

alloted. But this is generally a pretty certain proposition with an Indian, and they did not hesitate to take the chance. It illustrates the load progress is now compelled to carry in the Territory, and it is saying much for its vitality to remark that it carries it, all right.

A townsite was surveyed and given the name of Weleetka, which in the Creek language means "running water." The clear, swift-running Canadian, which washes the limits of the townsite, gave the place its poetic name. Then came the struggle to "make good," as they say in the Territory. The town was laid out in March, 1902. It consisted at that time of a tiny log cabin and a cotton field, occupying a small clearing on an elevation overlooking the river. The Frisco System tracks skirt the hill, along the river bottom, but there was no station. There was a station and switch two miles below, called Alabama. As soon as it was definitely settled that the Fort Smith & Western would cross at that point—and it did cross there—Moore and Clark set to work to have the station at Alabama moved up to Weleetka. This they succeeded in doing. The station house was placed on a flat car, and taken to Weleetka. A further arrangement was affected, by which the Fort Smith & Western should use the same station house, thus making a joint terminal.

Thus was Weleetka born. Seven months ago the first house was built. Today the town has a population of 1,500, and more are coming every day. More than 40 people got off the train by which I left the town. Of course, all these do not come to stay. A majority are "prospecting;" that is, looking for a place to locate. Thousands of "prospectors" are now in the Territory. One encounters them at every step. Many remain. Others return home, having probably selected a place to locate, with the intention of coming here as soon as allotment makes land available under secure title tenure.

While the railroad terminals lie in the bottom, the town has an admirable location

on heights which command a view of the country for miles in all directions. A very little investigation demonstrates the wisdom displayed in the selection of the site. Crooked about and almost circling the townsite is Alabama creek, a lively little stream, of sufficient volume and current to make it an ideal drainage canal. This creek, fortunately, does not empty into the river for several miles below the town, an advantage to be appreciated when the matter of waterworks comes up.

Waterworks? A town not yet out of its swaddling clothes talking about waterworks? Yes, indeed. And in a short time it will have them, too. You, perhaps, are living in a long-settled community, and do not know how they do things in the strenuous southwest. Though only months, as yet, are required to number its age, Weleetka is a corporation, with a full set of municipal officers, and propositions for waterworks and an electric lighting plant are already maturing. There is already a good telephone system, with long distance connections in all directions. Weleetka feels the necessity of preparing for its future population. Six months ago its population numbered three. Today it is 1,500. Next year it will be 2,500, and in three years it will be disappointed if fully 5,000 people do not call it home.

Are such expectations unwarranted? Let us consider. Owing to the great "boot," fully 60 miles of river bottom averaging two miles in width and not subject to overflow, are within ten miles of the town. It inadequately describes this land to say that probably no finer farming country is to be found in the world. The bulk of this land is virgin soil, less than ten per cent being in cultivation at the present time. Even the uplands are exceedingly fertile. Contrary to popular opinion, this country cannot be regarded as a prairie land. In this locality fully 60 per cent of the land is timbered, in the bottoms heavily. Weleetka is built in the woods. This comes as a relief after the flat monotony of the prairie towns, which stand

out in all their crude nakedness. It will never become necessary to plant shade trees in Weleetka. At this writing the streets are plentifully dotted with stumps, even in the business part of town, while in the residence sections trees by the hundred are still standing. Anyone who will take out the stumps is permitted, nay, encouraged, to cut all the firewood or timber he wants, provided he confines his operations to the streets. In this way broad avenues are rapidly opening through the woods in all directions. It requires no very vivid imagination to see, on a day soon to be here, a remarkably attractive little city in this fine natural grove.

Fifty a week is the average rate at which investors have come to Weleetka during the past few months, and there are at present no indications of a cessation of the influx. A great majority are farmers, who are looking for a chance to locate on the vacant lands. As soon as the Indians secure their deeds, all the land will be occupied by men whose purpose will be to raise something on it. Cotton and corn are the two best products, and a majority of the farmers seeking locations come from the cotton raising parts of Texas and Louisiana. Land just cleared and used for the first time this season has produced a bale of cotton to the acre. The timber is very valuable, and a plant to manufacture staves, tool handles and ties has already been established at Weleetka. The prairies, while not so rich as the bottoms, afford excellent farming and grazing land. Small fruits do especially well on the slopes of the hills and this culture offers a promising field. There is no reason why this should be a one-crop country, as small grains thrive on the ridges and up-lands. On the whole, the agriculturist could scarcely desire a prettier piece of virgin soil in which to pitch his habitation. While it at present seems destined to be chiefly an agricultural region, other natural resources are not lacking. Providence, so prodigal in its gifts to the Territory everywhere, has placed coal and oil fields at Henryetta, only 11 miles north of Weleetka. The mines at Henryetta are already placing a consider-

able output on the market, although it is not two years since operations were begun, and insecure tenure has there, as everywhere in this country, retarded development.

