

LAURIN MAKES HIS REPORT

HOW HE SAVED WAREHOUSE SYSTEM FROM COMBINE.

That by Publicity He Removed Dangerous Ebe of State Warehouse System—Recommends Election of Commissioner by People—Would Establish Boll Weevil Zone.

Columbia, Jan. 13.—That the State warehouse commissioner should be elected by the people and not by the general assembly is a recommendation made by John L. McLaurin, commissioner, in his annual report, which was sent to the general assembly yesterday.

Among the suggestions made by the commissioner are:

"I suggest an appropriation for current expenses, in accordance with the estimate furnished by the comptroller general. A large portion of this would be paid back to the State upon the collection of storage for cotton now on hand and as pointed out above I am convinced that during the following year the State can be reimbursed for the total amount expended on the system from the date of its inauguration. I suggest an amendment providing for the bonding of all graders in the State and forbidding any person to grade cotton, either for himself or as an agent, unless such cotton has been weighed by a sworn grader and graded by a licensed grader."

"I suggest the title of 'fighting the weevil' be given to the report."

Mr. McLaurin says: "I have referred several times in my report to the persistent fight which has been waged against the warehouse system. Its business success is generally admitted, but the fight has never stopped until the people take a hand. Hated by politicians, acouted by special interests, without adequate protection, it has succeeded at all points in the soundness of its management and the need of its existence. It was to be expected that in the coming year the cotton grower the system would be fought by those against whom he is protected and for that I have not been surprised or discouraged by the relentless warfare which has been made, some times for the form of personal attacks."

"The world ever seeks to prevent reform by destroying the reformer. It makes and crosses through all the signs of human progress. On the other hand the true reformer fights individuals; he attacks systems. It is foolish to blame individuals. I have no fight on them, except as cogs in the wheels. They are merely symptoms of a disease in the body politic which only the surgeon's knife can eradicate."

Commissioner McLaurin asserts that the spread of the warehouse idea in other States of the South has been viewed with alarm and the corporate interests which have fattened at the expense of those who grow the cotton have waged a battle throughout the South such as only could have been waged by combined millions. "There is a tremendous combine in Georgia, Oklahoma, Mississippi and Alabama," he says, "seeking not only to concentrate the cotton in Atlanta, but to parcel out the territory and fix the price. They are now invading the State of South Carolina to take the Standard Warehouse into the combine. When I appeared before the Georgia legislature the statement was freely made to me that this was an effort to head off the recognition of the storage of cotton through State warehouses. The success of this corporation movement will parcel out the cotton territory and concentrate the money power, with the federal reserve system at its back, just where it has been since 1865, while the success of the plan upon which South Carolina is proceeding means the liberation of the people."

Commissioner McLaurin quotes from a call which he alleges was sent out by Philip M. Shaw to shareholders of the Standard Warehouse company of Columbia. Mr. McLaurin says that the call was for the avowed purpose "of taking the Standard into a significant merger which is forming."

Concerning the alleged warehouse merger, Mr. McLaurin says: "Of course the real purpose is to crush out the State system, if possible, not for the credit which the holders of cotton would receive upon the receipts which would be issued by this monster merger, but, as explained in the following sentence in this propaganda, proposed by the gentleman from New York, representing the Northern milliners: 'It can not be doubted that a combination of the Atlantic States and Standard companies for the purposes which I am planning would produce an enlarged enterprise whose earnings would exceed the aggregate earnings of the two existing companies.' It is very clearly and very frankly stated."

Continuing, the commissioner says: "Of course the ultimate purpose looks further than the profits from storage—it looks to the control of the price to be paid for the entire crop."

The report says that the object of the State warehouse system is to enable the farmer to carry the surplus, "for it is the surplus of any product which depresses the price. The farmer must either carry the surplus himself or permit his enemies to use it as a club. It is a very subtle attempt to retain control of the cotton crop, and were it not for the South Carolina and Texas State warehouse systems it would already have been accomplished without anybody knowing what was being done and I am satisfied that if I had not given the attempt the publicity which I did last fall, South Carolina would have been in their hands now. This is really a violation of the Sherman anti-trust law and of the constitution and statute laws of this State and the facts are sufficient for the government, both State and national, to take action."

The next charge contained in the report is that Mr. Shaw met certain "Columbia gentlemen in Greenwood." "It is significant," Mr. McLaurin says, "that the daily press carried no notice of this important conference, although doubtless they were well represented."

