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### ***The Great Southwest***

No part of the United States is less generally known than the Southwest, and none is better worth knowing. Of no other part of the United States is so large a proportion of the unpleasant and unattractive features known so well, and so small a proportion of the beauties, wonders, and utilities known so little. To the Eastern and Northern mind the Southwest raises a dim picture of hot desert, bare mountain, and monotonous plain sparsely grown up to cactus, sage, greasewood, or bunchgrass, and sown with the white bones of animals which have perished from hunger and thirst; a land of wild Indians, of lazy Mexicans, of rough cowboys, of roving, half-wild cattle, of desperate mining ventures, of frequent train robberies. This impression is based in part on the stray paragraphs from this unknown land that occasionally creep into the metropolitan newspapers, but it is chiefly founded upon the hasty observations and reports of dusty transcontinental travelers, car-weary for three or four days, the edge of their interest quite blunted with longing for the green wonders and soft sunshine of California.

What is generally known as the Southwest may be said to comprise all of the territories of Arizona and New Mexico, the greater portion of Texas, perhaps best described as arid Texas, southern California east of the Coast Range, and the western half of Oklahoma, including the "Strip." Eastern Texas, with its plentiful rainfall, its forests, and its fine plantations of cotton and corn, is quite a different country from western Texas, and must be classed with the South. In extent of territory the Southwest is an empire more than twice as large as Germany, and greater in area than the thirteen original states of the American Union. Its population is sparse and occupied almost exclusively in cattle and sheep-raising, mining, and irrigation farming, with a limited amount of lumbering. All its vast territory contains only a little more than half as many inhabitants as the city of Chicago. Its largest city, on the extreme eastern edge of the arid land, is San Antonio, Texas, with a population of fifty-three thousand. All of its other cities are much smaller. It is traversed east and west by two, in Texas three, great railroads, running generally parallel, having many branches, and connected by several crosscuts running north and south.

It is a land of amazing contrasts. It is both the oldest and the newest part of the United States—oldest in history and newest in Anglo-Saxon enterprise. Long before the Cavaliers set foot in Virginia or the first Pilgrims landed in Plymouth, even before St. Augustine in Florida was founded, the Spaniards had explored a considerable proportion of New Mexico and Arizona, and the settlements made soon afterward at Santa Fe and near Tucson were among the earliest on the American continent. Indeed, for many years the region was better known to white men than New England. Yet today there is no part of the United States so little explored, many places, especially in New Mexico and Arizona, being wholly unsurveyed. Probably the least known spot in the country is the mysterious wilderness, nearly as large as Switzerland, which lies in the northwestern corner of Arizona beyond the Colorado River. It is bounded on the south and east by the stupendous and almost impassable chasm of the Grand Canyon, and on its other sides by

difficult mountains and little-explored deserts. Here, in this long-known land, if anywhere on the continent, can be found the primeval wildness of nature.

Though the Great Southwest is now the most sparsely inhabited region of its size in the United States, it was once the most populous and wealthy, probably more populous than it is today, with all its present American enterprise. Hundreds of years before the Spaniards first appeared in the New World, the valleys of Arizona and New Mexico contained a numerous population, supporting considerable cities, and irrigating extensive tracts of land with wonderful engineering skill. Frank H. Gushing, the anthropologist, who in 1882-83 wrote elaborately in *THE CENTURY* of the ruins of the Southwest, estimated that the irrigated valleys of Arizona were once the dwelling place of two hundred and fifty thousand people, about twice the present population of the entire territory. The remains of these ancient civilizations—the pueblo dwellers, the cliff and cave-dwellers—are found scattered everywhere throughout Arizona and New Mexico, and in such numbers that archaeologists have only begun to explore them.

No part of the United States, indeed, has had a more thrilling and eventful history. While denominated a desert “not worth good blood,”—in the words of the historian,—it has been a center of contention for centuries, overwhelmed by one tide of conquest after another. From the time that the Spaniards first invaded the country, hunting for gold, down to the capture of Geronimo by American soldiers in the eighties, it has been the scene of many bloody Indian wars. It was the source of contention between the United States and Mexico in the war of 1846-48. Once a possession of Spain, and later of Mexico, the story of the struggle for independence by the Texans and for annexation by the Californians is full of fascinating interest. Its soil has developed some of the boldest and most picturesque characters in American history—Boone, Crockett, Kit Carson, Sam Houston, and many a pioneer cattleman and settler, to say nothing of the Crooks and the Lawtons of the Indian wars. The main trail of the El Dorado hunters of '49 on their way to California led through it, garnishing its history with many a story of bloodshed and hardship. No American fiction is more vital and characteristic than that which deals with the early lawless days of the miner, the buffalo hunter, and the cowboy; none is more richly colored, picturesque, or rudely powerful.

