

Miles Linen Company Pioneer in Industry Which Has Bright Future

Faith Displayed by B. C. Miles Points the Way To Establishment of Manufacture on Broader Scale In Past Year—First Yarn Spun Here In August, 1925—Miles Plant Produces Salmon Twine and Shoe Thread, Both of Which Enjoy Big Demand—Linen Twine Best For Salmon Nets—Long Fibre Loosely Twisted Is Required—Manufacture Here Important To Oregon's Fishing Industry—Shoe Manufacture Requires Strong, Perfectly Made Twine—Skill Necessary In Making Both Types—Good Raw Material Essential For Marketable Twine

Administration Change Follows Sale of Stock

H. R. Crawford Is New President After Founder of Company Sells Interest—T. B. Kay, Henry Meyers and Carl Nelson Purchase Shares

It was the faith and efforts of B. C. Miles, founder and first president of the Miles Linen company, that made the linen industry, now an established success, possible in Salem. Miles' organizational ability and his own substantial subscription of stock, actually got the present linen mill going, and gave the confidence that made the Oregon Linen Mills, Inc., possible.

August 22, 1925, saw the first wheels turn in the Miles Linen company's plant, and Labor day of that year saw the first yarn spun. These dates are of historic significance. Since that time the mill has been in operation almost constantly, producing two articles: flax salmon twine, such as is used on the rivers of this coast in the salmon fishing industry, and linen shoe thread, such as is used for sewing on soles and sewing the welt to the upper of the shoe.

Twine Demand Huge
The demand for salmon twine runs into big figures, and when the ready made net end of the industry is considered it means millions of dollars a year. These nets are called gill nets. They are a free drift net in contrast to seines, and traps, and are hauled into the boat quite often. The fish are killed to the net and not just stopped and trapped, so that the net has to stand the actual struggle of the fish; all in the one spot where the fish happens to be killed. This means that the net has to be strong all over.

The nets, because of this fact, get a great deal of slime and blood on them, and this has to be washed off. This is done by washing the net in a solution of copper

sulphate and water. This process is necessary and is also a test of the quality of the net, but it shortens the life of the net.

The nets are hauled in over the edge of the boat a good many times a night, when the men are fishing and this too, adds a great deal to the strain on the net. A number of big salmon swimming fast can hit a net pretty hard, and even though the net has a tensile strength of 100 pounds when wet, a fish will often just plough through as though it were a spider web.

The color of a net is an interesting item, for the less easily it is seen in the water, the better will it fish, for naturally the fish will run into it before they can see it and if the mesh is the right size they will be caught.

Requirements Many
A net that has fewer struts bits of flax attached that stand out from the yarn in the current is a better net. Then too, the net with the least possible twist in the twine is the better net. By this is meant that if you take an ordinary piece of string and untwist the strands, you will find that there are several complete turns of the twine to a given length, usually four or five to an inch.

In salmon twine the fishermen like just as little twist as possible. Just enough to hold the several pieces of yarn that make up the twine together, actually less than one turn to the inch.

The reason given for this is that the fish will push against the net until he finds that he cannot go ahead, and then will begin to back up. Should the twine be twisted five turns to the inch it would be hard twine and would roll back on the fish and pass right over the gill, but since the twine is very loosely twisted, and is wet, it will slip under the gill, and so hold the fish from backing out of the net. This puts a great deal of strain on the individual yarns that make up the twine, and means that they must be especially strong. No other raw material can be spun so fine and yet be so strong as flax, therefore all these nets have to be made of flax fiber.

There are a number of other intensely interesting points in connection with the salmon twine industry. For instance, the manufacture of the nets, the regulations that govern the size of the

mesh, and the whole life history of the salmon.

Suffice to say that the whole fishing industry is of great importance to the development of Oregon, and the relations between it and the linen industry should be developed.

Linen Shoe Thread Best
The other article that is manufactured by the Miles Linen company is shoe thread, used in the manufacture and repair of shoes. This also is a product that must have great strength, and the object in making good shoes is to have various parts so well sewn together, that the wearer can step in a puddle of water and still have dry feet.

Fine cotton and silk threads are used in sewing the various parts of the upper together, which is a very complicated task, especially on women's shoes. Some of these modern shoes have as many as 14 parts in the upper, and these all have to be sewn together.

Linen thread is used, in the case of these fine elaborate shoes of the McKay variety, to sew the sole to the upper. This is done without the welt being used at all, which is the reason why so many of these shoes cannot be mended, because there is no welt to sew the new sole to.

In the case of wet shoes, the linen thread is used to sew the welt, or narrow strip of heavy leather that makes half of the thickness of the sole, to the upper. Then the sole is sewn to the welt, and here again the thread has to be good, although there is not quite so much strain on it as in the previous operation.

Before the war practically all shoes were sewed with linen thread only, but since the war, a great many of them are sewed with cotton thread only. It was impossible to get linen thread during the war, except for army shoes so makers of civilians' shoes had to use cotton. Meanwhile the cotton thread people got busy and learned how to make a better thread than before. Since cotton is cheaper than flax, this thread is cheaper than linen thread.

Small Amount Used
One pound of thread will sew 100 pairs of men's shoes, and the difference in price between the linen and the cotton will not be more than 25 cents a pound, so it would naturally be assumed that the manufacturers of shoes might as well use the linen thread. But they contend that in making 10,000 pairs of shoes a day that 25 cents is quite an item in a year.

