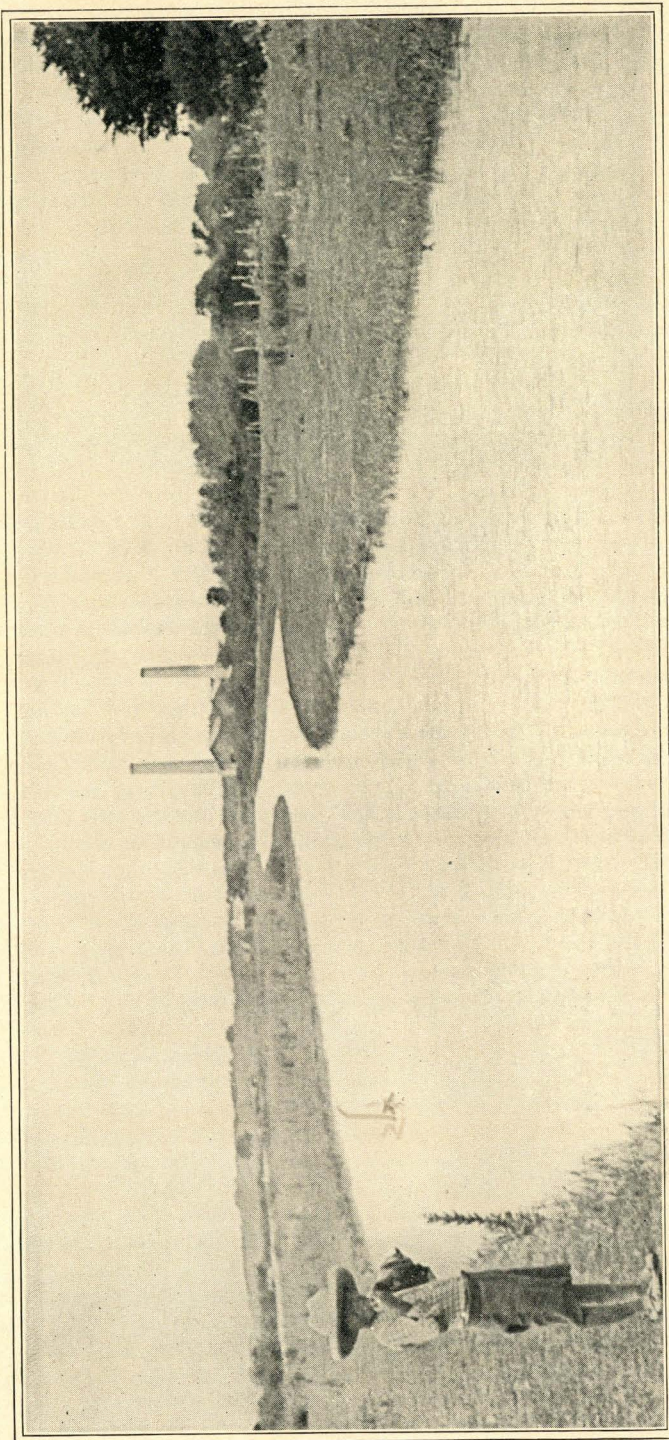
towns are just taking shape, and the locator to-day knows that he is "one of the first settlers." Harlingen is twenty-one miles south of Raymondville and twenty-five north of Brownsville, where the Fordyce branch of the Gulf Coast Line starts west up the Rio Grande Valley.

Lonsboro, Donna, MacAllen and Fordyce will all be important towns on this branch. The first two are located in the territory covered by the American Rio Grande Land and Irrigation Company. MacAllen is the shipping point for Hidalgo, the county seat of the county of the same name. A daily stage runs from MacAllen to Hidalgo, which is on the banks of the Rio Grande six miles away. Fordyce the terminus of the branch, is the nearest railroad station to Rio Grande City, the county seat of Starr County, and it will also be the shipping point for a large and rich territory above it in the Rio Grande Valley.

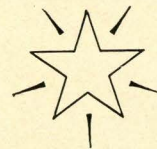
Besides these there are numerous intermediate stations to serve the convenience of the farmers and shippers of their respective localities. Driscoll, Julia and Caesar are located between Robstown and Kingsville. Richard and Spohn are stations between Kingsville and Sarita. Mifflin and Turcotte are south of Sarita. Between Katherine and Raymondville are Norias, Rudolph and Yturria. South of Harlingen are Bessie, Barreda and Olmito before Brownsville is reached. Lesser towns on the Fordyce Branch are Tiocano, Ebenezer, Mamie and Closner.

