

# PIERCE COUNTY

GEORGIA.

An Accurate Description of its  
Great Resources and Wonderful  
Advantages. An abundance of Fine  
and Fertile Land thoroughly  
adapted to



FRUIT GROWING.  
 GENERAL FARMING.  
 DIVERSIFIED OR TRUCK FARMING.

Good Health, Peace, Prosperity.

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 AND MANUFACTURING SITES.



**A Land that flows with Milk and Honey!**





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Book . P 61 P 6

SMITHSONIAN DEPOSIT.





# Pierce County, Georgia.

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PIERCE COUNTY has unsurpassed and unequalled advantages to offer to the new comer, whether he be a farmer, a mechanic or a manufacturer. It has all the elements that nature could contribute to render farming, as well as industrial pursuits, successful and remunerative.

## A WHITE MAN'S COUNTRY.

Pierce County is strictly a white man's country. More than four-fifths of its population is white. The land is owned by a progressive and intelligent people who keenly feel the need of desirable immigrants, who can rest assured that they will be welcomed with the proverbial generous Southern hospitality.

## AN OLD SETTLEMENT.

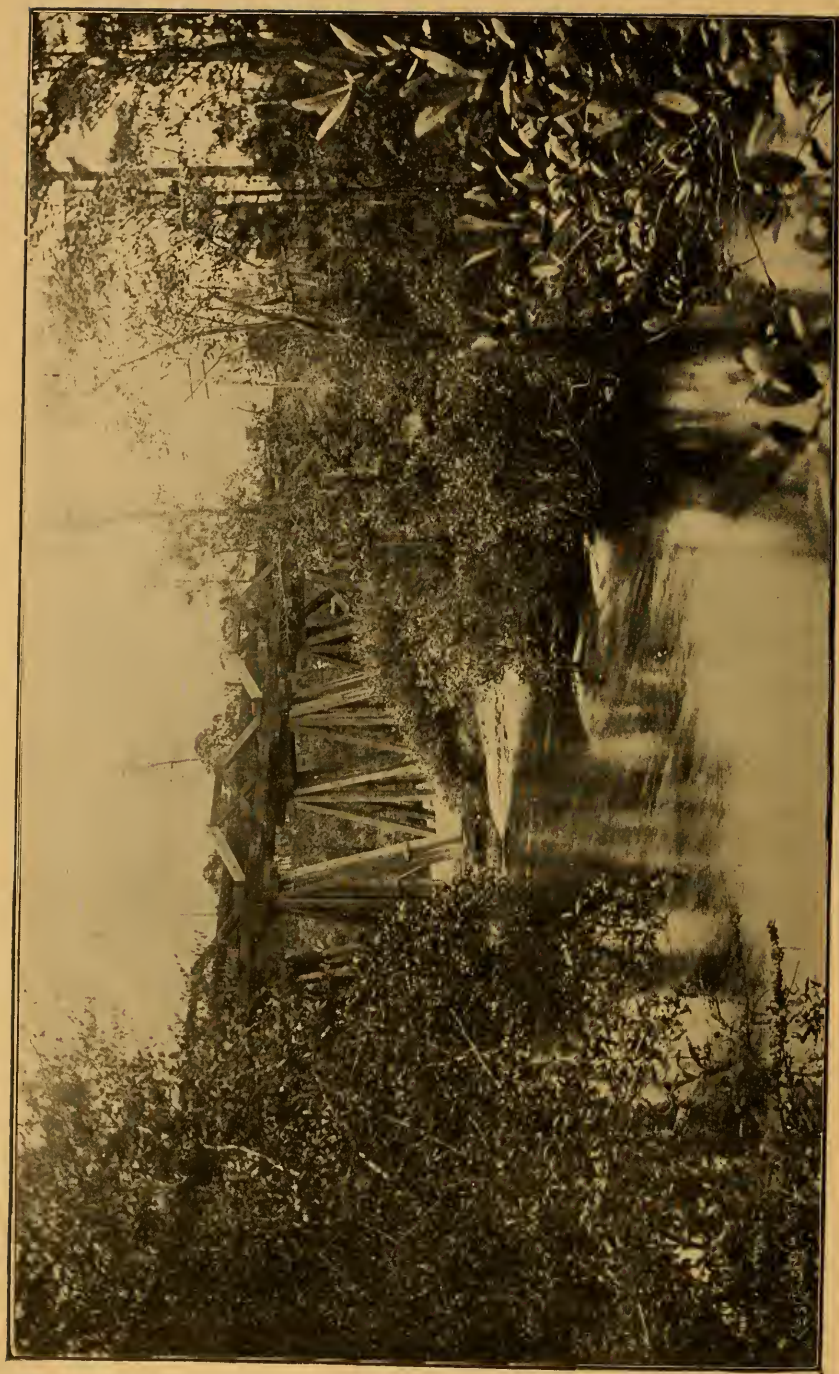
All the benefits that only an old settlement can offer are found here, at the same time the county is only sparsely settled and there is a very large amount of exceedingly fine and fertile farming land available at comparatively low prices, where an ideal Southern home can be made at little cost; where abundance, thrift and prosperity go hand in hand with good health; where all the advantages of civilization are as available as the divine climate, and the numberless blessings of the "Sunny South."