In its material aspects it is equally full of contrasts. Here are the greatest deserts and waste places in America, and side by side with them, often with no more than a few strands of barbed wire to mark the division line, are the richest farming lands in America, lands more fertile, even, than the famed cornfields of Illinois or the fruit orchards of Michigan. The Southwest has been denominated, with reason, the treeless land, and yet it contains today the largest unbroken stretches of forest in the country, there being nothing to equal the timberlands of the Colorado plateau in northern and central Arizona. No part of the United States possesses such an extent of grass plain, Texas being the greatest of the plain states, and yet none has grander mountains. Only three states have higher peaks than the noble Sierra Blanca of New Mexico, fourteen thousand two hundred and sixty-nine feet in altitude, and there are few more magnificent elevations than San Francisco Mountain in Arizona.

Though the region, to the hurried railroad traveler, seems barren and desolate almost beyond comparison, it is yet richer in variety, if not in luxury, of vegetation than any other part of the country. Professor Merriam found many arctic types in the flora of the upper regions of the San Francisco Mountain. Within a radius of a few hundred miles grow the pines and firs found in northern Canada, and the figs and dates of the African semi-tropics; Southern oranges and olives grow side by side with Northern wheat; the cactus and the fir are often found within sight of each other. Nowhere are there so many strange and marvelous forms of life as here—of flowers,

multitudinous cacti and the palms; of animals, the Gila monster, the horned toad, the hydrophobia skunk, and many other unique species. Besides the monotonous desert, with its apparent lack of interest to the traveler, the region contains the greatest natural wonder on the continent—the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River. It also possesses unnumbered other natural phenomena and some of the grandest mountain and forest scenery. With all its lack of rain, it is watered by two of the great rivers of the continent—the Colorado and the Rio Grande.

The Southwest also presents great contrasts in climate. On the high Colorado plateau it partakes of the temperate zone, with snow and cold weather in winter and bright, hot sunshine in summer: in southern Texas and Arizona, only a few hundred miles away, the temperature, during much of the year, is that of the torrid zone; indeed, Yuma is the hottest and driest spot in the United States, the thermometer sometimes reaching 118° F. in the shade. The climate throughout nearly the whole region is the most healthful in the United States, California not excepted. The long hours of bright, germ-killing sunshine, the dry air, which desiccates waste animal and vegetable matter before it has time to decay, the high altitude above sea level of much of the region, the entire absence of fever-breeding swamps and marshes—all these assist in producing a climate as nearly perfect as one may hope to find this side of paradise. Indeed, it is fast becoming the great sanatorium for the invalids of the nation, especially those affected with tuberculous diseases.

In its human life it is equally prolific in diversities. In few other places in the world is there such a commingling of dissimilar human elements. I doubt if even the cities of the Orient can present such contrasts of wholly unrelated races of people, as well as so great a variety of the white race. Here, in one small town, one may find representatives of several different tribes of the aboriginal Indians, in every state of civilization and savagery, picturesquely attired in bright-colored costumes, bearing their peculiar baskets and pottery. Here, also, is the next higher stratum, the Mexicans, in great numbers, and in all mixtures of blood from the nearly pure Indian peon upward. Here are African Negroes in considerable numbers, emigrants from the Southern States, and every town has its Chinese and usually its Japanese contingent, the overflow from California. Above all these, and in greatly superior numbers, rises the white man, usually American by birth, and yet generously intermixed with many of European nationalities. In most of the older towns, such as San Antonio in Texas and Tucson in Arizona, whole neighborhoods appear more foreign than American, presenting strange contrasts between modern store buildings, banks, and churches, and ancient weatherworn adobe houses where the Mexicans live almost as primitively as did their forefathers a century ago.

