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WEEKLY.

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ALONG THE ROUTE

OF THE PROPOSED ROAD FROM ALEXANDRIA THROUGH TEXAS — THE LETTER OF COL. T. C. MOORE, OF BREMOND, TEXAS, ON THE SUBJECT.

BREMOND, TEXAS,
Sept. 2d, 1886.

L. V. MARYE, Esq., Alexandria, La:

Dear Sir — When in Alexandria I promised to write to you giving a description of that part of the route of the proposed railroad from Alexandria through Texas, by way of Houston to the Rio Grande, and also of the route through middle Texas, crossing the Brazos river in Robertson county, and the Colorado in Burnett county, and thence up the Llano river.

I have taken the pains to collect the population of the sixteen counties in Texas through which the road would run from the Sabine river to Laredo on the Rio Grande, via Houston and find that the aggregate population in 1880 was 88,151, and of that number Harris county, in which the city of Houston is located, contained 18,646, leaving for the other fifteen counties a total of 63,680. The increase of population from the Sabine to the Brazos river since 1880 has been very slight, except in Houston, while that West of the Brazos has rather decreased.

The country from the Sabine to Houston is a timbered one—on the streams the growth being that common to low river and creek bottoms subject to overflow, and on the hills mostly pine. The route inclines all the way to the lower flat lands of the coast, much of which during the wet seasons of the year, is submerged by water, rendering it sickly in the dry season, and totally unfit for cultivation.

From Houston to Victoria, in Victoria county, it would run through a low, flat prairie coast country, destitute of natural drainage, and, except along the narrow belts of alluvial lands on the larger streams, unfit for cultivation, producing only a coarse grass, suited for nothing except the raising of long horn Texas cattle and Spanish ponies.

Beyond Victoria and to the Rio Grande, the country is a little more broken and better drained. The soil and quality of the grass is better, but the lands are owned in large bodies by individuals and companies extensively engaged in raising cattle and sheep. A large proportion of the soil is not adapted to farming, and the country can never become a densely populated one. The population between Houston and Victoria has not increased since 1880, and beyond there it has decreased, owing to the fact that wealthy cattle and sheep men have bought up and fenced the country in large pastures, thus driving out the small farmers and stock raisers.

At Houston the proposed road would make connections with eight other roads. But all of these would be competitors instead of feeders. The Texas and New Orleans, the Houston and Texas Central and Galveston, Harrisburg and San Antonio (Sunset Route) belong to the Huntington syndicate and are interested in diverting the trade and travel to and through New Orleans. The Houston and Great Northern, and the New York, Texas and Mexican road, (completed to Victoria, about 130 miles) belong to the Gould system, interested in the St. Louis and Chicago trade. The Gulf, Colorado and Sante Fe, owned by the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe, having its terminus in Galveston is deeply interested in building up that place. It will thus be seen that the New York road, via Natchez and Alexandria, would at Houston, be forced into direct competition with all the great controling railroad systems of Texas.

From Houston going West, the proposed road would run along and parallel with the New York, Texas and Mexican road to Victoria, a distance of 130 miles. The Gould syndicate intend building a road from Dallas to Hillsboro, to connect there with the Missouri Pacific running through Waco to Taylor on the International.—They have also bought the road from Taylor to Barstrop, and intend extending it to Goliad and thence to a connection with the San Antonio and Aransas Pass in Bee county. This will require the extension of the New York, Texas and Mexican to Goliad, which will prolong the length of the competing line from Houston to a distance of more than two hundred miles.

The sixteen counties on the proposed route through Middle Texas, composed of Sabine, San Augustine, Angelina, Trinity, Houston, Leon, Madison. Robertson, Milam, Falls, Bell, Williamson, Burnett, Llano, Mason and Kimble, had a population in 1880 of 163,250, nearly double that of the sixteen counties on the coast route.