## "SOUTH GEORGIA," THE GARDEN SPOT OF THE STATE.

Half a century ago, when railroad building was in its infancy, the aim of their projectors was to select the richest, the healthiest and the most promising parts of the State through which to run, where a white immigrant would be attracted and where a white man could live, work and prosper. The sole aim and purpose of the projectors of the old Atlantic and Gulf Railroad nearly fifty years ago, was to reach what was then considered, and what is now so well known and recognized as the Garden Spot of the State: "South Georgia."

## RAILROAD FACILITIES.

The old Atlantic and Gulf Railroad has been succeeded by the Savannah, Florida and Western Railway, which forms the trunk line of the Plant System of Railways. So that to its many other advantages the county has that of being traversed by this great trunk line, with its unequalled passenger and freight facilities, making it possible to reach New York City within twenty-five hours.



SAVANNAH, FLORIDA AND WESTERN RAILWAY BRIDGE OVER ALABAMA RIVER.



#### ALTITUDE AND TOPOGRAPHY.

The altitude of Pierce County is the highest of any county, traversed by any railway, along the South Atlantic seaboard. The topography of the county is slightly hilly, and the rolling land is traversed by two rivers, the Satilla and the Alabaha, with their numerous branches, which perfectly drain its whole area. The undulations of the land are ample to secure the most perfect natural drainage, while the inclines are not heavy enough to cause the land to wash and become rugged.

#### THE SOIL.

The soil is the fertile gray sandy loam, with clay sub-soil, characteristic of South Georgia, the adaptability of which to intensive or truck farming, as well as to the growing of the grape and fruit is so widely known and so well recognized to-day. The clay sub-soil, which is found from fifteen inches to two feet below the surface, enables the top soil to retain any amount of humus or fertilizers that may be incorporated in it.

#### THE DRINKING WATER.

The greater part of the county has a thin layer of iron ore, a few feet below the surface, which is impervious to water, and has the great advantage of effectually preventing the percolation of any contaminated surface water, thereby making the pollution of the well or drinking water from this source a practical impossibility for all time to come. Throughout the county an abundance of excellent, clear, cold, sparkling drinking water can be obtained at depths varying from twenty-five to thirty-five feet.