Concerning the grading of cotton the report says: "I earnestly recommended that you pass an act adopting the federal standards for the State at large, along the line of the farmers' union bill, which would give an adequate fund for the employment of expert graders, which is totally lacking now, and which would amply protect the State, and net the cotton growers over a million dollars a year, which is now simply taken from them under the same method as that employed by the ordinary highway robber."

The commissioner reprints from The State a number of letters to show that the system has been of benefit to the small farmer. The legislature last year appropriated \$15,000. To December 23 the commissioner had expended \$12,123.23.

The commissioner expresses the opinion that by the end of the present year the warehouse system will be self sustaining. Mr. McLaurin proposes the establishment of a boll weevil zone in the following section of his report:

"The threatened invasion of this State by the boll weevil is closely related to the State warehouse system and to the production of cotton generally. I desire to make a suggestion which is certainly worth investigation. In my opinion the only really effective proposition was that made by Senator E. D. Smith to establish a zone across

the belt in which no cotton should be planted. It seems that the weevil is absolutely dependent upon cotton for food. It is too late now for anything like national action. The weevil is in Florida and southwest Georgia, and at the present rate of progress should strike South Carolina, unless something is done, about 1913. Its approach will be from the south. There is a line across the cotton belt north of which, on account of the severity of the winters, the weevil can not spread. The movement north is slow. Georgia is fighting to keep it south, and we can take advantage of this. From Augusta to Savannah there is a natural barrier, a poor, sandy ridge on the Georgia side until you strike the flats, where the swamps are from 12 to 20 miles wide. It is not a cotton country on our side, except about Ellenton, where cotton runs in close to the river. North of Augusta, we have the mountains of Oconee, which the weevil can never cross. A non-cotton zone west of the railroad from Hardeville to Allendale, from there to Warrentonville, Alken county, thence straight through Abbeville and across Anderson, via Pendleton to Walhalla, with strict quarantine on hay, cotton seed and other products liable to carry the weevil, would probably stay its march for some years, and in the meantime a remedy may be found. This is not a natural cotton section, and it would pay to compensate those affected rather than to imperil the prosperity of the entire State. At the present rate of progress our time limit is not over two years. The weevil is now in Sumter county, Georgia, following rapidly the coast line, and moving slowly north."

AMMUNITION DEPOT BLOWN UP.
Berlin, Jan. 12, (via London).—An ammunition depot in the Southern section of Lille, northern France, has been blown up. An official announcement says that 70 persons were killed and 40 injured. Considerable damage to property was done.

The official announcement which was contained in today's army headquarters statement is as follows: "In the southern walled-in section of Lille an ammunition depot belonging to the pioneer detachment, lodged in one of the casements of a fortification, blew up. The nearby streets suffered to a very considerable extent. Rescue measures taken resulted up to last night in the finding of 70 killed and 40 injured inhabitants. The inhabitants believe the accident was due to an English attack."

HAMLET SECURES S. A. L. SHOP
CONTRACTS HAVE BEEN LET FOR BUILDING OF BIG PLANT.
Estimated That \$150,000 Will Be Spent on Shops—Will Employ 250 Men—100 Acres of Land Secured.
Hamlet, N. C., Jan. 11.—Hamlet is rejoicing that the long expected building of the Seaboard's shops at Hamlet is now an assured fact. On last Monday Vice Presidents Bonsal and Seddon, of the Seaboard, visited Hamlet and closed deals with various parties owning land in the vicinity of the present holdings of the Seaboard, just north of the round house and transfer shed. A total of 100 acres, with the land owned by the Seaboard which was held for shop purposes, was acquired.
The contracts have been let for the beginning of the work and within another week the actual work of excavating will begin. These shops will be for the building and repairs of cars, mostly freight cars. The main building will be 150 feet by 750 feet, and will be of concrete foundation with steel frame construction. There will be a large number of other buildings, and the equipment will be most modern.
On account of the advent of steel freight cars a modern plant for the repairing of these cars is necessary. Formerly when a freight car was out of order any carpenter could repair it, but, with the new steel freight cars, it is different, and it requires modern machinery and an extensive plant to properly make the repairs.
It is estimated that at least \$150,000 will be spent in the erecting of these shops, and that from 200 to 250 men will be employed. These will be in addition to the large force of machinists and others employed in the round house here.

"Wildcat" Stills Taken.

The destruction of ten moonshine stills and the arrest of two alleged blockaders was the work accomplished in Oconee county this week by Deputy Collector R. Q. Merrick and other internal revenue agents who have headquarters in Greenville.—Florence Times.

Died, Robert Carrigan, Jr., the four-months old son of Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Carrigan at Summerton, last Monday afternoon at 4 o'clock, and was buried at the cemetery at that place Tuesday at 11 o'clock.—Manning Times.

