

Uncle Sam's New Fruit Garden

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MAYAGUEZ, Porto Rico, Aug. 20, 1890.—Would you like to own an orange grove? If so, come to Porto Rico. The rich, golden fruit grows here without cultivation. There is no need of irrigation, as in California, and as for Jack Frost, his name is unknown. There are only 1,400 miles of smooth water between San Juan and New York, and in the near future there will be lines of fruit steamers which will dump your product into the best of our markets.

At present the oranges grow almost wild, and you can buy the best at less than 1 cent apiece. I am told that they could be grown here in orchards so that they could be sold at \$1 a thousand and give a big profit, and fruit men say they could be shipped to the United States and sold there at 12 cents a dozen and still pay the growers, the shippers and dealers.

Porto Rico promises to be Uncle Sam's choicest fruit garden. Barring hurricanes such as that of last March, which do not come more than once in a generation, we have no land so well favored. Oranges, lemons and pineapples grow almost wild, and with careful cultivation they can be produced in great quantities. It seems to me the best chance in Porto Rico for men with small capital is in fruit growing. If some of our small investors would form

is exceedingly profitable. The trees are ready for sale at two years, and they can be sold from then on for three, four, five or more years. They will bring, according to their age and size, all the way from \$1 to \$15 a tree. If the rush to Porto Rico comes as Major Harvey expects, it will be seen that his nursery will net him a fortune. It is, I believe, so far the only one started on the island.

Profits of Orange Growing.

I chatted with Major Harvey about orange growing in Porto Rico. He tells me that good orange lands can be bought for from \$50 to \$100 per acre and that a man can make a fortune out of 100 acres. Said he: "I think that a hundred-acre grove should pay a man from \$20,000 to \$25,000 a year at the end of six years. He would have to come here and handle the property himself. He would use the peons as laborers. They are superior to our negroes and they can be hired for from 25 to 30 cents a day. The man should not expect to do anything himself but boss the job and furnish the brains." I think that syndicates could also do well, and the larger the capital the better the investment. There is an American fruit company which is making a great deal of money out of Jamaica fruits. Within a year from now there will be no tariff on fruit brought from Porto Rico to the

the size of a peach. It rapidly grows until at last it has become as big as a gallon crock or, when well cultivated, the size of a peck measure.

On the top of the pineapple and about its base suckers or slips sprout out. These are used for replanting and in Florida they command a good price. The best of them are sold at 15 cents apiece and those not so good bring as much as \$7 and \$8 a hundred.

Among the best known pineapple growers of Florida is a man named Van Houten. He has a grove near Orlando, from which he receives at times as much as \$50,000 a year. A large part of his profits comes from the sale of the slips or shoots which he ships by the railroad to the sports to be sent to Honolulu.

There are different kinds of pineapples. The finest growers in Florida are the Cayenne, the Abak and the Queen. The Cayenne is as smooth as an apple and so juicy that it can be eaten with a spoon. The Florida men here believe that all of those varieties can be grown in Porto Rico and that they will produce better here than anywhere else.

Money in Coconuts.

A million and a half of coconuts are shipped from Mayaguez every year. There are large coconut groves along the western coast of Porto Rico, and smaller groves in the other coast lands of the island. I saw one grove of many thousand trees in eastern Porto Rico, not far from Humacao.

There are men here who have large incomes from coconuts. One man is reported as making \$20,000 a year out of his orchard. He has more than 20,000 trees and they pay him on an average \$1 each yearly.

It is not difficult to start a coconut grove. The only things needed are the land and the nuts. The nuts are laid upon the top of the ground a few inches apart. The air here is very moist, and after a short time each nut sends out a sprout from one of the little eyes at its ends. The sprout grows up into the air, and at the same time a root shoots out of the base down into the ground. Within a few months the sprout has grown as high as a table. The root is now broken off and the sprout and nut are planted where the tree is to stand. The nut is buried about six inches in the earth, the sprout remaining above. The earth is now pressed tightly down over the nut and the planting is done.

The trees here have been set out irregularly. They should be planted about fifteen feet apart, or about as far apart as the trees of our peach orchards. This will give 193 trees per acre. They begin to bear at five years and need practically no cultivation. Grass can be sown in a coconut orchard and cattle pastured upon it. Such an orchard in full bearing would produce, with the present facilities for shipment, \$193 per acre, with no other labor than the gathering and shipping of the fruit.