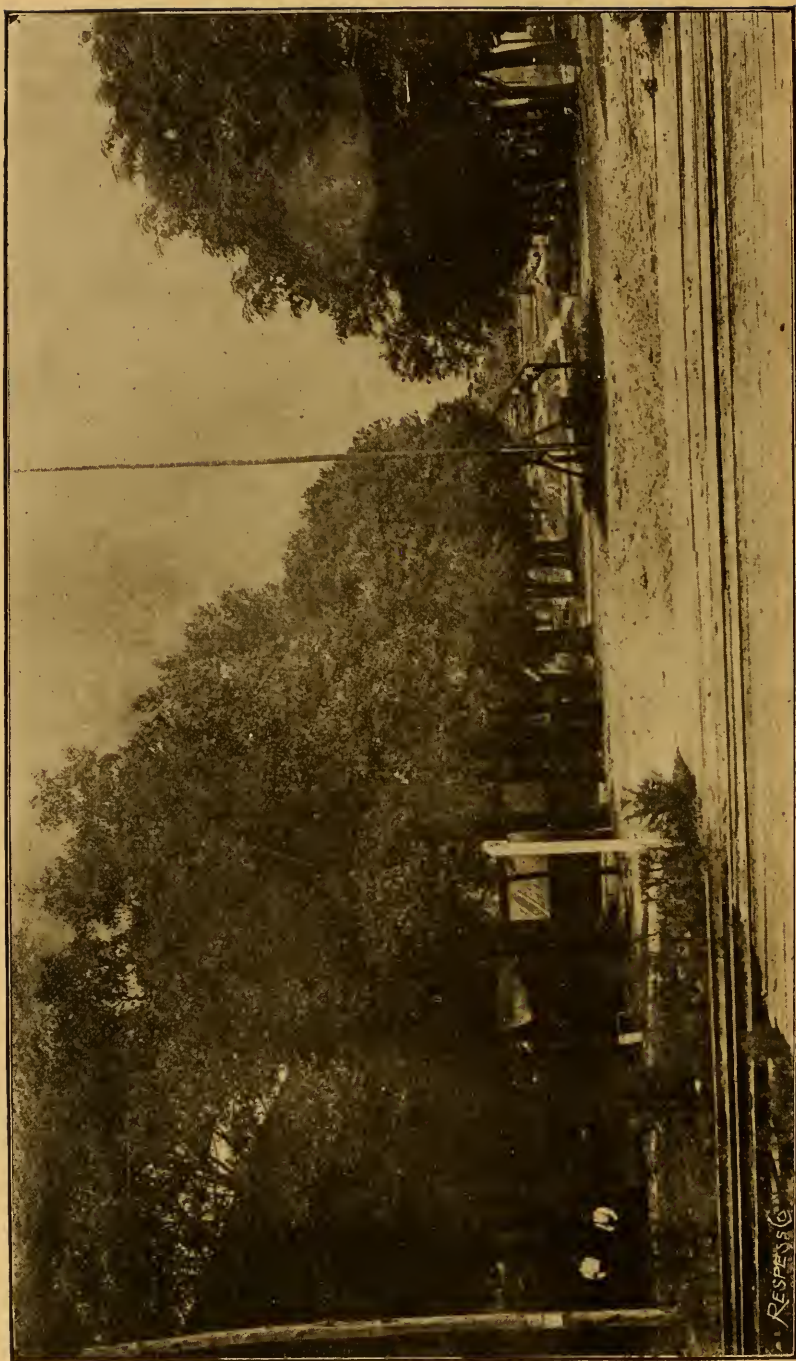
#### HEALTHFULNESS.

The health of the people throughout Pierce County is phenomenally good and is in fact all that could be desired, as there is a total absence of miasma and malaria, being in the midst of vast yellow pine forests, whose invigorating, refreshing and health giving influence is so well known.

#### CLIMATE.

The atmosphere, while it is not totally devoid of humidity, is soft, balmy and wonderfully beneficial for invalids, especially those suffering from lung or throat diseases; in fact the county can beyond a doubt claim a foremost rank as one of the most perfect sanitariums in the South. Competent medical authority has declared this immediate section of South Georgia to be the natural sanitarium of the American continent.

While the winters are so mild, pleasant and beneficial, the



OAK TREES, A STREET, BLACKSHEAR.

RESERVE



summers are equally agreeable, as the high altitude of the territory causes the never failing Southern trade winds to have a free access and a full sweep. Their effect renders the Summer temperature delightfully pleasant, as it is very rarely that the thermometer ever ranges above 90° F., the mean temperature being in the seventies and eighties. The nights are always refreshingly cool.

#### SEA ISLAND COTTON.

Pierce County is a large producer of long staple or Sea Island cotton. Last year (1894) three thousand, five hundred bales of this valuable staple were shipped. As the name indicates this variety of cotton was formerly produced on the sea islands of the south Atlantic seaboard. The great length of the staple, the fineness of the fibre, as well as its great strength and brilliant lustre render it the best cotton raised on the face of the globe, consequently it commands the highest prices. While upland cotton sold at times below five cents per pound, Sea Island cotton brought in the neighborhood of fifteen cents per pound.