The peopling of the country makes one of the most interesting and significant stories in the history of the nation. For many years it was the unknown land, the land of possibilities and wonders, as well as of danger and death. Therefore it attracted the hardy pioneer, and here, for lack of any other frontier on the continent, the pioneer, though with the germ of westward ho! still lingering in his blood, has been compelled at last to settle down. I shall not soon forget the sorrowful desert-dweller whom I met in what seemed the ends of the earth in Arizona. His nearest neighbor was fifteen miles away, his post-office twenty-five miles, and yet he was bemoaning the fact that the country was becoming crowded. "If there were any more frontier," he said, "I'd go to it." It is hardy blood, that of the pioneer, good stock on which to found the development of a country. For years the West has been the lodestone for those adventurous spirits who love the outdoor and exciting life of the mining prospector, the cowboy, the hunter—a healthy, rugged lot, virtually all pure Americans. The Rough Riders sprang from this element. But probably the most distinct single human invasion of the Southwest was made by the

irreconcilables of the Confederate army after the Civil War. They could not endure the Federal domination of the reconstruction period, or else they had lost all their property, and with it their hope of rising again in their old neighborhood, and so they set westward, remaining, as immigrants usually do, in the same latitude as that from which they came. Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona all have a strong substratum of the Old South, still possessing many of the bitternesses left by the great conflict, and yet rising with the opportunities of the new land, and adding to its development peculiar pride, dignity, and often culture. Owing to its wildernesses and its contiguity to Mexico, the Southwest was also for many years the refuge of outlaws from all parts of the country—an element which, though small, was so perniciously active that it earned an undue prominence in fiction and contemporary literature, giving the country a complexion of evil which it did not deserve. This element still effervesces occasionally in a train robbery, but its effect on the Southwest has been inconsequential.

All these earlier sources of population, however, were small compared with the great inundation of the last few years, following the extension of the railroads, the crowding of other parts of the country, and the hard times of 1893, which, causing discontent among many Easterners and Northerners, tempted them to try new fields of enterprise. There are virtually no native-born Anglo-Saxons of voting age in New Mexico and Arizona—at least, they are so few as to be a wonder and a pride. In Texas there are many, for the changes in that part of the Southwest are a step older and possibly not quite so rapid, although Texas, too, is overrun with people from every part of the country. It is safe to ask any middle-aged man what part of the East he is from. Of this later influx of population there are representatives from every part of the United States, with a specially large number from Kansas, Nebraska, the Dakotas, and Missouri—the Middle West. In many cases these settlers had first immigrated to the States just beyond the Mississippi, and had there taken up farms; but uncertain rain and crop failures drove them onward to the irrigated valleys of the region, and there they are today.

Up to this point the population consisted of the strongest and most enterprising American manhood, for the weaklings do not undertake the chances and hardships of pioneering. With this drift of population, however, there has appeared a large number of invalids, mostly with pulmonary complaints, from every part of America. Many of them have been promptly cured, and have engaged in business or taken up farms in the valleys or ranches on the plains. A considerable proportion of them are people of education, culture, refinement, and often of wealth. Much of the money of the region, as in southern California, has been brought in and invested by health-seekers. This class has added much to the social and religious development, and it includes some of the leading spirits in politics. As yet there has been very little immigration of Italians, Russians, or the lower class of Irish, most of whom are by preference city-dwellers. The menial labor usually performed by these classes here falls largely to Mexicans, Chinese, and Indians. The Jew, as usual, has set up his trading places here, and, as everywhere else, he thrives.

It will be seen, therefore, that the Southwest is peopled with the very best Americans, segregated by the eternal law of evolutionary selection, with almost no substratum of the low-caste European foreigner to lower the level of civilization. Of course there is no danger from the Indians, Negroes, Mexicans, or Chinese, because there is rarely any mixing with them by marriage, as formerly. With such a start, and such a commingling of Americans from all parts of the Union, the man from Boston rubbing elbows with the Atlanta man, and Kansas working side by side with Mississippi, it would seem that the region may one day produce the standard American type. It has already manifested its capacity for type production in the cowboy, now

being rapidly merged in the new Southwesterner, a type as distinct and as uniquely American as the New England Yankee or the Virginia colonel.

