

## METHODS OF CUBAN TOBACCO FARMING

Variable Seasons Cause Uncertainty Among Growers.

### MISTAKES ARE EASILY MADE

How Two Young Americans Lost Their First Year's Crop—Cuban Growers Able to Obtain the Largest Returns.

NEW YORK, June 27.—The Pirar del Rio correspondent of the Tribune says: The Cuban tobacco farmer is not unlike the western wheat grower or corn raiser. Rains or droughts have a great deal to do with the view he takes of the tobacco industry and of his own condition. When the rains come at the right time and when the dry spell lasts just long enough, he is fairly cheerful and does not have a gloomy opinion of farming in general and for the tobacco industry in particular.

When the seasons are dislocated and there is too much moisture at the wrong time or too much dryness at the right time, he is a pessimist and thinks that tobacco growing is going to become one of the lost arts in Cuba. The last two seasons have been only fair and prices have been hardly up to the average, yet in this region there is no disposition to talk of turning the tobacco lands into something else. The crop is the wealth of this province and will continue so in spite of occasional discouragements.

The removal of the export tax by direction of the Washington authorities had helped to reconcile the growers to an average return when they hope for an exceptional one. The crop last year was about 400,000 bales of 110 pounds each, but the price was a low one. The exact figures are not yet obtainable for this year, but taking the island as a whole the crop may be a little larger with prices a shade better.

Tobacco differs from sugar in that the Cuban producers of the leaf have not so much to learn as the sugar planters and there is not the field for introducing more modern methods that exists with sugar. In the case of tobacco economy of production probably has not reached its limit, yet there is no wide discrepancy between what it actually costs to deliver a bale of tobacco to the factories in Havana and what it should cost. The methods of cultivation are simple and it future economies are to be effected they will be chiefly in drying, shipping and warehousing rather than in actual cultivation. An incidental help has come from the weather bureau reports, that system having been extended by the American authorities under the signal service corps.

In the matter of production, however, Americans do not find that they have much to teach the Cubans or the Canary Islanders. Two young fellows, one from Iowa and the other from Tennessee, bought a farm a few miles out of Pinar. The plants developed splendidly, the leaves were green, and the tobacco field looked finer than any in the region. Nevertheless their neighbors warned them of the various mistakes they were making. The warnings were unheeded until the buyers began coming through the country looking for choice crops. They made no bid for that owned by the Americans. The latter found that the leaves crumbled to powder as the buyers and their crew were practically useless. The Cuban tobacco growers do not themselves know how to describe their way of analyzing the exceptional qualities of soil, atmosphere and moisture which give the vuela shaja leaf its primacy, but they know when a crop is defective and they know how to handle it so as to secure the largest return. The Americans, too, will know next year, for they will follow the advice of their neighbors.

It is the general testimony that the vuela shaja district is likely to increase its production within the next few years though not phenomenally.

The lands which were in the initial process of destruction when General Grant discovered the flavor of guano in his cigar and called the attention of the Cuban producers to it at that time, has been thoroughly fertilized, so that for years the crop was failed. Some of them were left untouched. Now it is said that a considerable portion of tobacco lands which have been rested through a series of years is beginning to be cultivated again and that the quality of the leaf produced is excellent. Ordinarily good tobacco lands do not need any resting and the alteration of crop is sufficient.

### PORTO RICAN DUTIES

Claims of Those Who Paid Under Protest Being Examined.

NEW YORK, June 27.—The controller of the treasury, says a Washington dispatch to the Tribune, has been called upon by Assistant Secretary Spaulding to render an opinion as to the power of the secretary of the treasury to settle the claims of merchants who paid duties under protest on Porto Rico goods imported into the United States between the date of ratification of the Paris treaty and the passage of the Foraker act.

Under the supreme court's recent decision in the Insular test cases, Dooley & Company have made a claim for the refunding of duties paid between the dates named. The controller is now examining the evidence in this particular case, to determine if possible what would follow in paying all similar claims.

When the supreme court decision was made public it was popularly supposed that there was available in the treasury money for the payment of this class of claims, but when the subject was considered by the treasury authorities it was found that it may be necessary for congress to pass a special appropriation bill for this purpose.

### FIRE ON BRITISH STEAMER

Transport Monterey From Cape Town Arrived at Chicago Badly Damaged.

CHICAGO, June 27.—A special to the Tribune from New Orleans says: The British mail transport Monterey from Cape Town has arrived in port after a terrible experience with fire at sea. Twelve days ago, from St. Vincent, flames were discovered in the after hold and gained such headway that the heat prevented the usual means of extinguishing fire in a shipboard. Flaming clouds of smoke poured out from the hold and when the officers and crew were about to abandon ship, First Officer Reid and Fourth Officer Harrison volunteered a daring plan. They dropped to the wire cables around their bodies and have their companions lower them down the side of the ship until they were above the port opening into the burning section. It was a desperate exploit but after a short consultation was adopted.