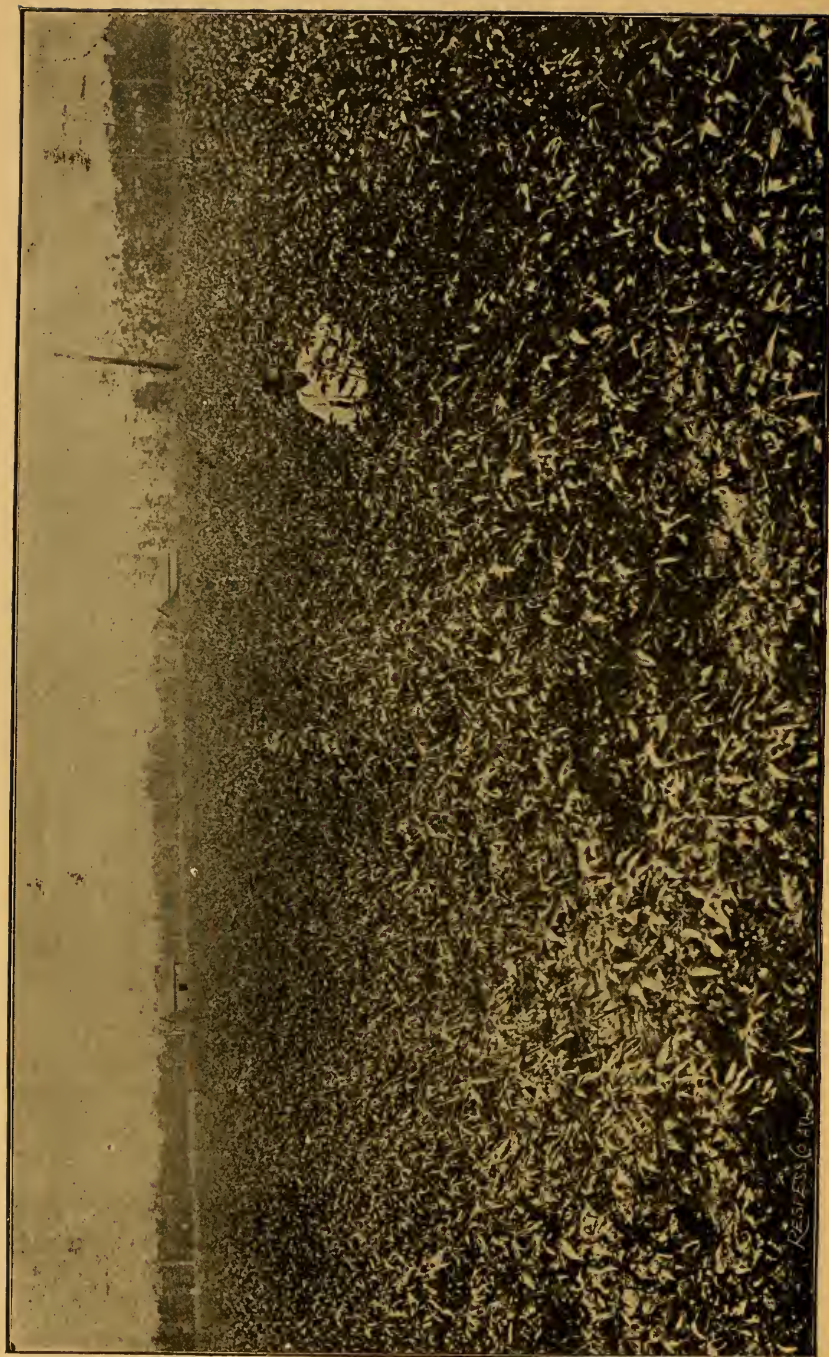
To grow Sea Island cotton successfully the soil must be a well drained sandy loam, while the quantity of humidity in the atmosphere and the rain fall must be perfect. It has been found that there are a limited number of counties further inland where this cotton can be grown successfully, its production has therefore increased from 25,000 bales to 80,000 bales within fifteen years.

