

Richest Indian.

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enough money to renovate and repair the building, and, placing it in charge of competent parties, it was opened as a hotel, but for several weeks the only patrons were Hill and one or two of his friends. Then the awakening came and there has not been a day during the last two years that this very hotel has not been crowded to its utmost capacity with guests.

When he had become well settled Hill began the work of interesting capital to build a railroad to the place. He enlisted the efforts of wealthy land-owners in the project and a party of them, accompanied by Hill, went to St. Louis, where B. F. Yoakum, now chairman of the executive committees of the Rock Island and Frisco systems, who personally was known to Hill and other members of his party, agreed to enlist the necessary capital and build the road.

When the plans for building the railroad had progressed sufficiently far, Yoakum and his associates secured the services of Hill in getting options on other vast tracts of land for them. He was well paid for this work and was able to purchase outright many thousands of acres upon which he had secured options to purchase on his own account.

The building of the railroad was begun and as each mile of track was completed the land adjacent thereto and extending back for several miles came into demand for farming purposes and its value doubled, trebled and quadrupled in a short space of time. In the meantime Hill was buying more land and loading himself up with options to purchase still more. The land which he

had bought for \$1 and \$1.50 per acre went to \$5 per acre before the railroad had reached Brownsville. When the line was finished and the influx of investors and home-seekers began land values mounted higher and higher.

Make hay while the sun shines! Never was a motto lived up to so completely as this one by Hill. When he found that horses were too slow and the passenger trains did not run at all times to suit him, he purchased an automobile—the first ever brought to the lower Rio Grande region. His landed possessions extend all the way from the international boundary stream to beyond Harlingen for several miles. It is 25 miles from Harlingen to Brownsville, and when this town was laid out Hill established his home here. He maintains an office at Brownsville and the daily trips between the two points are made by him in his automobile. When he heard of a tract of land that could be bought cheap, the automobile was made to carry him to the owner with all possible speed. Quickly closing the deal, he would be back in his office attending to other business before investors who had intended to make the purchase had got fairly started on their trip to see the owner.

Hill's enormous wealth is not speculative or "on paper." He has the land and other property to show for it. His vast holdings are in his own name and he has paid for them. The wildness of the region when he first located here appealed to his Indian nature, and he took the greatest delight in exploring the mysteries of the chaparral and in leading the primitive life of his tribe. He still spends practically all of his time in the open air, traveling from one landed possession to another.