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MONDAY, DECEMBER 5, 1921

HENRY FORD'S MUSCLE SHOALS PROPOSAL.

The business genius of Henry Ford has been volunteered to transmute the relatively untouched natural resources of the South into the gold of solid achievement. The creative genius of Thomas Edison underwrites the colossal material assets of the other "high adventurer."

We are not acquainted with the minutiae of detail involved in the Ford offer for Muscle Shoals. Mr. Ford has usually been most liberal in his business offers and has not been inclined to haggle over a few dollars. We are, on the other hand, most intimately advised as to the repeated efforts of more or less responsible people, some styling themselves experts, to deride and belittle the whole Muscle Shoals development. The public over and over again was given to understand that the appropriations for Muscle Shoals represented nothing more than a bold raid on the treasury, that it never could and never should be made to amount to anything; that at best it was but junk and that the Government would be lucky if it got back any part at all of the millions it had expended. But no sooner did Mr. Ford suggest that if the property was worthless to the Government it was worth a great many millions to him, which he was prepared to pay, then a great cry of protest rose to high Heaven. We believe that it will require considerably more logic and considerably better arithmetic than have yet appeared to convince the people of the United States that the Government, in any fairness whatever, either to itself or to the taxpayers, can decline the Ford proposal.

It may be argued with power that it would be of advantage to the whole United States, and not to the South only, were Mr. Ford permitted to undertake his plans even if he were not in a position to pay in cash a single penny for the Muscle Shoals property. He is prepared to undertake a development which is incomparable in its magnitude. He plans in millions—not in millions of dollars but in millions of men—work for a million men. He visions an industrial creation which would appear to be absurd were it not for the fact that accomplishments almost equally great he has already achieved. If he is able to get but half of the million horsepower he hopes to obtain and is able, therefore, to give employment to but half a million men, still that in itself would be an achievement to amaze and educate the world.

Mr. Ford intimates that as a result of his operations at Muscle Shoals he will be able to revolutionize agriculture in the South. He foreshadows the upbuilding of a variety of manufacturing enterprises, including production of aluminum on a huge scale and promises to upbuild in the environs of the power-development an industrial area that, if his plans are carried out, would quite obviously rival any similar area in any other place on the face of the earth.

Mr. Ford intimates that there is much he can teach the South, to the South's great benefit. We do not doubt it. He has taught the North, and the industry of the whole world, many things. His peculiarities are various. His ignorance on some subjects is astounding. But in the balance scales his eccentricities are as nothing compared with the things he is able to achieve. The world is interested in his merits, not his demerits.

The future belongs to the South. It is not remarkable that a man of Ford's magnitude has foreseen it. Power is the open sesame in modern development. "White coal" is power. The Southern Power Company has just announced that it will begin the

construction at once of two great new water-power plants, in the Carolinas, one at Great Falls, with a maximum capacity of 60,000 horse power; the other at Mountain Island on the Catawba River, with a maximum capacity of 80,000 horse power. Southern rivers, year-round reservoirs of perpetual power, are being harnessed up, in increasing number and volume. The example of what has been done, when accentuated by the enormous project of Ford at Muscle Shoals, will not only induce other developments in all parts of the South, but, as with the power of a vast magnet, will draw to the South innumerable manufacturing plants of all sorts.

The whole South ought to get behind Mr. Ford, and Mr. Edison with him, and assist to the uttermost to see that he gets Muscle Shoals. The investment will be worth incomparably more under private than under public ownership, and worth incomparably more under the Ford direction, we believe, than under any other direction. While we believe that Mr. Ford is fundamentally wrong in a number of the things he does and says, there is none who can challenge the actuality of his achievements. A man who dreams dreams, he has the ability and the resources to make them real. The coming of Ford to the South, with the vast enterprise he contemplates, would mean infinitely more in the immediate industrial development of the South than anything else that can possibly happen. It would be an event of world renown, and in its influence on opinion, on faith in the South and as a stimulus to greater effort on the part of all the forces now working for development in the South, it would exert a power illimitable.