The seed of this cotton is black, perfectly smooth and lintless, it yields more oil than upland, green or lint covered seed. The oil can be extracted without decorticating. The oil cake from the Sea Island seed resembles the well known and highly esteemed linseed oil cake to a high degree. It can be fed in the same manner and with like results to stock, and is much cheaper.

#### GENERAL FARMING.

The best proof or guarantee that any farmer could require as to the adaptability and value of land, either for general, diversified or truck farming, is the mere fact that Sea Island cotton is successfully grown, since there are only a very few spots on earth that are thus favored. Wherever Sea Island cotton is grown a great number of varieties of other farm products can be successfully cultivated,

The county is therefore well adapted for general farming, and especially for truck farming. Cotton is the staple or money crop, but all farmers raise an abundance of provisions, such as



FIFTY-SIX ACRES SEA ISLAND COTTON, PLANTATION JACKSON WALKER.

corn, oats, rye, sweet and Irish potatoes, sugar-cane, hay, peas, peanuts, chufas, melons, and an abundance of fruit. Barley can also be grown advantageously, as well as all plants having seed adapted to oil milling, which have always been legitimate products of sunny climes and warm rich soils, such as the castor oil bean, the ground pea, and the flax, and those familiar with their cultivation, could not find a soil and climate better adapted to their growth.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS SHOWING THE PROFITABLENESS OF GENERAL FARMING

A list of one hundred average, middle-aged farmers of Pierce County, selected from the tax list of the county, shows that they have increased in wealth, as the legitimate outcome of their farming operations alone, 386 per cent. in fourteen years. These farmers in 1880, returned for taxation \$52,114 of property; in 1894, these same farmers return a total of \$253,377 worth of property.

Numerous individual instances can be gathered from the tax books of the county where the increase is very much larger, for instance, in 1880, Mr. Jackson Walker returned for taxation \$1,270, and in 1894, his returns amount to \$13,215. This tremendous increase is the result of his farming enterprises simply. What he has done others can do, and are doing.

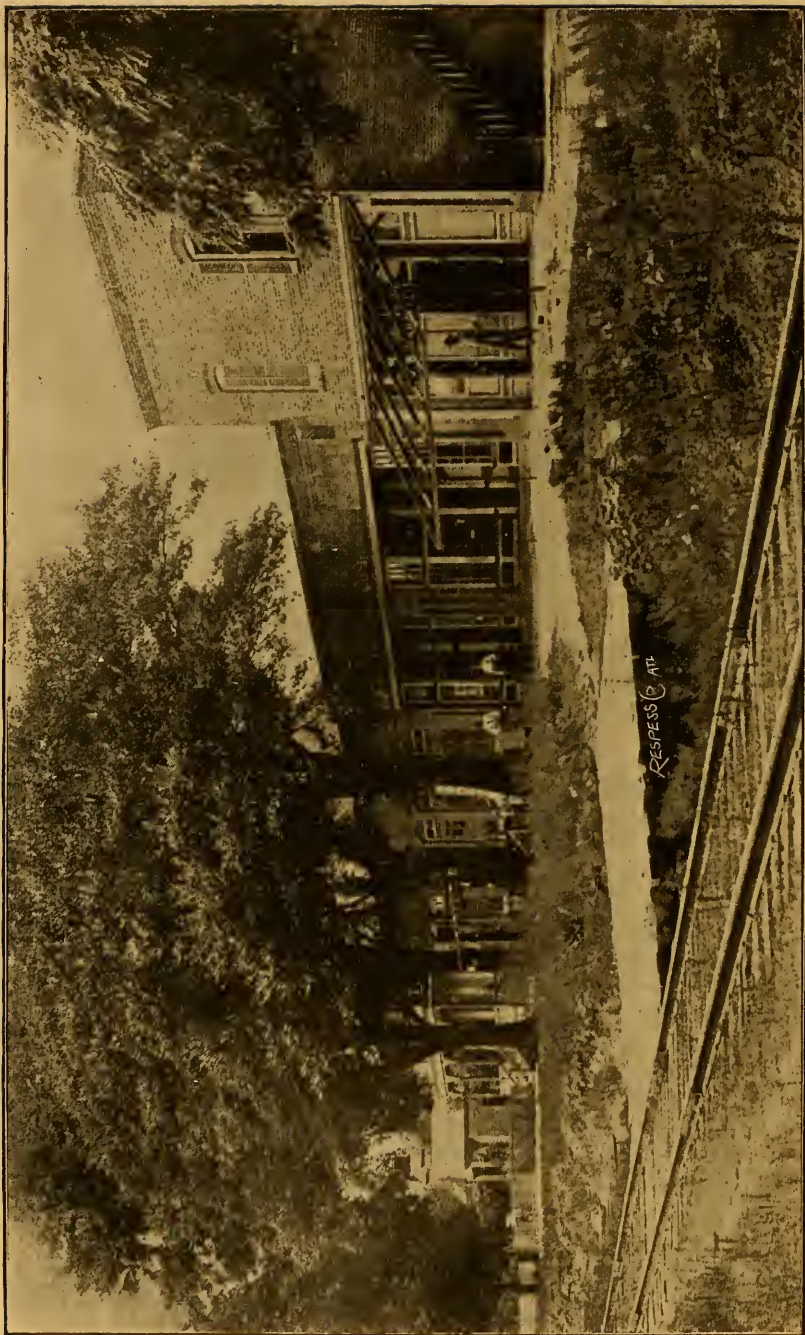
In 1880, the total returns of property for taxation amounted to \$525,802; in 1894, the aggregate returns of the county amounted to \$1,386,135, an average increase of 163 per cent. in fourteen years.