It is interesting to note the progress of one of these quick-growth towns. Three phases usually manifest themselves—tent, hut and cottage. All three phases are in evidence in Weleetka now. Although the town contains three large lumber companies it is impossible to erect houses fast enough to supply the demand. The town is not being built by the townsite company. All improvements are the result of individual enterprise. Investors are erecting habitations as rapidly as possible, but hundreds will be compelled to spend the coming winter in tents. The town contains two banks, two hotels, a score or so of business houses, two factories and a cotton gin which turned out 1,000 bales this season. This gin is doubling its capacity, and two other gins will be in operation by next year, prepared to care for the anticipated crop. By that time it is expected that an oil mill will be prepared to handle the cotton seed. And all this has been accomplished without the accelerating influence of the Fort Smith & Western railway, which has not yet reached the town. But its coming will not be long now. The grading of the roadbed is completed, and the day I was at Weleetka a large force of men were unloading steel and cross-ties, preparatory to laying the track. The bridge work is finished, and trains will probably be running in a few months. As Weleetka is equidistant from Fort Smith and Guthrie, it is regarded as the natural location for the freight division of the new road, and, by the erection of a large and expensive pumping station and the laying out of extensive yards, the company indicates a purpose to place it here.

Not all the residents of Weleetka are living in tents and temporary structures, though such habitations at present predominate. The time has been short, but it has sufficed for the erection of a number of substantial brick and stone business blocks, and many residences, which in both external and inter-

nal appointments would be a credit to long-established communities. A two-storied public school building is about finished. It will be provided with four large class rooms, equipped with all modern appliances. One church is completed and others in course of construction. In the main business street, a curious contrast, emphasizing the rapid growth of the town, is presented. The First National Bank occupies a tiny, one-room hut, while adjoining its cramped quarters is a handsome stone structure nearing completion, soon to be the new home of the institution. It is the spirit of the southwest at a glance, and, thinking of what it all means, one forgets the rawness of it all in profound wonderment.

Situated as it is, in the neck of the "boot" of the Canadian and washed on one side by the river the town is scarcely two miles from the other edge of the loop. This peculiar condition has given life to a somewhat pretentious project. Between these two points, but two miles apart, the river bed has a fall of over 100 feet. A plan has been advanced to connect the two points by cutting across the neck, and thus secure an immense water power. The plan is perfectly feasible from an engineering point of view, and only needs capital to carry it out. If the population that is pouring into the country comes to realize the importance and far-reaching possibilities embodied in the project, they will undoubtedly subscribe the necessary funds. Such a movement has already gained considerable headway. The power thus developed

would provide for unlimited manufacturing facilities.

Welectka is a familiar name to the Indian residents of this part of the Creek Nation. Just in the edge of the present townsite is the long-used religious camping ground of "Running Water." For half a century, or ever since their removal into this region, have the Creeks assembled once a year at this praying place for the purpose of religious communion. These assemblies were almost identical and were probably modeled after the old-fashioned camp meeting of our forefathers. The camping ground lies in a pretty grove near the river bank. There are rough shelters for the people scattered about, under which they sleep and eat and seek protection from inclement weather. The only building is a small hut for cooking and the storing of provisions. Here in the wilderness—for it was a literal wilderness only yesterday—they came and, for weeks at a time, listened to the exhortations of their preachers or humbled themselves in prayer. Since the railroad came, three years ago, the annual meetings have been abandoned, and the structures are rapidly falling into decay.

Here, as elsewhere, the past is giving way to the present. In another year the old camping ground will probably be cut up into factory sites or town lots. Welectka—the new Welectka—latest representative of the marvelous growth of the southwest, will claim her own, and her claims are urged with an insistence that, judging from her brief but strenuous past, are not to be denied.

THEN AND NOW.

Sir Isaac Newton sat one day
 Beneath an apple-tree,
 He saw the fruit fall to the ground—
 Quoth he, "That's gravity,"
 If Ike could live again to-day,
 Methinks he'd show surprise,
 And hedge his bet, to see the way
 The fruit now takes a rise.

JUST A LINE OR TWO.

The fellow who has to make new resolutions the first of every year usually does not keep any of them over thirty days.

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There is a whole lot of danger in skates besides the kind you glide over ice with.

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Hamlin Garland wants Uncle Sam to compel the Indians to assume American names. Impossible. The alphabet has already been twisted upside down to exhaustion by the whites.

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Nothing is beyond American reach. The captain of a government exploring boat in the South Pacific has recently caught a fish at a depth of 6,000 feet.

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Snow balls furnish lots of fun, but they will never become as popular as "high balls."