The South must by all means take advantage of this opportunity.—Manufacturers Record.

JAY & COMPANY'S 1921-22 COTTON REPORT.

A combination of factors, two of them deliberately planned by the Southern producer and two, visitations of nature, explain the short cotton crop of 1921. These four were: First, the reduction in acreage; second, reduction in the use of fertilizer; third, bad weather and fourth boll weevil. Inasmuch as they account for the recent course of prices as well as having an important bearing on the future, we feel they are worth considering in detail.

Reduction in Acreage:—With the steady decline in prices from 40 cents to 10 cents a pound, and a threatened carry-over of nine or ten million bales it became apparent that drastic methods were necessary to avert an oversupply of cotton disastrous to the entire cotton industry. If a second large crop were to follow the liberal yield of 1920 price would sink to a level far below the cost of production. Thoroughly aroused to this outlook, a vigorous campaign was waged during the early months of the calendar year instigating planters to cut acreage one-third or even half that of the previous seasons. Such success attended the movement that the Department of Agriculture placed the reduction at 10,524,000 acres or 28.4 per cent. bringing the total area under cultivation to 26,519,000 acres.

Reduction of Fertilizers:—But the movement to raise a smaller crop was not confined to the question of acreage. Both intentionally and as a result of lack of funds, purchases of fertilizers were on a greatly diminished scale. Reports to the various State Commissioners of Agriculture, show that sales of fertilizers were reduced to 2,854,000 tons as compared with 5,257,000 tons the previous year. The Department stated that only about 65 per cent. of essential elements were used this year as compared with average seasons. Had the lessened use of fertilizers been confined to one season, results would have been less far reaching. But coming after the war period, during which normal supplies of potash from Germany were interrupted, the soil had already been impoverished. As a result, the plant lacked vigor, put on less fruit, and at the same time became less able to withstand insect deprivations.

Weather:—Not only did the plant obtain a late start, owing to a tardy Spring, but June brought excessive rainfall throughout the entire Western belt. The downfall in Texas amounted to 14.64 inches at one point, and nine places had from eleven to fourteen inches of rain in one month. For the State as a whole, the average

was 6.61 inches or 3.42 inches above the normal for June. Then in August, came a drought and extreme heat. This or a sappy stalk, withered the plant. Days of temperature as high as 110 degrees made satisfactory growth and fruiting impossible. In a few weeks all hope of a good crop had to be abandoned. In some sections West of the Mississippi River barely one bale could be gathered from twenty-five acres.

Boll Weevil:—Though each year the boll weevil area has increased, a vast enlargement occurred this season. Insects have now reached as far North as the coast counties of North Carolina—Pamlico and Brunswick—thus covering virtually the entire cotton belt. The open winter, a late spring, and a far from vigorous cotton plant, all operated to produce such swarms of weevil that fields were infested as never before. Fears are expressed that it will be years before the South can raise a good cotton crop again, since every effort of science has failed to invent means for the extermination of the pest. The importance of this subject as regards future production has become so prominent in the public mind that next season's prospects are already under discussion.

In this connection we would point out that all or none of the above mentioned factors may operate in 1922. A larger acreage, increased use of fertilizers and normal growing season would remove the first three. As to boll weevil, a cold winter, an early or average spring and a vigorous hardy plant next summer, would assist in restraining weevil activity to proportions of previous years.

WANT RAILROAD

Business Men May Operate Lexington Line

Athens, Ga., Dec. 1.—Several Athens and Oglethorpe county business men have under consideration the taking over of the Lexington Terminal railroad, provided the company is willing to lease or sell the road.

Some of the Lexington business men paid a visit to the Athens Chamber of Commerce, asking their aid in preventing the discontinuance of the running of the trains on this road. An application for the discontinuance of the service was made to the interstate commerce commission, but the men interested had much rather buy or lease the road than to see it scrapped.