The country along this route from the Sabine to the Trinity will compare favorably for agricultural purposes with that of any pine region in the Southern States. It is higher, more rolling, better drained, and more healthy than that nearer the coast. It is, in many places, well settled with an industrious, thrifty class of farmers, who cultivate successfully cotton, sugar cane, corn, oats and sweet potatoes, and garden vegetables in great variety and abundance. It is well adapted to fruit growing, especially to peaches, plums, grapes, figs, black and dew berries. The great and important feature of this country is its vast forests of pine, much of it being equal to the pineries of Louisiana. Besides the pine, there is also immense quantities of the different oaks, hickory, ash, gum, cypress, maple, walnut and other varieties.

From the Trinity to the Brazos the road would run along the line between the counties of Madison and Leon, both of which are fine cotton growing counties, and through Robertson, one of the largest cotton growing counties in the State; having besides its fine uplands and creek bottoms the celebrated belt of rich alluvial lands between the Little and Big Brazos rivers, with a width of from three to six miles, and extending the entire length of the country, a distance of about forty miles.

Crossing the Brazos river in Robertson, the road would run through the counties of Milam, Falls, Bell, a part of Williamson and Burnett to the Colorado river. These counties comprise a part of the great black prairie region of Texas, unexcelled in any country for the richness, depth and durability of its soil, the variety of its agricultural productions, and its fine natural grapes. The population and wealth of this portion of Texas have increased rapidly within the last fifteen years, and is still increasing. It is settled up with the middle class of people—none being very rich and but few very poor—the most valuable of all classes in the settlement and development of a country. They are the people who build up towns and make the trade and business of the country great and prosperous. In 1870 the above five counties had an aggregate population of 38,662, and 77,324 in 1880, an increase in ten years of more one hundred per cent. The increase since 1880 has been very great and it may not be considered an exaggeration to say the population is now 100,000. The principal crops grown in these counties are cotton, corn, oats and wheat. One bale of cotton, forty to sixty bushels of corn, 60 to 80 of oats, and 20 to 25 bushels of wheat to the acre are not uncommon. It is also a fine stock country, well adapted to the raising of fine cattle, fine horses, mules and sheep. The native grapes grow luxuriantly, and are rich in nutriment, affording excellent grazing or hay of good quality. Last year Franklin, in Robertson county, shipped 3000 bales cotton, 563,556 pounds cotton seed, 8935 pounds hides, 2894 pounds wool. Calvert in the same county shipped 15,000 bales cotton, 10,000 pounds hides, 250 cars cotton seed, and 3000 pounds wool. Temple, in Bell county, shipped 13,000 bales cotton, 100,000 bushels of oats, 150,000 bushels corn, 50,000 pounds wool, 400 cars stock, 400 tons cotton seed, and 120,000 pounds hides. Belton, in Bell county, shipped 18,000 bales cotton, 135,000 lbs wool, 45,000 pounds hides, 55 cars of live stock, and 6831 tons cotton seed. The above four towns are immediately on the proposed line and the two extreme ones are about 65 miles apart. It is safe to say that of the 49,000 bales of cotton shipped from the four towns, the proposed road would, if completed with direct continuous connections with New York have carried at least 40,000. The building of other towns along the line through Madison, Leon, Robertson, Falls, Milam, Bell, Williamson and Burnett, the additional trade given to those already built, and the increased settlement and development of the country would add immensely to the agricultural productions and business of that part of the State. The wheat, oats, corn and much of the live stock now shipped to other points would find the best markets East among the mill men of the pineries and the cotton and sugar planters on the line of the proposed road.

From the Colorado river the proposed road would run up the Llano river, a tributary of the Colorado to about the junction of the North and South forks of the Llano. The country on each side of the Llano, including the counties of Llano, Mason and Kimble is broken and in some places mountainous. The valleys along the rivers and smaller streams, and at the foot of the mountains are very rich, and adapted to the growth of cotton, corn, oats and wheat. Much of the upland is also rich, and suitable for cultivation. Owing to the want of railroad facilities, and the fact that but a few years ago it was an Indian frontier, this portion of the State is yet sparsely settled. In 1870 Llano county had a population of 1379, in 1880 it had 4962, and in 1882 the assessed value of property was $1,609,793.—The Commissioner of Statistics, etc., for Texas, in his report for 1880, says of this, Llano county: "The mountains in many places are composed of solid granite" and that "extenstve beds of iron and copper ore exist in several parts of the county. Specimens of the former from Iron mountain are said to contain 95 per cent. of pure metal, equal in quality to the best Swedish iron, and specimens of the latter from Owens mine, on the head of the Pecan creek assayed $300 worth of metal to the ton. Limestone, granite, marble, stealite and other valuable stone exist in immense quantities. Llano and Honey creek both furnish fine water power, which has been utilized and applied to a number of flouring and grist mills and cotton gins." The same authority says of Burnett county. "The great features of the county are its limestones of superior quality; its gray and red granites, the latter believed to be identical with the Scotch granite; and its marble varying in but from pure white to jet black, many of the tints being very rare and beautiful.—The Colorado river, at what is known as Marble Falls, makes an abrupt descent of about one hundred feet over a solid bed of marble."