The coconuts ripen all the year round. They drop off themselves when ripe, and the men go daily from tree to tree to pick up the nuts. Each nut has a thick green husk upon it. This is torn off and the nuts then look as we see them in our stores.

Coconut Milk.

Many coconuts in Porto Rico are picked green. This is when they are to be sold for their milk. The coconut milk which you find in the ripe nuts, as, for instance, these which are exported to the United States, is nothing like the milk of the green coconut fresh from the tree. The coconut milk we drink here is as clear as pure spring water. It is far more delicious than the fluid which you find in the ripe coconut. The method of getting it is to send a boy or man up a coconut tree. He climbs up, using only his feet and hands, almost walking, as it were, to the top and pulls off the green fruit. Then he takes a machete or big knife and slices off the top of the husk, making a hole in the nut as big around as a 25-cent piece. He hands you the coconut. You lift it up so that the hole rests against your lips and pour the cool, delicious water down your throat. It is a drink for a king.

Coconuts of this kind cost you about 2 or 3 cents apiece. They are for sale in the stores, they are peddled upon the streets and you can buy them in the markets. The milk forms a good substitute for water, and it has the virtue of being positively free from the disease germs which are usually found in the Porto Rican cisterns.

Porto Rico might be called Uncle Sam's banana land. The crop of this year has been destroyed by the storm, but in ordinary times bananas grow almost wild all over the island. They cover the lowlands and are found even on the summits of the mountains. They grow several years without replanting. I have seen stems as big around as a man's leg at the calf with leaves from six to eight feet long and over a foot wide. Bananas and plantains, or large bananas, form the chief food of Porto Rico. It was the destruction of the banana crop that has caused the present distress here. It is the only crop, in fact, that could be destroyed and create a famine. The peons eat bananas in the place of bread. They eat them raw and cooked, and the fat, round stomachs which you now and then see on the naked Porto Rican babies are often called banana stomachs, because they are being caused by banana gorging.

How Bananas Grow.

Banana raising is very profitable. I met a Chicago man in San Juan who told me he had 1,200 banana trees on one acre, with 1,200 pineapple trees growing on the same acre without the bananas. This story comes from Chicago, but there is no doubt you can really grow 600 or 700 banana plants on an acre. Indeed, one of the Porto Rican authorities states that eighteen acres will produce

Remarks on the Practice of Seeking Foreign Husbands

Once more the story of a mist marriage in high life, says the Philadelphia Times. It is told to a more or less unsympathetic public hardened by the frequency with which are repeated appeals to emotions that reflect the better side of human nature. Woman in distress, since the brave days of old down through changing epochs that have brought in their train prevailing practical and material views of life, has kept her claim to the devotion and the assistance of the sterner sex. Chivalry is not dead in this twilight of the nineteenth century, even though knight errantry exists only in the romances of Sir Walter and his kindred literary spirits of past and present generations. Even when, along with the tale of woe, comes the assurance that the unfortunate victim has none but herself to blame for conditions wrought by her own folly, the masculine heart throbs clamorously in its aspiration to succor, even as the male fist now and again has been known to intervene on occasion when prudence and discretion should have suggested a strict observance of neutrality.

Time and again the warning note has sounded for the bright, the beautiful, the winsome girls of America to beware of engaging alliances with foreign suitors, and he tale that now comes over the Atlantic to set society circles agog is an old one. The bride of an Austrian diplomat sends a pitiful telegram to her father, who was a member of the official family of General Russell A. Alger during the latter's incumbency of the War office, to rescue her from the brute of a husband, and who in the period of a few months has made life a misery to her. Mme. Guyla de Szilassy, who less than a year ago was Louise Hecker, the daughter of a Detroit millionaire, is coming back home broken-hearted, disillusioned, a sad, wise woman in place of the fascinating, lovely girl who quite recently was a leader of the smart set of her own home, a leader in the social whirl of official life of Washington. What boosted it to this willful, capricious darling of fortune that her cautious old father opposed her marriage to the imperious Austrian who was cutting a dash in the diplomatic circle of the national capital? Not a whit of attention did the fair maid give to the parental warning. Dazzled by the prospect of life near a gay court of the old world, with the gilded foreigner of the aristocratic name was something on which she set her foolish young heart, and the wedding took place amid the pomp and eclat which her father's millions permitted.