It may be somewhat presumptuous at this early day to attempt a delineation of the Southwesterner, and yet one who meets him in the busy towns and irrigated valleys of the arid empire cannot but feel that he has already begun to manifest the peculiarities and the distinctions which will one day make him notable. This is not at all surprising when one considers the entirely new conditions under which the Southwesterner is living—conditions wholly new to the Anglo-Saxon. Never before has the Anglo-Saxon attempted irrigation on a large scale, and irrigation means a complete change of many racial institutions and customs. It brings men closer together, makes communism and cooperation a necessity, curtails individual rights, accentuates community interests, makes the cultivation of land a science requiring high mental as well as high physical qualifications, largely eliminates the isolation of farm life, and by a much more dense population of the land enables every family to secure better school, church, and social advantages. Climate and altitude, a higher standard of physical health, and much free outdoor life must also have an effect on character, as they always have had in the past.

Under these new influences the outlines of the new Southwesterner are coming out like a photographic negative in the developing fluid. He is at present a man of great energy and enterprise, a result of new hope in a land of opportunities. A beguiling climate may, in time, subdue him somewhat. It probably will, although the climate of the arid Southwest is far from being enervating like the humid semi-tropics. He is hospitable, and he always will be, for the close relationships of the units in an irrigated country, on the one hand, as well as the loneliness of the great ranges, on the other, make this a necessity. He is enthusiastic, for the dry air, the altitude, and the bright sunshine tend to make him cheerful and healthy. A ready spender of money, he is also a good deal of a gambler. He despises copper coins as quite too small for his consideration, making change down to five cents, and balancing the fractions. He will sell you three oranges for a nickel, as he calls it, but if you want only one the price is the same. He loves to take chances, whether at roulette or real estate, and he loses or wins like a Mexican, with an unchanging face. These two characteristics may be toned down with growth. A new and rapidly expanding country, and especially one so brimming with possibilities, is quite likely to encourage speculation, to breed money carelessness.

The Southwesterner is the most democratic of Americans; nowhere else is a man taken so literally for what he is worth in brain and brawn, with no question of antecedents. A farmer—that is, a rancher—is as good a man here as the city banker. The Southwesterner loves politics and the discussion of public questions. No American is broader minded than he, for in nearly every case he came from “out East,” or “up North,” or “down South,” so that he retains his old interests with his new. He is also constantly meeting new people from everywhere, with whom he tries his wits, and learns much at the same time. An Easterner is astonished at the wide and accurate information on national affairs possessed by people who in their old homes in the East would be content with local gossip. The Southwesterner is a great reader, not of books so much as of newspapers and periodicals; in Tucson a Carnegie library is growing up out of the very desert. Naturally enough, also, he is a great traveler. He learned how to travel when he came West, and he always plans to go back regularly to see the old home, but never to stay long, and he travels to new places with much greater facility than his compeer in the East. He is beginning to love his home. As yet not one person in a hundred that one meets in Arizona speaks of Arizona as home. In the past the settlers hoped to make a “strike,” and expected to go “home” later to enjoy it. This condition is now slowly wearing away as a result of “farming.” The Southwesterner has not yet

developed a clearly defined political opinion of his own; he is not sure enough as to what his needs really are. Consequently, he supports the party which he served in his old home. But there are strong evidences of a tremendous political awakening in the Southwest, one of the keynotes of which will be the demand for the governmental solution of the present complex problems of irrigation and water storage. The region is destined to be a great power in supporting the party that advocates the increase of the functions of the general government, the governmental control of monopolies, and so on.

The average Southwesterner is acutely sensitive on one score, and that is his reputation for public order and decorum. He desires it to be thoroughly understood that the Southwest is not wild, that whatever may have been the fame of the cattle and mining country of the past, the modern Southwest is the pink of propriety. As a result of the determination prompted by this sensitiveness, the Southwestern town, despite its diverse and often rough elements of population, deports itself fully as well as any town of the Middle West. A celebrating cowboy or miner sometimes breaks loose and shoots, or a Mexican uses his knife, but without the old spirit of the game. Killing has grown distinctly unpopular. As for property rights, except in calves and horses, they were always safe; even today most of the region leaves its doors fearlessly unlocked. I was forcibly impressed with the passing of the old free West by the sight of a bad man named Red Jake, who was undergoing punishment in a little far-mountain mining town. He had indulged in the old-fashioned sport of shooting up a saloon, a pastime once highly honored. He had been promptly overpowered and dragged—dragged, mind you—before a little inoffensive justice of the peace of German descent, barber as well as judge. This eminently matter-of-fact and order-loving official dealt in no heroics, made no show of six-shooters. He set Red Jake to digging a tough mesquite stump from the street in front of the official barbershop, and he kept him at it there in public view until the work was finished. It was really embarrassing to the expectant Easterner to find this old hero and friend of the wild Western story in such sorry disgrace—and that with the evident approval of the entire community.