As the fire was near the water line, Reid and Harrison were lowered down until they were submerged in the sea nearly up to their waists. Hanging thus half buried in the waves, with the ship under way, the men battered in the port. A hose was then lowered to them and for several hours they hung, swimming outward and inward, pouring a stream into the blazing hold. In this way they finally checked the flames. The vessel was badly damaged.

### IMPERIAL CONFERENCE

British Statesmen Fear a Time When Great Britain Will Be Out-landed by Colonies.

NEW YORK, June 27.—An imperial conference has just been held at the Colonial office, says the Tribune's London correspondent, and preliminary arrangements have been made for taking up the question of trade between Canada, Australia and other colonies were represented, but nothing decisive was done. This conference is one of the responses to the Australian Commonwealth settlement, which was arranged by a compromise between Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour, and which left Canada and other colonies in an anomalous position.

The question is on the fringe of which fabric of imperial federation, the wool of which few English statesmen understand. Mr. Chamberlain and Lord Milner are perhaps the only two Englishmen who have the power of forecasting the trend of the forces of public opinion throughout the empire. They know that the time will come when there will be a parliament for the empire in which the United Kingdom will be outvoted and which will order customs relations on business principles for the welfare of all dependencies including an imperial Zollverein.

### ENGLAND'S POLICY

No Duality Between Their Method and Those Employed in Cuba.

NEW YORK, June 27.—Public apathy in England respecting the South African war is illustrated, says the Tribune's London correspondent, by the difference with which Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's parallel between the clearing operations in South Africa by British troops and those in Cuba by the Spaniards is regarded.

Nobody finds it necessary to point out that whereas the Cubans were driven out from their homes into encampments, where they starved and perished from pestilence, the Boers have been sheltered and fed in laagers under the protection of British artillery. Lord Milner, not says that those Boer refugees have received medical attendance when they required it, regular rations have been served out to them and in many instances their children have been sent regularly to school.

There have been some exceptional instances but the processes by which the Boers have been cleared have been essentially different from those employed by the Spanish generals in expelling the Cuban population. Considerable progress has been made toward pacification of the Dutch colonies many mines about Johannesburg are in operation and the farmers around leading railroad towns are assuming their usual occupations and sending supplies into the market.

Lord Milner has improved in health since his return to England in spite of the constant pressure of business with the Colonial office and unceasing social invitations. He takes a broad view of the situation in South Africa and is hopeful that the end of the war will soon be reached and reconstruction measures adopted.

### THE IRON TRADE

Consumption in Some Lines Continues Up to Top Notch.

NEW YORK, June 27.—The Iron Age, in its issue today, will say: So far as the foundry iron trade is concerned the markets have been rather quiet and are still balancing. Cincinnati, which is the chief distributing point for southern iron, is rather weak. In the east the purchases of basic pig by the leading steel interests, both for western and New England delivery are having their effect. Among these sales is one lot of 8000 tons. In Pittsburgh some larger outside steel companies have taken round blocks of Bessemer pig. Apparently, however, it is only for prompt shipment that this iron is wanted.

Consumption continues on a large scale and there are those who feel confident that it is bound to continue up to the top notch well into the winter months. In many lines, as in steel rails and in railroad equipment generally this is abundantly assured by the orders on the books. In structural material, in which there was a full in new orders, there is more doing. Some very good contracts have just been placed, among them one lot of 10,000 tons for improvement at the Pueblo works of the Colorado Fuel & Iron Company. The same is true of the ship yards on the lakes which have just booked additional tonnage.

The labor situation is being given less consideration. The end of the machine strike is in sight, so that that consuming branch will soon be restored to its normal conditions. It is not believed that there is serious danger over the molten demands while the conferences between the Amalgamated Association and the Union Rolling Mills are likely to lead to an early adjustment.

### KING EDWARD A WINNER

Cameo Go to Races But Is \$20,000 Ahead of the Game.

NEW YORK, June 27.—King Edward will not be seen at any sporting event until the regatta at Cowes, says a dispatch from London to the World. Though he is restricted by official usage from attendance at the horse racing, he has taken a deep and practical interest in every great meeting. It is rumored that he has already won over \$20,000 since the season began. He was a big winner as the result of backing Mr. Whitney's horse Volodyovski for the derby. He was so interested in the result of that race that he had a private view run from Epsom Downs to Marlborough House.

### PREDICTS AMERICAN SUPREMACY

German Economic Writer on Our Rapid Industrial Surges.