Of Mason county the Commissioner says "One-half of the county is susceptible of cultivation, the land in the river and creek valleys, and at the foot of the mountains, the soil of which is a dark rich loam being preferred for farms, though the black lime land prairies, and the sandy post oak up lands are cultivated to some extent." The population of this county in 1870 was 678 and in 1880 it was 2655, and in 1882 the assessed value of property was $1,214,598. "Surface indications of gold, silver, iron and copper are found. Mining for copper was prosecuted to some extent some years ago, but lack of adequate capital and railway transportation compelled a suspension of the work." The Llano and San Saba rivers in this county afford water power of large capacity.

Kimble, the last organized county going west on the proposed line, in 1870 had a population of only 70, and in 1880 it had 1343. The assessed value of property in 1882 was $1,189,866. With railroad facilities the country along the proposed road from the Colorado river to Junction City and beyond would offer great inducements to immigrants. The unsurpassed health of the country—its pure air, mild climate, rich and cheap lands, through which flow clear bold streams, fine and abundant building stone, its nutritious native grasses, on which stock can live the year round, would induce thousands to seek homes in that highly favored and picturesque region, the Switzerland of Texas. In 1882 the three counties Llano, Mason and Kimble had an aggregate of 14,248 horses and mules, 132,849 cattle and 75,527 sheep. Besides the inducements offered by this portion of the State to immigrants desiring to engage in farming and stock raising, the minerals and valuable stones and water power of the country would attract capitalists to engage in mining and manufacturing. In addition to the counties of Llano, Mason and Kimble, west of the Colorado river, the counties of San Saba, McCulloch, Menard, Kerr, Gillespie and Blaco would be tributary to it. From Mason, the county seat of Mason, to the nearest railroad north, at Brownswood, is about seventy miles, east to Burnett, in Burnett county, is sixty miles, and south to San Antonio one hundred and twenty miles. The nine counties above mentioned contain an area of about nine thousand square miles—larger than the State of Massachusetts—within which there is not a foot of railroad.

From Junction City the road would run up the south fork of the Llano to the north line of Edwards county, and thence through the northwest corner of Edwards and the southeast corner of Crockett to the Rio Grande, a distance through Texas from the Sabine to the Rio Grande of about 475 miles. Some of the advantages of the road through middle Texas may be thus summed up:

First—It will not run parallel with any of the main lines but will cross them, thus compelling them to become feeders and distributors instead of competitors.

Second—Running as it will through the centre of the finest pine region west of the Mississippi river and thence through the middle portion of Texas, and crossing as it will the roads leading out into all those parts of Texas where the demand for lumber will always be greatest, no other line of road can successfully compete with it in this immense business.

Third—Its line across the State will traverse the timber, cotton, corn, oats, wheat, wool, stock raising, and mineral regions of the State, thus assuring a diversity of local freights and business at all seasons of the year.

Fourth—It will attract a population which, added to what it now has, will be greater than that of any other route east and west that can be selected.

Fifth—From different points along its main line branches may be constructed extending into and tapping the best towns and richest portions of country on each side, all of which will be valuable tributaries to the main line, both for local and through business.

Sixth—It would make the line to New York the great thoroughfare for the freight and travel between New York and middle and northern Texas.