The committee, representing the chamber of commerce of Lexington, was composed of the following men: G. A. Barron, C. R. Crawford and Earl Reynolds.

The hearing will be held in Atlanta, December 14.

The Georgia railroad bought the Lexington branch from the McWhorter estate in 1898. The railroad claims that it is operated at a loss. The people of Oglethorpe are very much aroused over the possibility of the road being scrapped.

FURMAN HOME-COMING

Sons and Friends of Institution Meet December 6.

Greenville, Dec. 2.—Under the auspices of the Furman Club of Greenville county, a home-coming of sons and friends of Furman University residing in twelve counties of the Piedmont section is to be held in this city on the evening of Tuesday, December 6. A banquet will be served in the social hall of the First Baptist church at 6 o'clock. More than six hundred special invitations to alumni of Furman have gone out and efforts to reach others are being made through newspapers and the various county clubs.

Federal Judge H. H. Watkins, president of the Furman club of Anderson county, has been chosen to preside at the banquet. The gathering will be purely of a social nature.

As the home-coming is timed to take place on the evening of the opening day of the annual session of the South Carolina State Baptist Convention, it is expected that the attendance will be unusually large. Arrangements are being made for taking care of the greatest gathering of Furman men held in the history of the university.

Those desiring reservations at the banquet table should notify Alumni Secretary L. M. Clark, at Furman University so their names may be put in the pot.

DEATH OF HERO NOT EXPLAINED

Motive for Whittlesey's Act Still in Doubt.—Steamship Reaches Habana With Letters.

Habana, Dec. 1.—What compelling motive sent Lieut. Col. Charles W. Whittlesey, commander of the "Lost Battalion," overboard into the sea only a few hours out from New York last Saturday night may be revealed in letters to members of his family and business associates which he left for Captain Grant of the steamer Toloa to deliver. Nine of these letters were in the captain's possession when the Toloa docked tonight. Captain Grant also received a note from Colonel Whittlesey which he declared he regarded as confidential.

"I can say, however, that from all appearances the act was premeditated," Captain Grant declared, and "that Colonel Whittlesey leaped overboard either just before or just after midnight Saturday."

Various wireless messages were left by Colonel Whittlesey for transmission, but these were not forwarded, and except in case of one of the messages their nature was not disclosed. This particular message said that he would be missing.

None of the letters which Colonel Whittlesey left on his berth were on the writing paper of the steamship company, nor were any of them dated, which led to the belief that they were written before embarking on the Toloa.

After experiencing heavy weather nearly all the way from New York the Toloa docked this evening nearly ten hours late and it was only after two hours of conferences with representatives of the American and British consuls and the acting first secretary of the American legation, Cord Meyer, Jr., that Captain Grant would give out any statement.

"RED" BARRON CAPTAIN

Atlanta, Dec. 1.—"Red" Barron was elected captain of the Georgia Tech football team for 1922 at a meeting of the varsity men of the "Golden Tornado" of the past year here today. Barron has played half back since 1919.

REDUCED RATES TO GREENWOOD FRIDAY

Greenwood, Dec. 1.—Special equipment will be put on and special rates satisfactory to the public will be granted by all railroads entering Greenwood on Friday, December 9, railroad officials of the S. A. L., Southern, Piedmont and Northern and C. & W. C., meeting here today with the local committee on transportation, declared. The exact rates will be announced tomorrow, the officials stated, but they assured the committee that the rates would be so low that they would be entirely satisfactory to the public.

Representatives of the railroads at the meeting today were: R. C. Cotner and George M. Bishop of the Southern, Fred Geissler and J. M. Elliott of the S. A. L., Mr. Tuthill of the P. & N., and Mr. Stites of the C. & W. C.

The local committee was assured the public need have no fear of not being properly handled by the railroads. Sufficient equipment will be carried on that day to bring the enormous crowds to Greenwood and to carry them away, the railroad officials stated.

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