#### TRUCK FARMING.

Truck farming is engaged in to a limited extent, with very satisfactory results. Two and three crops are gathered from the same land in a single year. The proximity of the county to the sea ports of Savannah, Brunswick and Jacksonville, all being within fifty or seventy-five miles, besides the unsurpassed railway facilities, which always offer to the truck farmer quick and cheap transportation to the markets of the north and west, make it practicable to ship even the most delicate vegetables, fruits and berries with perfect safety.

Irish potatoes, English peas, snap beans, asparagus, cabbages, cucumbers, squash, tomatoes, cantaloupes, celery, etc., can all be grown to reach the markets much earlier than the same products grown further north, consequently better prices are obtained. Both the watermelon and muskmelon grow luxuriantly and pro-





A BUSINESS BLOCK, BLACKSHEAR.

duce an excellent quality of splendid size and fine flavor. Both melons are largely grown to supply the early demand, which of late years has grown to enormous proportions.

#### ILLUSTRATIONS OF TRUCK FARMING.

The following is a record of one and a quarter acres, cultivated by Mr. Elijah Aspinwall, at his home eight miles from Blackshear, this year, (1895):

February 5—Planted Irish Potatoes, using four barrels of seed at a cost of.....	\$ 15 00
Expended for Fertilizers.....	20 90
Paid for Labor, Cultivating and Harvesting.....	15 70
Cost of Barrels.....	5 20
Total Cost.....	\$ 56 80
From this he gathered fifty-two barrels of first-class Potatoes, which he sold, net, for.....	\$140 65
5 barrels of Culls, valued at \$2 per barrel.....	10 00
Making a total of.....	\$150 65
Deduct Expenses.....	56 80
Net Profit from planting of Potatoes.....	\$93 85
On May 3: Corn was planted, at a cost for Cultivation and Harvesting of.....	\$ 3 90
From this he gathered Fodder valued at.....	6 00
50 bushels Corn valued at.....	37 50
Making a total of.....	\$ 43 50
Deduct Expense.....	3 90
Net Profit.....	\$39 60
Following the Corn a fine crop of Pea Vines and Grass Hay was raised, valued at.....	\$ 20 00
Deduct Expense—Planting and Harvesting.....	1 50
Net Profit.....	\$ 18 50
Grand Total Profit from one and one-quarter acres in twelve months.....	\$151 95

#### FRUIT CULTURE.

Fruit growing on a large scale as a commercial commodity is still in its infancy in Pierce County. The raising of Sea Island cotton has always been attended with such success financially that the people have been slow to take hold of other products from which to realize the ready cash; this fact, however, has not prevented some from experimental fruit culture. It is a notable fact that every farm has its fruit trees, the peach, the pear, the plum and the grape predominating, affording more than an ample supply for home consumption.