All of these towns offer excellent openings for business enterprises. The localities around each are settling with people who have money with which to supply their needs, and within a very short time after their arrival they begin to reap big returns from their lands. The next few months will afford many opportunities for the profitable investment of capital in these new towns.





Irrigating Canal and Pumping Station—Brownsville, South Texas



## North of the Nueces

*A territory of almost two hundred miles in extent just recently favored with transportation facilities. A "new" country, but without pioneering.*

Thus far these pages have treated primarily of that new region that lies between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, a region extending a hundred and fifty miles north and south and about half as large as the Territory of Oklahoma; a region where irrigation is possible, and necessary for most crops, and which has recently been opened for settlement by the building of the Gulf Coast Line.

But north of the Nueces and extending from that river nearly to Galveston and Houston, is a territory of almost two hundred miles extent, paralleling the Gulf, and which has had transportation facilities only in favored localities, and even those not direct to the great centers of trade. Consequently, the development of this region north of the Nueces has only begun.

The St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway was first built from Corpus Christi south to Brownsville, and after trains began running between those points the construction of the road was pushed two hundred miles north and east to the great cities of Houston and Galveston.

As in the region around Corpus Christi, irrigation is not an imperative necessity north of the Nueces for some of the staple crops, and in San Patricio and Refugio counties ranching and stock-raising have been the chief industries because of a lack of transportation facilities. Now, however, more attention is being paid to agriculture, and corn, cotton, and some truck crops are raised. San Patricio has about 2,500 population, and Refugio county still less. Sinton, the county seat of San Patricio county, is where the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway crosses the San Antonio & Aransas Pass. It is a town of about 300 inhabitants. Refugio, the county seat of the county of the same name, is a town of double the size of Sinton, but it was entirely without railroad facilities until the Gulf Coast Line built into it a few months ago.

Victoria county, which lies just north of Refugio, is one of the most populous and prosperous in that region. Its soil is adapted to general farming and truck-growing, and its county seat, Victoria, is a town of about 6,000 people.





Palms and Corn, Brownsville.

### The Rice Country.

In Jackson, Matagorda and Brazoria counties the Gulf Coast Line runs through an important rice-producing region. The former has developed rapidly in the last two or three years, and now produces more than 10,000 acres of rice annually.

Matagorda county, which the great Colorado river bisects, is given over largely to rice-growing, as that is its chief crop. Last year about 50,000 acres were sown to the white cereal in this county. Bay City, the county seat, a town of 1,000 inhabitants, is the present terminus of the trains on the Gulf Coast Line.

Rice is also raised on the prairies of Brazoria county, but sugar cane, corn and cotton, are more important crops in the Brazos Valley, which runs through this county. Its county seat, Angleton, is an important town of about 1,200 people.

At Algoa the St. Louis, Brownsville & Mexico Railway divides one of its lines running twenty-five miles east into Galveston, and the other running about the same distance north to Houston.

### Galveston and Houston.

Only fifty miles apart lie two of the great cities of Texas, Galveston and Houston, where the Gulf Coast Line makes its connections for the North. The latter disputes with Dallas the honor of being the most populous city in the great Lone Star State, claiming something more than 70,000. Galveston has only half that figure, but its importance lies in the fact that it is not only the greatest port on the Texas coast, but also the third greatest exporting port in the entire nation.

The manner in which Galveston has risen from the misfortune that overtook it less than six years ago when it was overwhelmed by the great flood that washed over it from the sea, destroying thousands of lives and millions of dollars worth of property, indicates tremendous possibilities for its future. The great sea wall that has been builded absolutely guards against any such calamities in the future, and the raising of the grade of the city, which will soon be completed, will make it one of the finest cities on the entire Gulf Coast from Florida to Brownsville.

Galveston restored cannot avoid becoming one of the great commercial centers of the Southwest by reason of its location. The great railroad systems from the West and Northwest there meet the ships that come from across the seas and from South America, and there they exchange cargoes. Ships of all nations enter the Galveston harbor, and its export trade alone will make it a great city.