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"Christmas may bring all the joy we hear so much about, but as for me, give me "The good old summer time," waileth the tramp.

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The person who thinks that the inventive genius of Americans is on the wane should inspect a toy store.

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You can travel for many hundred miles over the Frisco System where the "Last Rose of Summer" is known only in song. Roses bloom in those parts all the year 'round.

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A New York banker proposes to settle the threatened international imbroglio in Venezuela by refinancing her national debt, so that the Europeans can get their money—if this government will back him. Sure, and we will do the same thing.

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The hunter who shoots a lame duck is not a true sportsman. Moral: Never kick a man when he's on the down grade.

Of course, the fifteen-year-old St. Louis wife who is suing for a divorce should be permitted to go back to her ma.

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The voters of Wyoming have clothed a woman with the judicial ermine, but she refuses to adopt the Dr. Mary Walker costume, in order to make it fit her like a man.

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Well, it all may be over sooner than we expect. Astronomers report that comet 999, bigger than the sun—discovered by Prof. Perrine—is swooping down on this old world at the rate of 1,000,000 miles a day.

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It is to be hoped that the "bulls" and "bears" will leave the farmers enough corn to raise another record-breaking crop on.

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Denizens of the mountains in Kentucky and Tennessee are beginning to think that the millenium is near at hand. The year is closing, and there is not the sign of a feud in sight.

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If a man could only borrow money as easily as he does trouble, his troubles would be rew and soon forgotten.

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Especially about Christmas time do so many young men get a lot of rye mixed with their wild oats.

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It is but natural for a mountaineer to take a peak when he is trying to obtain a good view.

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It is not always the longest stocking that draws the richest prizes from Santa Claus.

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Figures are awful prosy but it would be interesting to see a census of the people in this world who would be miserable if they could not be finding fault with somebody about a dozen times a day.

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A man with winning ways is often a heavy loss.

A LITTLE OUT OF THE WAY.

She was sitting in the front chamber—a small, fragile figure half hidden in a pink chintz easy-chair, with the most inviting of footstools under her helpless feet. There was a pale pink bow in her dainty cap to match the ribbon at the throat of her white wrapper. The sunlight, flowing through the broad window to ripple placidly on the walls, seemed a very different thing from the blinding dazzle on the library dome—it was mellow and tranquil—the golden heart of the sun poured out there to delight and cheer those faded blue eyes.

“I’ll take myself off and leave you ladies together,” said the squire. He bustled away with a great assumption of hurried responsibility. We three talked awhile of old friends, happy associations, and beloved places. She forgot a great deal, repeated herself very often, and cried softly from time to time, as she stroked our hands, and told us how glad she was that we had come. We could see how much she had failed since we were here last, but her wrinkled face was prettier than many a girl’s, with both beauty of feature and the immortal loveliness of a gentle nature and a pure, sweet soul.

We had always called her husband “The Squire”. The title traveled with him from his own little town when he first came to Congress. He was a rugged old fellow, of pronounced views—often as narrow as they were positive—but the man was genuine through and through; there was not an ounce of expediency in his being. When he clung with savage energy to some position which seemed—and probably was—retrogressive to younger, broader men, it was never a matter of cautious policy or a weighing of possible benefits, but the defense of a proud conviction. By and by they did not return him to Congress. That was after his wife began to fail. His career was her glory. He put off telling her again and again. At last the usual time

came for them to move to Washington, and she began to wonder at the delay. He made a sudden, desperate resolve—she should never know at all. The packing began, the journey was taken, and this small house rented on the outskirts of the city. He picked up a little law practice here and there, through interested friends, and his real ability. Those of us who were likely to see his wife, he requested not to mention his defeat before her.

It was slow, hard work for him, but even in his native town, through his long absences, he was no longer in the current of things, and it was perhaps almost as easy to gain a modest income here.

I sat where I could see him filing papers in the next room. With nervous fingers he pored them over, and fastened them carefully into neat packages with the rubber bands which are a sine qua non to every man who has once been a Congressman. His eyes wandered from time to time toward the little figure in the front window, and I saw for the first time on that grim face an undisguised look of yearning tenderness. And then he silently drifted back into our room again, “to put things to rights on the mantel-piece.”

A few more moments, and he was standing behind her chair, forgetting that he had ever tried to stay away. She reached a soft wrinkled hand up to him without a word, and he covered it in both of his. Then we all went on quietly talking.

“Ezra had to go up to the house today,” she said, “and the morning was a whole year long without him. I’m a selfish old woman, for I know the country needs him, and I’m afraid his committee work is getting behind—but it isn’t going to be for long—and I want him so. Ezra, you mustn’t ever leave me again!” She turned to look back at him, with anxious, clinging, dependent worship in her eyes. He lifted a loop of the little bow on her cap over his finger, and bent to kiss it,