POLICE CHANGE IN CHARLESTON.

Joseph A. Black Chief of Police to Succeed Cantwell—Conrad Stender, John J. Healy and E. Mitchell Whaley are the Lieutenants.

Charleston, Jan. 12.—Jos. A. Black was appointed chief of police; Conrad Stender, first lieutenant; John J. Healy, second lieutenant, and E. Mitchell Whaley, third lieutenant, by Mayor Tristram T. Hyde at the regular meeting of City Council held last night. All appointments were approved by Council, the rules were suspended and the Mayor instructed to cast a unanimous vote for the appointees.
Several other appointments were made by Mayor Hyde and a number of vacancies filled by elections. In addition to this a large amount of routine business was transacted by the Aldermen. Fifty-three minutes after Council was called to order the motion for adjournment had been passed. This is a record for the first meeting in January for a new administration. There was not a hitch in the proceedings from beginning to end.

SCHOOLS PROFIT BY FEES.

Hunters' License Law Effective in Seventeen Counties, Which Have Received \$6,143.03.
Columbia, Jan. 13.—"The results of the hunters' license law, passed at the 1915 session of the legislature, have not only been eminently satisfactory but most serviceable to the schools. Going into effect July 1, this law has now been operative only six months. The hunting season opened in the fall, hence its benefits can be judged only from a part of the present season," said J. E. Swearingen, State superintendent of education, in commenting on this situation yesterday.

"The law is operative in 17 counties," he continued. "It prescribed a fee of \$1.10 for a county license and \$3 for a State license. Collections are used in meeting expenses and any and all surplus goes to the general school fund of the county where collected. The State game warden distributed recently \$6,143.03 among these 17 counties. If this law could be made State-wide it would bring in an appreciable revenue to the schools. This first apportionment indicates a possible income of \$25,000 or \$30,000 a year—an amount exceeding the annual State appropriation for public school buildings. Though the raising of revenue is not the chief purpose or benefit of the hunters' license, this contribution to the schools should not be overlooked."

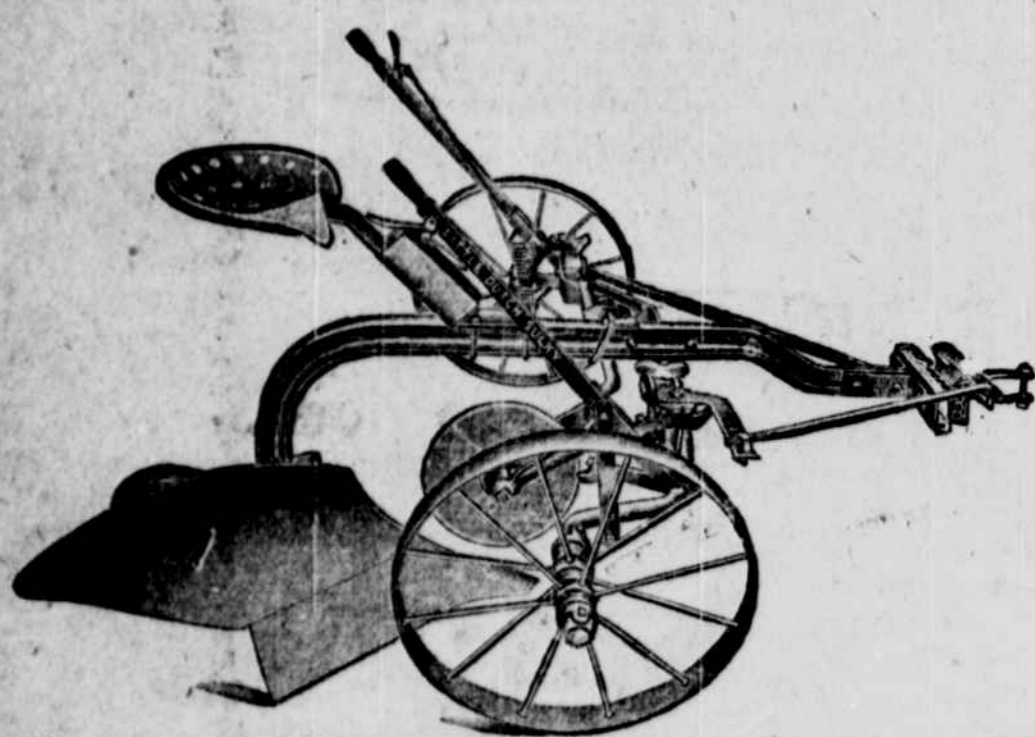


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