It was an ominous token of what might be expected when the foreign bridegroom caused the nuptial gifts of silver and of gold showered upon his lovely mate to be inscribed with his own name instead of hers before he would consent to receiving them. But society affected to regard this as a mere eccentricity of the Austrian. All too quickly, however, has come the natural sequence of this initial exhibition of selfishness and cupidty. The honeymoon had not yet waned before the demands of the Austrian diplomat upon his wife's purse became so exacting that the bride's father put in an objection that objected this time; and then it was found that after all the "distinguished attaché of the Austrian legation" was a very small fish in the diplomatic pond. And then came whispered tales of his cruel treatment of this fair girl whom he had torn from a luxurious home.

So it happens that the masculine heart of this country is beating with resentment, and so it happens that an American father is about sailing for Europe to bring his daughter to her American home, cured of her folly and disenchanted from the glamour of a foreign capital.

The moral of this is all so plain; and withal it is so often told. Girls, stop it. Stay at home and marry American gentlemen instead of foreign upstarts with queer sounding names, and the sum of human happiness will be by so much increased, and misfits at the bridal altar will grow beautifully less.

Fashionable Garret Novelties

Probably there are few families that have not somewhere, carefully laid away, a small collection of old-time watches which vary in style from the round, thick bull's-eye down to the flat, open-faced gold watch. The works of these watches are practically valueless and the cases would bring a trifling amount if sold for either old gold or silver. Sentiment seems to cling about the faithful timepiece and here is a way of bringing them into action once more as small pin-cushions for the bureau. The change is readily made. Simply have a silversmith take out the works and cut off and fill in the hole left by the thumb piece. The round metal case is then ready and an admirable receptacle to hold the pin-cushion, which should be snugly fitted to it and made of a shade of velvet that matches the bureau trimmings. Gay colors are by far the most effective. We find many of the old Dutch watches to be fancifully engraved with ships and windmills, and when this is so and they are well made up they form quite the piece de resistance in a blue and white room. The greater amount of old English and American watches commemorate the ancestors that wore them by having large monograms upon the cases.

Eighty years ago women were busy doing headwork and made for themselves beautifully designed bags, or reticules, as they were then called, to hang over their wrists

and carry their mouchoir, fan and other trifles of necessity. A favorite design in those days appears to have been pansies or violets, in all the varied shades of lavender and purple, on a black ground. The durability of their material saved the bags from destruction and when they passed out of fashion, like the watches, they were laid aside with other glories of the past. One never knows how these things come about, but at the present time they have regained the good graces of fashion and are basking in her blandest smiles. They are no longer worn over the wrists, however, but are fastened to antique silver clasps and suspended from the button of the bottom they are finished with a fine beaded fringe about an inch in depth. Pansy velvets or suede are regarded as the most satisfactory materials with which to line them.

The long crocheted and beaded purses with slip rings in the center are also now to be seen again, and notwithstanding their long absence from society of about fifty years, have about them quite an air of smartness. The all-over black ones are undoubtedly looked upon with the greatest amount of favor. They are light and pleasant to carry and look extremely fetching when tucked in the belts of summer gowns.

Dainty bits of hand needlework on linen that come from the garret are also opening our eyes with astonishment as their fineness when we see them made into the short yokes and collars that are in vogue.

"That is an exquisite bit of work you have on the neck of your red silk gown," one girl told another.

"Yes," her friend replied glibly, "it was once my great-grandfather's nightcap."

"You mean the one whose portrait hangs in the library?"

"Yes," again she replied, "the one that looks as though he had been brought up on red-hot nails. His infantile wardrobe, however, was most luxurious. You would be equally envious of the fancy aprons I have made out of his long baby dresses. I assure you the handwork on them puts to shame the embroidery I do while wearing them. After cutting them into shape they only need a narrow edge of lace to be frilled around them and to be further decorated with two plain and to be further decorated with two frilled and pockets of a broader lace of the same pattern. I then fasten them to soft pieces of liberty satin and wear them tied about my waist, with a large bow at the side. They really are quite perfect."

Some Unprevaricated Proverbs

Boston Journal: If the X-ray was applied to minds, probably the only one who would not shrink from the ordeal would be the man of consistently evil life.

After a man is thirty he despairs of finding his ideal, while a woman of thirty is apt to see hers in any unattached man of decent looks.

Justice is merely injustice from one point of view.

The less a man does the more time he has for telling what should be done.

Old age is magnified youth.

The speech of love is dangerous only when it becomes a written language.

An unprincipled man may be exceedingly dangerous as an enemy, but is infinitely more so as a friend.