I need not say what the advantages of a road over the route herein proposed would be to the people of Alexandria. The intelligent business men of that future railroad centre and beautiful embryo city fully understand and appreciate what those advantages would be. They know that by affording outlets to markets east, north and west for their lumber, it would give to their pineries a value that no other road could. That it would give them a market for their sugar, syrup and rice direct to the consumers in Middle and Western Texas, and in return for these products they would receive the horses, mules, beef, mutton, corn, oats and wheat of that region.

I therefore am encouraged to hope that the people of Texas along the proposed line will find in the enterprising, liberal spirited business men of Alexandria ardent friends who will contribute whatever they can toward the accomplishment of this "consummation devoutly to be wished."

Yours truly,
T. C. MOORE.

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Ears Almost Eaten Off.

About eight months ago I contracted blood poison. I was treated by a private physician on Thirty-first street, and then for a month at the New York Hospital. Finding I did not improve I began taking Swift's Specific. Up to this time I had a drowsy and sleepy feeling continually with no appetite and was losing flesh rapidly. I was covered over the ankles, arms, neck and face with sores, and it seemed that my ears would be eaten off. I have taken seven bottles of the S. S. S., and the sores are all gone except a few on my forehead, and they are nearly out of sight; my ears are entirely well, my appetite is splendid, and I have gained five pounds in weight. I feel so perfectly well that I know in a short time I will be soundly cured.

FRANK E. KEEFE,
405 W. 71st St.

New York, Feb. 13, 1886.

Fat and Rosy.

My little boy has suffered for six years with scrofulous sores. Many who saw him a year or so ago thought he never could recover. He commenced taking Swift's Specific, and has taken about twelve bottles, which has effected a perfect cure. I have waited some time to see whether the disease would come back, but am now satsfied that the cure is permanent, for all the sores are gone, and he is fat and rosy, and as playful as any child of his age. With a grateful heart known only to a mother I write these lines. MRS MARY E. HOLT.

Concord, Pike Co., Ga., Feb. 6, '86.

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I chanced to be in New Orleans a few days since, and took occasion to visit some of the large establishments while there;—the most extensive and thoroughly conducted of all that I went through was the "RED STAR," corner of Canal and Exchange Place, of which MR. Arthur Durieu, one of those clever pushing men you meet so rarely now-a-days, is the proprietor. This mammoth establishment is really a sight, and I made note after note, until, as you see me in this picture, I had a stack of them under my arm. There are more handsome shoes for men, boys, ladies and children than you ever dreamed of, and the beauty is everything is of the best stock and away down in price. I think I saw there over 100,000 straw hats which they are selling from 10c up. They showed me numerous orders from the country. Persons desiring a hat just send them the size, age of person and price they wish to pay, and the Red Star sends them the best goods that can be had for the money. They also carry an immense stock of Trunks, Valises, Baskets, Umbrellas and Parasols. This is the most pushing and reliable house in its line in the city, and I would advise my friends to try them. OUR SPECIAL CORRESPONDENT.

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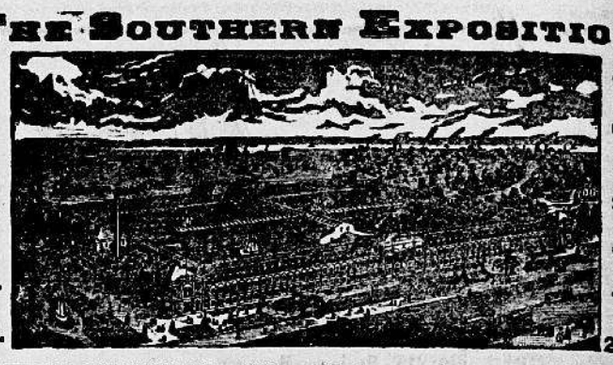

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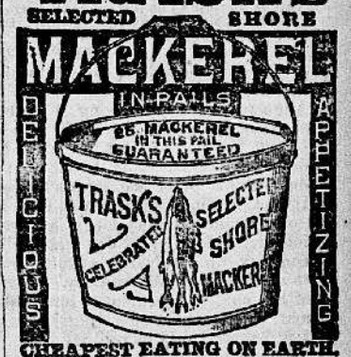

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