

MEXICO LOSING WORLD MONOPOLY

American Manufacturers
of Binder Twine Turn-
ing to Other Fields

American manufacturers of binder twine are turning to other fields than the twine business. No longer are they dependent entirely upon the Mexican market, as it is generally known, for their raw material according to government figures, but are turning to other tropical countries like Java and Sumatra.

Whereas a decade ago Mexico had a practical monopoly of the binder twine market, today more than 50 per cent of the average annual production of 100,000 tons in Yucatan is produced in other tropical and subtropical countries.

Of the 115,000 tons imported by the United States last year, 45 per cent came from Yucatan. The year before 58 per cent of the domestic production came from that state.

Commerce department figures show that Mexican production had 240,000 bales of binder twine on hand April 1, and that by December they had limited production to 42,000 bales a month from March to July, and reduced the price to 47 cents a pound, f.o.b. Progreso.

Last year's production in Yucatan averaged 45,000 bales a month. Binder twine, unknown a little more than 15 years ago when sheaves of grain were hand-bound with bands of straw, is now an important commodity to the grain farmer.

He requires more than 200,000,000 pounds of it a year for feeding the great labor army—the combine harvester—which cuts and automatically binds the more than two billion bushels of grain grown annually in the United States. In 1925 private American concerns and penal institutions produced 235,000,000 pounds, valued at approximately \$10,000,000. Fifty-four million pounds of the twine were exported that year.

Practically all binder twine is made of the hard fibers, including hemp from Yucatan and Campeche, Mexico, also from East Africa, the Philippines, Java, and the Hawaiian Islands, also from the Philippines, and others from New Zealand.

Hemp and sisal furnish about 75 per cent of the raw material going into the twine industry. Some of the sisal fibers, such as those from the Philippines, have been used to a limited extent. Sisal has been grown in small quantities in Porto Rico and Florida, but Federal War exports will allow it no place in the United States where soil, climate, and land and labor costs would permit of such production on a scale to compete with the Yucatan.

More than 100 companies in

FIRST PHOTO OF FILICIDE



(NEA Service, New York Bureau) Mrs. Christine Stabile, who slew her 14-year-old daughter, Ross, last after the girl gave birth to an illegitimate child, being led by deputy sheriffs across "the bridge of sighs" to stand trial for first-degree murder in the supreme court at Freehold, N. J. This is the first picture made of Mrs. Stabile since her arrest in March. Her defense is insanity.

raising hemp in Mexico. The first crop from new plantings is harvested in the sixth or seventh year, although in the middle of the next year it may be taken up in the fourth year. Leaves of the plant, which resemble the century, are crushed by machines. It takes only six to 10 seconds for the machine to change a bit into fiber strands, and as high as 10,000 leaves an hour are sometimes put through this process.

The fiber is then spun in the same or different ways and after drying it is gathered and baled for market.

The fibers used in the making of binder twine principally from the sisal, a star-like plant, regarded as sacred by many African tribes.

ZEP'S NEW GRIDDERS LATER, BUT LACK SPEED

URBANA, Ill.—"Heavy and slow, but willing," says Bob Huppke, head football coach of the University of Illinois at his 1927 camp.

Spring practice for the Illinois ended in April. The 12 best recruits for next autumn's team all are natives of Illinois. With such stars as "Red" Granger and "Prossy" in the spotlight of the past few seasons, Illinois has done its share of spectacular work on the gridiron, but the team hasn't been able to reach the Western conference since 1922.

Farmers of McDonough, Kansas, have formed the Wheat Growers club with a large gold link, regarded as sacred by many African tribes.

Papers Mystery Cause of Rumor In Washington

By Rodney Datcher

WASHINGTON (NEA Service)—One of these days the telegraph wires may tell us of the arrest of the villains who are said to have filed and altered certain important documents of state with a view to influencing serious trouble between the United States and Mexico.

The most unfortunate phase of the mystery is that although there have been all kinds of indications to convince one that certain papers passing from the state department to the American embassy in Mexico City fell into the hands of President Calles, there have been nothing but unconfirmed rumors, dark and deep, to show that the papers had been tampered with to the point of alteration or forgery.

A definite declaration from the state department might clarify this situation, but it hasn't been forthcoming.

It may or may not be significant that there has been no condemnation of the Mexican government because it bought secret American papers from someone supposed to have pilfered them. Although this sort of espionage presumably is practiced throughout the world, its discovery during a period of strained international relations might have been expected to call forth a shout of holy horror at such immoral practices.

On the contrary, it is generally understood that relations between the two nations are sweet and beautiful compared with what they were a couple of months ago, and it is even added that the discovery of the forgeries or whatever they are has brought a new under-

standing and a certain sympathy where little but discord had previously existed.

Reports of what happened are so vague and conflicting, however, that the whole atmosphere is foggy. This same foginess envelops numerous persons here to suggest that if the documents in question really did prove an unfriendly attitude toward Mexico, or an unseemly interest in revolutionary activities, Mexico might have been able to play them as trump cards.

Motorists of Montreal are tired for splashing mud on pedestrians while passing through pools of water at a high rate of speed. The bigger the splash the larger the fine.

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