

tough, that it is frequently employed in lieu of iron to make the screws of cotton presses; together with iron-wood, hickory, and many other woods admirably adapted for the lathe. The sugar-maple is also very valuable. An auger hole being bored in its trunk, in the spring of the year, a small spout is inserted, and the liquor, which is subsequently evaporated to a consistency, is caught in a vessel.

"A single tree has been known to yield one hundred and fifty pounds of sugar: the average daily produce being from three to four or six pounds. I found its flavour very pleasant, but do not think it is nearly so sweet as the common sugar.

"Humboldt's prediction, that carriages would pass from Washington to the city of Mexico, has been verified.

"North Americans have, in their convenient and light Dearborn or Jersey Wagons, repeatedly passed into the interior of Mexico from the United States. Roads are very easily made through Texas, as the country is either flat or gently undulating.

"To clear away the wood costs little trouble; and although the rivers are numerous, being generally narrow and deep, they oppose no obstacles but such as can be easily surmounted.

"The fact that Mr. Couer, an enterprising Frenchman, with about forty others, nearly all his countrymen, passed through Texas, with several large wagons laden with goods, in June, 1826, is the best proof of the facility with which every difficulty, such as those which are usually met with in a new country, is here overcome. The Dearborn or Jersey wagon, just mentioned, is admirably calculated to journey through countries where rivers or other natural impediments may render it necessary that each part be speedily reduced to a small size or weight, so as to be rendered portable, and taken to pieces with the greatest ease, and a raft formed of a few trunks, or the larger branches of trees, which suffice to convey it across the rivers, or the whole is progressively passed by hand over any other obstacle.

Those who have settled in Texas a few months, really enjoy more comforts (and these, in addition to the opportunity of realising a handsome property) than any peasantry with which I am acquainted. One act of liberality and hospitality, which is constantly practised by all his neighbours towards a new comer, whose character is found unexceptionable, would do honour to the most highly civilised people. They all assemble at the spot which he has fixed upon for his residence, with their axes and draught oxen, fell the timber, and build for him his log-house. This generally consists of three apartments, one for sleeping, another for eating, both closed in all round, while in the centre, which is left open on both sides, he keeps his saddles and tools, and takes his meals during the hot weather.

"The kitchen (also a log hut) is usually separated from the house, and so is also the smoke house, where the meat is smoked and kept.

"The log-house is by no means an inconvenient residence; indeed, some of them are roomy, neat, and durable, very strong, and well calculated to afford protection from every inclemency of the weather.

"The wild animals to be met with in Texas, are the buffalo, or the bison, known in this country as the bonassus, which enters Texas from the north in vast herds during the winter; the panther, leopard, bear, otter, beaver, antelope, deer, racoon, black fox, &c. Turkeys abound: there are two species of the partridge; swans often arrive in great numbers, together with immense flocks of wild ducks and geese. The flesh of the buffalo, especially its hump, is excellent, and generally prized far above beef; the bear's ham is also considered a great delicacy.

"But by far the most interesting animal is the wild horse from Barbary, which the Arab transplanted into Spain, passing from thence to the New World, and being turned loose by the first European settlers, it has

peopled the rich plains of Texas with droves innumerable. The mustang, or wild horse, is not often large or heavy, but shows blood; it is well made, hardy, active, and if caught young, very docile, although whenever an opportunity offers, it is apt to rejoin its wild brethren. The pearly, light brown, chestnut, and dun colours prevail.

"Their defect is the tenderness of the hoof, which is too frequently to be met with amongst them, as they are bred on soft ground; whereas, throughout Mexico, those which are reared on a hard rocky soil, have a solidity of hoof which renders shoes unnecessary even to the fore feet; the hind feet are seldom shod. The mode of catching them is similar to that by which wild elephants are caught in India.

"A space sufficiently large to contain a drove is enclosed with stakes, trunks, and branches of trees; the entrance is narrow, but gradually widens outwards, and a herd is driven, or decoyed into it by a horse trained for the purpose. I have seen instances of attachment, on the part of a young colt thus caught, to a careful master, far stronger than any that I ever before witnessed in a horse.

"The country of the Comanches is the mountainous district of San Saba, which they cross both in the spring and autumn, and where they deposit their families occasionally during their long expeditions. These Indians generally kill the buffalo with their bow and arrow, their horses being trained to carry them close to it, and on its right side. Sometimes they pursue and, with a sharp iron (crescent shaped) passing its left flank, sever the ham string of the right leg, when the animal falls away from the horse; they sometimes almost shoot it with the rifle. The scent of the buffalo is, however, so acute, that it can be only approached from the leeward side; it is timid till wounded, but then its impetuosity is irresistible, and its attacks are repeated until it falls. Being both active, and from its vast bulk very powerful, the charge of an old bull is described as tremendous. The long shaggy hair which covers its head and breast, gives it a terrific appearance, and it rushes headlong at whatever it perceives (after the smoke of the rifle), blowing and snorting with astonishing loudness.