Another point of sensitiveness is the Indian. The Southwesterner wants it thoroughly understood that there is absolutely no danger of any more Indian outbreaks, despite the fears of the visitor who has not forgotten Geronimo and Apache Kid. There are Indians in plenty everywhere, but most of them are of the blanket tribes—Navajo, Moki, Pima, Papago, and similar Indians. The really wild tribes, especially the Apaches, have been hopelessly overawed, not so much by soldiers as by railroads, telegraphs, telephones, stage-routes, and the in-crowding settlers. An Indian cannot make a stir toward hostility without alarming the whole white country, and an Indian who cannot use the ways of stealth is a helpless Indian. No, the day of the red danger is past.

The Southwesterner is already developing a distinct personal appearance, which in course of years will be as inimitable as that of the Yankee, the Tennessee mountaineer, or the Pike County man. He wears, most impressively, a distinctly out-of-door look, a complexion born of good outdoor wind and sunshine—not the sallow hue of the humid South, for the wind here is ash dry and the sunshine is hot, producing a peculiar rich, healthy bronze to be seen nowhere else in the country. A white-skinned American, with this tint of brown overlaying his face and reaching into the very roots of his hair, has a most inviting appearance of health. The bright, long-continuing sunshine, the glaring desert, and the absence of green vegetation, except in the irrigated fields, have produced another effect peculiar to the Southwest: they have creased the outer corners of the Southwesterner's eyes with great numbers of fine wrinkles—good-nature wrinkles they are, too. Every rancher has this Southwestern squint, as well as most of the city-

dwellers, unless they live exclusively indoors. As a result of this wrinkling, the average man appears to look out at you with level eyes, a striking directness of gaze, which more than one observer has noted as a peculiarity of the cowboy. It gives a pleasing impression of frankness and straightforwardness.

The Southwesterner promises to be lean and tall: that is the tendency shown by the cowboy. In dress he is at present distinctly careless. A silk hat and kid gloves are worn in the Southwest at the peril of the owner's reputation. A black derby is almost as bad. The prevailing hat is soft, of the sombrero order; not many straw hats are worn, except by the Mexicans, whose gorgeous headgear is a source of continual amusement to strangers. The clothing, naturally, tends to the lighter, cooler colors, and there is a predominance of the flowing tie. By such signs as these one who knows the Southwest could usually lay finger on the Southwesterner in the crowds in Broadway, even to the extent of marching up to him and saying, "Well, how are things down in Texas?"

The Southwesterner almost lives out of doors. His climate makes it pleasant, often necessary, to do so. His house is frequently only the core of a huge piazza or the shell of a patio, into which the family overflows, eating, sleeping, reading, gossiping. Parts of this piazza, or patio, are often completely surrounded by fly-netting, for of all the discomforts of the Southwest, the houseflies are perhaps the worst. The housewife has a constant and desperate struggle with them the year around. There are no mosquitos, except in a few localities where the irrigator leaves stagnant pools of water; the tarantula and the scorpion are much dreaded, but are almost never seen. Fleas are plentiful; in parts of Texas it is a common saying that if one takes up a handful of sand half of it will jump away. Next to the housefly the greatest discomfort is the dust and the dust-storm. The dry desert is never far away from the settlement, and the wind sometimes blows the dust through every crack and cranny of the house. It is not uncommon to find a whiskbroom hanging at the front door of the house, so that the visitor may brush himself off before entering. Nearly every street or roadway in the irrigated country, unless regularly sprinkled or macadamized,—and sprinkling in a rainless country is an expensive process,—becomes ankle-deep, at times, with soft puddly dust, from which there is no escape. However, fine, hard roads are now being constructed in much of the irrigated country. The hot weather in the Southwest, bad as it sometimes is, is by no means as uncomfortable as might be imagined. In summer the mercury certainly registers a high degree of heat, a maximum of 100° to 118° in the shade, but the air is so dry that one is less sensible to the heat than he would be to a much lower temperature in a humid climate. Sunstroke never occurs; indeed, one is rarely damp with perspiration, for the dry air absorbs the moisture as rapidly as it is thrown off from the body, thereby eliminating one of the great discomforts of hot weather. That the evaporation, however, goes on constantly and rapidly is plainly manifested in the amount of water which every one drinks. However hot the days, the nights, unlike those of the humid regions, are usually cool and comfortable. The winter climate is nearly perfect.