The orchards and vineyards in existence will convince the expert at a glance that as a fruit country the county is simply perfection, and that its possibilities in this line are great indeed.

The pear, the plum, the peach, the apricot, the apple, as well as every variety of grape, grow to perfection and yield enormously.

The people are well aware that the growing of fruit for shipment to the early markets of the North and West is one of the surest and best ventures that can be made, and there are a number of orchards planted. The majority of these orchards, while thrifty, are young, but those which have come into bearing





CORN, PLANTATION OF JACKSON WALKER.

demonstrate beyond a doubt the financial success of fruit growing in Pierce County. The abundance of excellent fruit grown is a splendid illustration of the adaptability of soil and climate to fruit culture, and throughout the county the matter is now receiving active attention.

Mr. Joseph A. Harper has a vineyard of seven acres, near Blackshear; the vineyard is now seventeen years old; it has yielded regularly for years fifteen hundred gallons of excellent wine annually, never missing an abundant crop. The vineyard has exclusively Scuppernong vines. The bunch grape, however, grows equally well wherever it has been planted.

#### STOCK RAISING.

The raising of cattle, hogs and sheep has been carried on successfully as an adjunct to farming for years, not as a specialty; there is, however, no doubt that well appointed dairies or stock farms would thrive well and yield handsome returns.

#### BEE CULTURE.

The flora of the County is excellent for bee culture. Wherever bees are kept they thrive well, and the yield of very fine honey is large, although as a rule the bees receive very little care or attention. Professional bee culture, with all modern methods and improvements, would doubtless pay handsomely in numerous localities.

#### THE YELLOW PINE.

The whole of Pierce County was originally covered with as fine a growth of yellow pine as only a very fertile soil will produce. The manufacturing of lumber and naval stores were pioneer industries, which have gradually given way to farming and kindred pursuits. The annual output of sawn lumber from the County is estimated at fifteen million feet, while the turpentine farms produce fifteen thousand barrels of naval stores. Unlike hard woods, the cutting away or the bleeding of the yellow pine does not effect or impoverish the soil in the least degree for farming purposes. There is an abundance of timber everywhere, and lumber for building purposes is of excellent quality and cheap.

#### HARD WOODS, ETC.

While the supply of hard woods is by no means so exhaustless as that of yellow pine, there are nevertheless quantities of various kinds, such as the hickory, the oak, the black gum, etc., to be had. Besides these, there is a plentiful supply of cypress, poplar, maple, etc.





ALABAMA RIVER SCENE, NEAR BLACKSHEAR

## CHEAP FUEL.

Wood for household purposes can be had on any farm almost for the cutting and hauling. Thousands of cords of excellent wood is annually destroyed, wasted, so plentiful is it! Wood for fuel, for steam, or other industrial purposes is cheap, abundant and of excellent quality.

## WATER POWER POSSIBILITIES.

Besides cheap fuel, the County has great water power possibilities, as there is a considerable change of elevation and an abundance of flowing water. The Satilla River, as well as the Alabama River, can be made to yield a vast amount of power.

## POPULATION.

According to the census of 1890, the population of Pierce County is 7,367 souls. Careful estimation places the population in 1895 at 8,500 souls.

According to the records of the School Commissioner, there are 43 schools in the County, of which 36 are for white and 7 for colored children. The attendance of white children at school is 1621, against 481 colored children. The registration books of the County show that there are 932 white voters registered, against 225 colored voters. These figures show that four-fifths of the population is white.

## THE NEGROES.

The small colored population consists mostly of people born and raised here, and they are humble, civil and willing to work. Among their number are many estimable and worthy colored citizens.

There is no friction between the races, and all live harmoniously and peacefully, each race having its own sphere, its separate churches and schools.