NEW YORK, June 27.—A dispatch from Washington to the Times says: Consul Mahin, of Eisenberg, Austria, has sent to the state department an article recently published by Dr. Alexander Von Pez, under the title "The Struggle for Industrial Supremacy." After reviewing the progress of England and Germany in commerce and manufacturing, Dr. Pez passes to the United States, "rising in the new world with sinister rapidity." He says among other things:

The three competing countries now suffer from obstacles which hinder their free movement. Germany has China, England has the Transvaal, American the Philippines. From appearances, the United States will be the first to throw off its burdens. After that country shall be free from the Philippine war, its industrial advance upon Europe will be fully manifested. Further on Mr. Pez says: "What should first be done in de-

fense is to follow the example in regard to tariffs and trade treaties, which the United States has set for us. At the European seashore (England is included here) a tariff should be established counter to that of the union, while the union nations should arrange tariffs touching each other which would not materially differ from those now existing.

"What will the United States do? That is her affair. We only follow her example. A people so young, acute and rich in future possibilities as the citizens of the union will find boundaries to their aspirations only when they see their attempts at further conquest will be met with vigorous resistance."

### NEW LIFE FLOAT ADOPTED

Ingenious Arrangements Superior to Either Boat or Raft.

NEW YORK, June 27.—The Navy Department is providing some of the warships with a new life raft, says a Washington special to the World. It consists of an elliptical copper tube, somewhat flattened with air tight compartments, strengthened by ribs. The tube is incased in cork, wound with canvas and made absolutely water tight. Attached to this float is a rope netting three feet deep from which is suspended a wooden slatted bottom.

The netting is suspended on the inner side of the float from rings which travel on lashings, so that the bottom rests in the proper position no matter which side of the float falls upon the water when it is thrown overboard. It does not require to be righted, adjusted or turned about, it is ready for service the moment it strikes the water. Cords are attached to the side of the float to be used when it is opened.

Enough persons can get on board to sink it and, unlike the life boat it cannot capsize or founder, nor like a raft go to pieces against the side of a ship. The war department is considering the advisability of equipping army transports with the same sort of float.

### MAMMOTH OIL TANK FIRE

Decatur, Ind., Chinese Fighting Flames Without Success.

CHICAGO, June 27.—A special to the Tribune from Decatur, Ind., says: The fire which was started at Preble Tuesday night by lightning striking a tank of the Standard Oil Company containing 50,000 barrels of oil is still burning. Three hundred men from this city, Huntington, Montpelier and Lima, O., are fighting the flames and making efforts to save five other tanks that contain over 200,000 barrels of oil.

Joe Kintz and V. D. Lowson, of Lima, O., were leading a cannon to shoot the burning tank when it exploded and they were fatally burned. The loss to the Standard Oil Company alone will reach \$50,000. Many of the inhabitants have been badly burned.

### THAT CLAIM FOR LOOT

General Heywood Indignant That Marines Should Be Accused.

WASHINGTON, June 26.—The claim amounting to the aggregate of 400,000 taels reported to have been presented by the Chinese merchants association on account of alleged looting by the American marines at Tien Tsin will be referred to the military authorities for report.

So far it has not been presented to the state department. General Heywood, the commander of marines, is indignant at the reported intention to permit this claim and he cites a telegraphic report from Admiral Remy dated some time ago, upon this general subject of looting, containing the most explicit denial of the allegations so far as any of the United States marines were concerned.

### E. P. COAL CHUTES BURNED

CHEYENNE, Wyo., June 27.—The big coal chutes of the Union Pacific at Medicine Bow have been entirely destroyed by fire. The conflagration is supposed to have been started by sparks from an engine. A large amount of storage coal was consumed, also two steel coal cars which were being unloaded.

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United States Official Report

MADE TO

COMMISSIONER OF THE UNITED STATES, GENERAL LAND OFFICE, WASHINGTON, D. C.

by a geologist and mining expert of worldwide reputation, Professor Benjamin Silliman, who spent several months there, then being connected with the United States surveying corps, and in his official report says:

"Here are countless millions of tons of rich gold quartz reduced by the great forces of nature to a condition ready for the application of the hydraulic process, while the entire bed of the Rio Grande for over forty miles is a sluice, on the bars of which the gold derived from the wearing away of the gravel banks has been accumulating for countless ages, and now lies ready for extraction by the most approved methods of river mining. The thickness of the Rio Grande gold gravel exceeds in many places 600 feet, or nearly three times that of the like beds in California, while the average value per cubic yard is believed to be greater in the New Mexico beds than in any other such accumulations yet discovered."

"I have made a reconnaissance of the whole of this gravel along the Rio Grande, and have examined with all the care possible at the time at my command the character of the gravel and its contents of gold. Nothing I am persuaded, since the discovery of California and Australia is comparable for its immeasurable resources of gold available by the hydraulic process to the deep placers of the Rio Grande."

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