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RIO GRANDE COUNTRY.
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RIO GRANDE! There's romance in the name--romance that has drawn many people for many years to this ^e part of the Southwest through which this historic river flows. But when travelers come, it is the land, the people, and perhaps most of all the sky that holds them. Travelers have come to spend a vacation in this country, but have remained ^{for} the rest of their lives. There is magic in the name RIO GRANDE, but to many ^{the river} it is disappointing at first sight, for as rivers go, this one is woefully small. It hasn't always been so, and one must learn to understand this river and what it does, before one judges. In the days of the Spanish Conquistadores, EL RIO DEL NORTE, as they named it, was a great stream. Irrigation of to-day, turning immense quantities of water upon hundreds of thousands of acres of land that were once a wilderness, has depleted the river's volume. Water from ^{the Rio Grande} this river feeds a myriad of crops, from the potatoes, grain and alfalfa of the mountain country in Colorado, through Indian corn fields, New Mexico cotton fields, to the final great citrus groves and cotton fields of the south Texas and Mexico country. Throughout the 1800 mile course of the Rio Grande, from its 12,000 foot source to the semi-tropic delta, what a variety of country is to be found! To the photographer who loves landscape, here are breathtaking and challenging scenes to portray. It would be difficult to choose any one section as the best for photography. It is a question of personal taste and the interests of each individual. To those who

Love the mountains, the upper region of the Rio Grande in the San Juan Mountains of Colorado ^{offers material} can keep one busy for a life time. To those who love the vast expanse of semi-desert and incredibly beautiful skies, New Mexico, as its slogan implies, is truly "The Land of Enchantment". This landscape is a challenge every time one goes out with a camera, where the problem of depicting scale is uppermost in a desert sweep leading to an horizon one hundred miles away. Here is the country where photography should really come into its own, for here, the land is "drawn with light". It is light, the strong, clear sunlight, and illuminated shadows, that mark the contour of the land, giving it its form and meaning. In one aspect of lighting, a certain scene may have all the elements of fine design; in another light, it can turn into a meaningless, worthless subject, as far as pictures go. In this Rio Grande Country, one can spend a lifetime studying light, from the best source of all, the sun, and its effect on the subjects on which it falls. In the Southwest one can find everything from the most delicate gradations of tone in the White Sands, to ~~the~~ austere cliffs or towering thunderstorms. All this and far more are what one finds throughout the entire valley of the Rio Grande.

TP Architecture? Yes, there is lots of that, from log cabins in the high country, through the land of adobe walls to old Spanish Colonial houses in the south.

TP People? Perhaps as great a variety as one can find anywhere. In New Mexico, the Pueblo Indians whose great religious dance-dramas beat out the rythm of the land, are of-course wonderful

subjects for photography. But here, a word of caution. One must always secure permission from the Governor of each pueblo first. Arrangements may be made to hire a model, or to work in some of the villages. Some pueblos will grant permission, others will never do so for they ban photography completely. Respect their rights in this. Much harm has been done for the serious photographer at many pueblos, by the behavior and attitude of some visitors.

Action photography? During the ~~only~~ summer and early fall, countless rodeos ~~take~~ place the length and breadth of the land.

Color? It is everywhere. Along the Border one may make short excursions into Mexico bringing many new sights and colorful subjects. Here, too is a region as yet but little seen by travelers, the new Big Bend National Park. This is an exciting and dramatic country.

It is difficult to suggest how to photograph the country of the Rio Grande. To this writer, knowledge of the basic elements of design ^{the first} is essential. Then comes the medium of photography, the action of light, not only the technical action of light on sensitive material, but the all important effect of light on subject matter. Light interprets the subject, reveals its form, explains its textures, accents its focal points. It is the coordination of all these thoughts and skills into an harmonious whole that creates a work of art. It isn't easy. When one goes out to make a landscape, one doesn't have the control of light as in the studio. Here, it is a matter of selection, of waiting for right conditions, of ^{changing} moving one's point of view. More and more, this photographer

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has come to the conclusion that the most important thing in a landscape is the foreground. It must lead to the focal point, must be relatively unimportant, must have the right lines and forms which relate the foreground to the middle distance and the horizon, if there is one. Many good landscapes are spoiled by obtrusive or overpowering foregrounds. This can best be studied on the ground glass, where the foreground immediately takes its relative place. When one learns to use the ground glass to arrange design, and where the impact of of tone and light contrasts are really ~~felt~~, then the door swings open to creative photography, no matter what the subject, or where the location.