## BLACKSHEAR.

Blackshear, the county seat, has been very properly termed "The Garden City" of South Georgia, for it is one of the prettiest and most picturesque towns in this region. Nearly all of its dwellings are surrounded by neat flower gardens, beautiful trees and thrifty orchards, while its principal streets are lined with fine shade trees. The town is built on a high hill, on the banks of the Alabama River. Its altitude is about 200 feet over sea level, the slight undulations affording a very perfect natural drainage.



LOOKING ACROSS ALABAMA RIVER FROM THE FOOT OF SAVANNAH, FLORIDA AND WESTERN RAILWAY BRIDGE.



The healthfulness of the town, like the rest of the county, is excellent.

The city is incorporated, and the municipal authorities are capable, public-spirited men, who have the good of the community at heart.

The moral status of the town is high, no liquors being sold, as a \$20,000 license is equivalent to prohibition.

Blackshear has 1200 inhabitants; the court house, and all county offices are located here. The town has two prosperous weekly newspapers: "The Times," and "The Hustler."

The Blackshear Bank has a subscribed capital of \$50,000, and an authorized capital of \$200,000, and does a large business, and stands high on account of its integrity and business-like management.

Blackshear has four churches, Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist and Episcopal, each having representative congregations. It is also the home of the Pierce County High School, an institution which ranks high in the educational world. This school is thoroughly normal, and draws its patronage from a wide and increasing territory.

Blackshear has two physicians, three dentists, four lawyers, one drug store, and thirteen general stores with choice varieties of goods not often found in towns many times the size of Blackshear.

In the cotton season all roads lead to Blackshear, the farmers of Pierce and all of the adjoining counties finding an excellent market for their cotton here. It is not an uncommon occurrence for a farmer to haul his cotton 25 or 30 miles by wagon to obtain the advantages of the Blackshear market. In this respect Blackshear is ahead of any town in southeast Georgia. Exceeding \$200,000 is annually paid out over the counters of Blackshear's cotton merchants.

Its merchants are energetic and progressive. Their customers are to be found in Pierce and all of the adjoining counties. The business done will approximate three-quarters of a million dollars annually.

Blackshear enjoys the distinction of having the only exclusively Sea Island Cotton Seed Oil Mill in Georgia, a large Fertilizer Manufactory, and the largest and most complete Sea Island Cotton Ginnery in the State. All of these enterprises are owned and operated by The A. P. Brantley Company, and afford

employment to a large number of people.

Blackshear has two hotels furnishing excellent accommodations, and a stay here will always be remembered with pleasure. It is one of the most pleasant towns for residence, whether permanent or transient, in Georgia.

Blackshear is one of the most important towns on the line of the Savannah, Florida and Western Railway, almost equi-distant from Savannah, Georgia, and Jacksonville, Florida, and all trains stop here regularly.

Mail, Express, Telegraph and Banking facilities are excellent.

Undoubtedly the future of Blackshear is very bright; a magnificent water power is available at its very door, making it one of the most desirable points in the South for the establishment of cotton spinneries. The climate is well suited to the spinning of the finest yarns and threads, and there is an abundance of intelligent white labor, male and female, who can easily be taught.

#### PATTERSON.

Patterson is a thrifty, incorporated town on the Savannah, Florida and Western Railway; it has a population of 250 souls. The town has schools and churches, a number of stores, and a large cotton ginnery which is operated by The Henry Hyers Company.

In the season of 1894 Patterson shipped about 1,000 bales of Sea Island cotton.

#### OFFERMAN.

Offerman is a depot on the same railway. The Southern Pine Company operates the largest single circular saw mill in the South at this point. This mill turns out 50,000 feet of merchantable lumber per day. This Company has fourteen miles of railroad, and its three locomotives haul, besides logs to the mill, produce from the interior.

#### SCHLATTERVILLE AND HOBOKEN.

These are depots on the line of the Brunswick and Western Railway. Each is a village of from 50 to 100 souls, having one or more stores, besides being a neighborhood shipping point.

No part of Pierce County is far remote from railway facilities.

#### —FINIS—

Persons interested and desiring further information may address

THE A. P. BRANTLEY CO., Blackshear, Ga.

THE BLACKSHEAR BANK, Blackshear, Ga.

ANDREW B. ESTES, Blackshear, Ga.

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