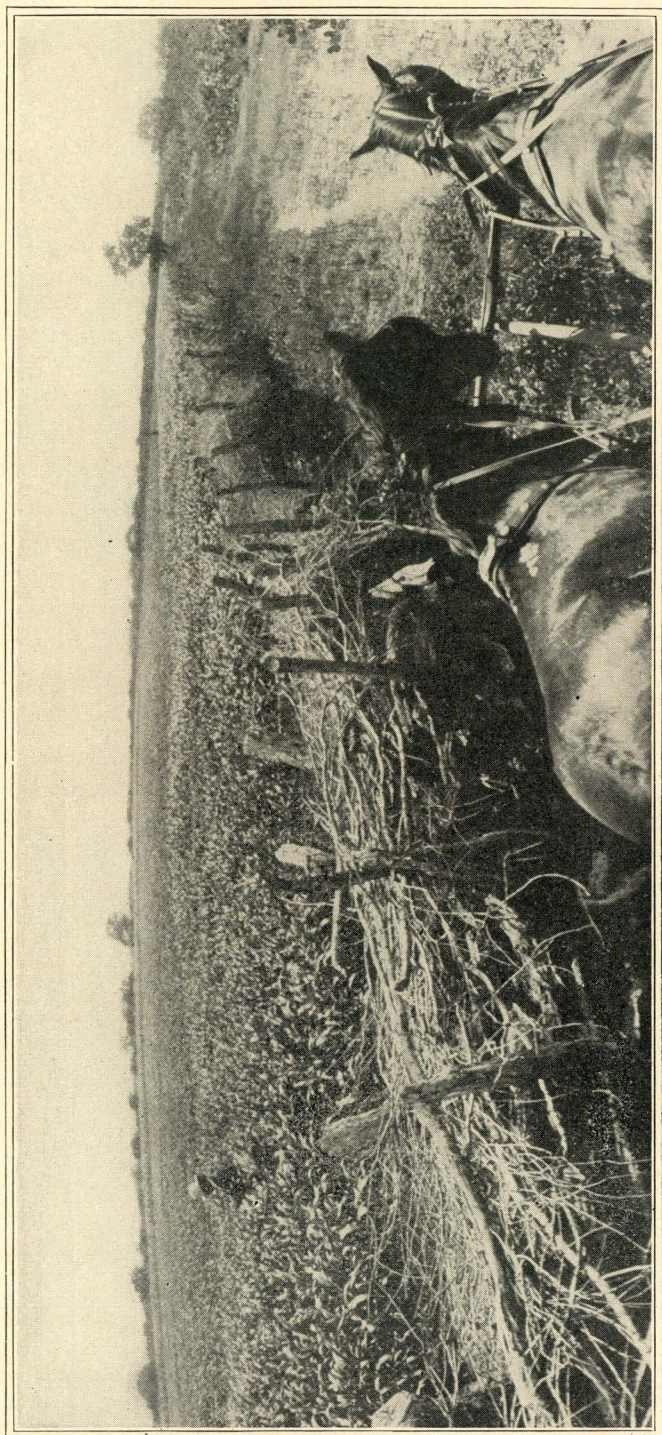
Houston, fifty miles to the Northwest of Galveston, is the great cotton mart of Texas—and Texas is by far the greatest cotton-producing state in the world. With its more than 70,000 people, Houston is a busy, bustling, enterprising city, the center of a large trade. When it secures a deep water canal through Galveston Bay to the Gulf, as it expects to do before long, it hopes to load ships with cotton at its own wharves, thus becoming virtually a seaport.

Both Houston and Galveston have before them bright futures, and each is steadily attracting the attention of outside capital.



An Afternoon's Duck Shoot.





A Landscape of Cotton and Corn, near Harlingen.

## The Way to Southern Texas

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The Rock Island-Frisco, as a system, terminates at Ft. Worth and Dallas. From these points the Gulf Coast passenger has his choice of three different routes to Houston and Galveston. By the time this book reaches the hands of its readers, the St. Louis, Brownsville and Mexico Railway will be running its trains into these two cities.

The trip is quickly and easily made, and to render it more convenient, Rock Island-Frisco Lines run frequent thru excursions with no change of cars from the North and East to Corpus Christi and Brownsville over the entire Gulf Coast Line. The expectation is to amplify this service in the near future.

A very low rate of fare is extended to homeseekers, investors, and the public generally on each first and third Tuesday of the month: \$25 from Chicago, \$20 from St. Louis, \$27.50 from Minneapolis and St. Paul, \$20 from Memphis, through to Gulf Coast points, with the very liberal return limit of thirty (30) days. Corresponding reductions from all points North and East.

A trip of investigation—a "show-me-trip," if you please—would be very advisable. You should see the country for yourself. You ought to meet and question some of the present successful land-owners of the section. There is nothing like getting information first hand.

The excursion rates mentioned are for this very purpose. They have been authorized for first and third Tuesdays during the remainder of 1906. They may be authorized in 1907, but it behooves you *now to go and see Texas*, for you will *not find the present conditions there in 1907*; you will *not* be able to buy land as cheaply, and you will *not* have the wide choice of the present time in the matter of location.

"First come, first served."

Will you come NOW?



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# Rock Island Frisco Lines





Rock Island  
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To the Winter  
Vegetable  
Garden of  
America