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IN THE COUNTRY.

syndicates of ten or a dozen each and come down here and buy orange groves they could soon build up an industry which would pay them enormous dividends. One man could do but little, for enough fruit would have to be raised in a locality to furnish shiploads for the steamers. But in combination settlements of this kind could be made all over the island and a vast business established.

At present the orange trees are scattered. They have grown up where the seeds have dropped and have been neither budded nor cultivated. They are of many varieties, some being as full of juice and as sweet as any orange of Florida or California. The trees are exceedingly thrifty. They grow everywhere, but the best places are back from the coast, on the foothills of the mountains.

Florida Men in Porto Rico.

The frost of last year, which killed the orange trees of Florida, has brought a number of men from that state to Porto Rico. They are now investigating the fruit conditions here and some of them are buying land and planting out orchards. One man has bought 600 acres not far from San Juan. He expects to give up his plantation in Florida and will begin planting oranges and pineapples this fall. A Mr. Averill of Ogdensburg, N. Y., has bought 120 acres, which he expects to plant in oranges and pineapples, and there is a colony of young Americans who are establishing fruit farms on the east coast.

One of the best posted fruit men I have met here is Major S. S. Harvey of Pensacola, Fla. Major Harvey is well known among the horticulturists of the United States. He has been at the head of some of the leading horticultural societies of the south and his pear orchard near Pensacola netted him more than \$16,000 a year for many years. He came to Porto Rico as a paymaster, but is thinking seriously of going into orange growing on a large scale.

One of his plans is to establish a nursery near Coamo, and there raise orange trees to meet the orange-raising boom which will probably be here within a few years. He has already bought the land for his nursery and he thinks that he will have 200,000 trees ready for sale within four years from now. He takes the oranges as they fall from the trees, buying them by the tens of thousands, and drops them just as you drop potatoes, drilling them along the rows and covering them up. The oranges soon rot and the seeds sprout up. Within three weeks they will be through the ground, and when they are six inches high they will be transplanted in rows, the trees being six inches apart. After they are a year old they will be budded from the best Florida fruit, and the result will be tens of thousands of the finest of young orange trees of our best Florida varieties. This is the way trees are grown in the nurseries of Florida, and the business

United States, and this island will lead the others of the West Indies in time in its fruit exports.

"I believe," continued Major Harvey, "that this is one of the richest islands of the world in its natural possibilities. You can raise anything here that you can raise in California or Florida, and many things that you cannot. I see no reason why English walnuts, pecans and almonds could not be grown, and as for pineapples, I doubt whether the equal of the Porto Rican kind can be found anywhere."

There is no doubt as to the excellence of the Porto Rican pineapples. I have seen some as big as peck measures, and pines which weigh twenty pounds are not uncommon. They are sweet and full of juice. They are far superior to anything that ever comes to the United States, and they could undoubtedly be sold there in large quantities. When picked green they will stand shipping and will easily keep until they get to our markets.

Pineapples grow all over Porto Rico. You find great beds of them in the valleys and along the foothills. They are not carefully cultivated and grow almost wild. I have seen them in the coconut orchards, but nowhere in very large quantities.

Pineapple Farms.

It does not take a large farm of pineapples to give a man a good income. In Florida a man can make from \$500 to \$1,000 a year on two acres of pineapples, but it will cost him at least \$2,000 per acre to get his farm into bearing. It is estimated that you can do the same here for one-tenth the amount and the expense of taking care of the crop after that would be nothing like what it is in Florida.

Pineapples must be carefully cultivated. They are planted from suckers, slips or buds, which come out of the base of the pineapple and upon the top. These slips are set out about three feet apart, so that you can grow about 5,000 pines on one acre. A pineapple field looks very much like a field of cabbage. It is of a salmon color mixed with green. The whole ground is covered, the leaves or blades about the pineapple reaching out and enveloping one another. Every leaf is covered with thorns or spines so that you have to use buckskin gloves in working the crop.

It is much more expensive to cultivate pineapples in Florida than in Porto Rico. There the plants are shaded by groves of trees made of slats or laths so that at a distance the fields look like a fair ground. Here the sun is not so hot, there are more clouds in the sky and a shade of palm bark could take the place of the slats.

At present most of the Porto Rican fruit is grown without shade. The growing is interesting. The plants are cultivated like cabbages. At first a blossom comes out as big as your fist with a little pineapple below it. The pineapple at the start is of about

(Continued on Eighth Page.)