The Southwesterner gets his living from tin cans. There surely never was such a region for canned vegetables, canned meat, canned fruit, canned soup, canned milk, canned cheese. Empty tin cans form a charmed circle about every Southwestern town and camp. Even where he can profitably and easily produce his own food, the Southwesterner seems to prefer to raise some exclusive crop, sell his product, and buy canned goods. It is amusing enough to discover that the cattle-rancher, though a thousand cows come up to water at his tanks every day or two, will yet serve condensed milk from cans that come from New Jersey, that his beef bears the mark of Kansas City, that even his poultry and eggs are imported at enormous prices from Kansas. His

butter also comes canned. If it were not for the patient Chinese gardener, even the best-irrigated valleys would be without fresh vegetables. But if the Southwesterner fails in garden-making, he does delight in flowers, vines, and shade trees. They relieve the monotony of the gray desert, and link him with his old green home in the East. He will let his fields go thirsty in time of drought before he will allow the rosebushes and the peppertrees in his front yard to suffer. Indeed, so industrious has he been in surrounding himself with shade and verdure that he is open to criticism for overdoing the matter, overcrowding his small grounds. An irrigated valley town in blossom is a marvel long to be remembered.

An interesting feature of the country is its splendid and significant names. If all knowledge of the Southwest, together with its history, were obliterated, leaving only a map with the names upon it, a student could paint a pretty clear picture of the physical conditions of the country and could outline its history with a fair degree of accuracy.

Dotted everywhere upon the dry desert and on the plains are such expressive and, to the desert traveler, such attractive names as Flowing Well, Indian Tank, Desert Spring, Steampump, and any number of Brown's Wells and Smith's Pumps and Black's Springs. I shall not forget the picture formed in the mind's eye of one Dripping Spring toward which we had traveled across the parched, waterless, dusty desert through the length of a day of interminable sunshine and heat, with the water in the canteen low and fairly hot. Dripping Spring became, in fancy, a cool mountain nook, with green trees round about, soft wet sand to wade in or wallow in, clear cold water bubbling out of the rocks—a perfect picture of paradise as it seems on the desert. Well, at last we saw Dripping Spring. The owner well knew the psychology of the desert traveler when he gave his place that heavenly name. A red iron tank, hoisted on poles, blistering with heat, a creaking windmill, a squat and dilapidated house in the midst of the desert, without a visible sign of water anywhere—nor, indeed, any sign of life—that was Dripping Spring. But the water did drip—from the rusty nose of an iron pipe when the cock was turned; and it was as delicious, if not as cool, as that which came from fancy's mountain nook. A whole volume might be written on these names, and I have barely scratched the subject.

The new words that have enriched the Southwesterner's speech also make a fascinating study. There are as many of them, and they are as characteristic and distinctive, as those of any other part of the country. Many of these words have come in by way of the Mexican border, and every one is fragrant with meaning and significant of the soil. Then there are a score of crisp, direct, busy English words used in a sense a little at variance from the ordinary, or lifted bodily from slang, and telling more to the syllable than they do anywhere else.

So the Southwest is becoming a distinct entity and the Southwesterner a personage. Character is here building, with the promise of virgin power and new ideas in statecraft, in economics, in agriculture. Men are laying deep and strong the foundations for an immense future population, and preparing for the responsibilities which that population will entail. The region is weak yet, and seemingly far off, rude, unformed, but its weakness is of the sort that cannot awaken scorn; it is that of a healthy, hopeful, ambitious boy who will stir the world when he reaches his majority. That is the Southwest. May her accomplishments equal her promise.