"Should it discover and throw down its antagonist, it goes, and tramples upon him until (if desperately wounded) it falls dead by his side. The horns of the buffalo are short, but very sharp pointed, although thick at the base. Being very hard and black, they are highly prized for cups and other purposes. Its flesh when fat, is excellent, especially the hump; the skins, covered with an excessively thick hair, nearly approaching to wool, are much used in the northern part of the United States, more especially as a wrapper upon travelling in the sledges or sleighs over the ice or snow. The Indians give a softness and pliability to these skins greater than that of the buck or even dookskin of Europe. The following is, I believe, the process adopted. After tanning with sunac and bark, the skin is stretched over a hole in the earth and smoked; the brains of the animal and alum are also rubbed into it. It is subsequently painted in cheques, diamonds, and similar figures, the colours being very durable.

The first person who took effectual measures to carry into effect extensive schemes of colonization in Texas on their own private account, was Mr. Austin, an inhabitant of Louisiana; and after he had traversed this vast country near the coast, he fixed on the spot between the rivers Brazos and Colorado, where he obtained a very extensive grant from the Spanish government. Embarrassments, owing to the failure of a large proportion of the banks of the Western States, together with the revolution, prevented his reaping the fruits of his exertions.

His eldest son, Stephen Fuller Austin, succeeded to the claims, and to the indefatigable and enterprising spirit of his father, who died about the year 1820 or '21. In 1823, he obtained from the first Independent Congress the recognition of the grant; and though inundations, which there was no reason to anticipate,

have twice done serious injury to the infant colony, he has the merit of having succeeded in peopling a wilderness, and providing a number of industrious families with an ample subsistence, as well as the means of acquiring not only comforts, but wealth.

"The only persons who have examined the country, or indeed, it may almost be said, have visited it, except momentarily, are settlers from the United States. So very considerable a proportion of the population of the adjacent districts has flowed into Texas from the United States, that there are now at least ten times as many inhabitants as there were only four years ago. Indeed, from the neighbouring territory (Arkansas) alone, as one of its most respectable land proprietors assured me, 16,000 out of 46,000 persons have quitted it in order to establish themselves there. Along a very considerable part of the road that leads from Nachitoches to San Antonio de Bezar, better lodging and provisions are obtained, in greater abundance, and at a lower price, than on many of the principal roads in Spain. The hospitality of all is most meritorious, and the usual price of each meal (which consists almost invariably of pork, eggs, bacon, butter, maize cakes, hot coffee, and sometimes venison and other meats), is only one shilling. This country might easily absorb the whole of the surplus population of Great Britain, a nucleus being formed by the settlement of about one hundred industrious agriculturists, who, after the first year, might supply grain for at least ten times their own number. Cattle, and more especially pigs, will increase most rapidly, almost without any care or trouble, in the woods. Thus each successive year would, by affording increased sustenance, allow the number of settlers to be tripled, at the least.

"Nature has evidently given to Texas commercial advantages, which she has denied to almost every other part of Mexico; indeed, few countries, if any one, are more favourably situated for carrying on an extensive and lucrative foreign and domestic traffic.

"The principal export doubtless will be cotton, which grows in the greatest abundance, and is in quality inferior only to that of the Sea Islands. As the capital employed in raising it is very inconsiderable, the Texas colonist will be able to undersell every competitor in foreign markets. His healthy land, cultivated by free and cheap labour, cost him comparatively nothing; whilst the North American and West Indian require an interest on a large sum employed in the purchase of property and slaves, subject to many contingencies.

"Pot and pearl ashes will be obtained in clearing the lands.

"Texas will supply the West India Islands with timber, salted provisions, flour, and whatever else they now require from the United States, at least equal in quality, and at a lower price, than they can be obtained from thence. Mules and horses will also be exported to Cuba and the Antilles. The southern parts of the United States are already supplied from thence, and from Coahuila, with both; but more especially the former, which are sometimes embarked at the Brazos, de Santiago, close to the mouth of the river Brao del Norte, but more generally conveyed by land. It is thought that Texas may prove well suited for the growth of the merino wool, both on account of the climate, and the extent of uncultivated land, over which they may be allowed to graze at liberty. The North Americans have exported wool from Coahuila, but I have been informed, that although the staple is long, it is by no means fine, and there is a burr in it, which it requires much trouble to extract. The latter disadvantage will not be met with in Texas, except possibly among the mountains of San Saba, for I have observed throughout Mexico, that wherever the land is arid, burrs and thorny plants of every description abound; although wherever water is abundant, they are scarcely to be found.

"Swamps, stagnant water, and a rank vegetation, together with the disorders arising from marsh miasmata, render, a large proportion of the southern parts of the United States little better than a sickly desert.

A circumstance that I have nowhere else observed increases the inundations, which are the real causes of these evils, to a very great extent. The ground is so level, that not only do the more considerable rivers overflow, but by their reflux into the smaller tributary streams, produce the same effect on both sides to a very considerable distance. This I remarked more particularly when ascending the Red River. A current from the Mississippi ran up it, not much less than one hundred miles. Nearly all the rivers of Texas, on the other hand, are "encases," and except near their mouths, seldom, if ever, produce inundations prejudicial either to property or health. Nevertheless, during the rainy season, there is a sufficient rise in the rivers of Texas to render even the smaller branches navigable, and afford opportunities of conveying the produce of the interior by water carriage to the coast."