Then too, there is the advantage of having people come back for another pair of shoes quite soon. Those who use linen thread say that if the thread happens to be bad, and one pound of it is put into 100 pairs of shoes, that many shoes will have to be counted as a total loss.

It is possible to take paper and sew it together with a good thread and have a pretty good shoe, but it is also possible to take the best leather and sew it together with poor thread and have a very poor shoe.

So the shoe people, if they make good shoes, and most of them still do, all say that even though the thread may cost less than one cent per shoe, they want to have the best. Some of them also say that since they use 35,000 pounds of thread a year, they will buy from the Miles Linen company only on

condition that they are really given a rock bottom price as well as the very best quality.

The shoe repair men, taking the country as a whole, use a lot of thread, though the average one man repair shop will not use more than two pounds of thread a month. The Salem shoe repair men have been very generous in using Miles thread, but not all of them use it all the time. Difference in stitching machines, and in the experience of the operator, account for this to a degree. These men just use the thread to sew on soles, but as has already been pointed out, they can do this only to shoes that have a welt to which they can sew.

These then are the articles that the Miles Linen company makes. They are not any good for Christmas presents and cannot be made into table cloths and handkerchiefs. However, some of the thread would make up into very nice bed coverings that would last for ages.

The process of making this thread is very similar to all of the textile processes; the same general principles prevail all through, but the nature of the raw material in each case requires some adaptation.

Process Interesting
The similarity of the machine used in the Portland Cordage company plant is striking. They make binder twine, transmission rope, etc. They, like the linen mills get a raw material that comes in length, which, if once tangled up, is almost a complete loss. Their whole process, therefore, depends on the skill with which they are able to handle this material in the long strips.

This is in contrast to wool or cotton, which comes in bundles of short fibers and has to be combed out into as nearly parallel positions as possible. It is the shortness of these fibers that makes it impossible to use them in the same degree for making materials that have great tensile strength.

The process in the Miles mill starts with the flax fiber in bits, about as much as can be held in the hand, and about two feet or more in length. This will be about one pound of flax, and will be the fiber out of about 10 pounds of straw. This fiber is combed, so as to get the tangles out of it as much as possible, and also to split the bundles of fibers that are held together by the natural gum, into finer units. This hackling process is very interesting, and is the process that really tests the quality of the flax.

When the flax comes off the hackling machine the one pound will have been reduced in weight by reason of the amount that has been combed out, but it will be very much finer, almost like hair. Suppose there is three-quarters of a pound left. This piece will be about two feet long. In the yarn stage there must be about 4800 yards to the pound before it can be used in the thread and twine that is wanted.

Must Lengthen Yarn
The process of drawing this out is very interesting to watch, but is purely a mechanical mathematical process. By passing the bits of flax through a machine, overlapping each piece so as to form a continuous strip, this strip then passes on through machines that have two sets of rollers about 30 inches apart. The ones in front are moving at a greater speed than those behind, with the result that the fibers are moved past each other as the ends are nipped under the front rollers. This operation is continued until the required length is reached and then the twist is put in on the spinning frames, making the flax sliver into flax yarn.

In addition to this drawing out process there is also a doubling process. As the sliver is lengthened, several of them are put one on top of the other, thus getting thin places on top of thick ones, and vice versa. This of course makes the drawing out process or draft, as it is called, slower but more necessary.

Earlier Process Recalled
This process is just like that which the old ladies, and the young, used to do by hand, but

they did the drawing and twisting all in one operation. The yarn is next boiled and partly bleached, and then several of them are twisted together to make the thread or twine desired.

The amount of machinery necessary to accomplish this is quite surprising, but machinery has made it possible to make miles of thread a day whereas the old hand method would only produce yards.

Yarn for thread has to be strong and it cannot be stronger than the raw material grown by the farmers. Therefore the Miles Linen company is essentially interested in the production of a very good grade of strong linen fiber, and farmers in the Salem territory can produce this fiber if they will.

In November of the year just ended, B. C. Miles transferred his entire stock to Thomas B. Kay, state treasurer; H. R. Crawford of the Ladd & Bush bank; Henry W. Meyers and Carl Nelson.

Crawford was elected president of the company, and Meyers manager and secretary. Kay, Heltzel and Shand make up the new board. Kay and Meyers being the new members, taking the place of B. C. Miles and Ross Miles, who resigned as secretary.

OUTPUT TO BE DOUBLED

Capital City Bedding Co. Secures New Machinery

Doubling their output will be the result of the recent purchase by the Capital City Bedding Co. of a new felting machine, the only one owned in Oregon outside of Portland. It will be installed soon.

This machine will make it possible for the local firm to turn out 50 mattresses a day, instead of the 25 now produced.

Their product already is known throughout most of Oregon, mattresses made here being sold as far south as Medford and in eastern Oregon.

Members of the firm are D. Poulin and E. W. Muller. Their factory is just east of North Capitol street, on Garden road.

SERVICE IS EFFICIENT

Young & Eckerlin Have Thoroughly Equipped Station

With thoroughly up to date equipment, making possible efficiency of which the patron reaps the benefit in the shorter time necessary to service his car, the Salem Super Service Station, on the southeast corner of Ferry and High streets, fully merits the name given it by its proprietors, Gus Young and Eugene Eckerlin.

Among the departments of this extensive business are those of tire service, gas and oil, washing and greasing, with the addition of two which are under separate management; the battery station, conducted by Dick Barton, and the speedometer and other accessories department, conducted by Stewart & Warner.

JEWELER LIKES SALEM

L. G. Prescott Picks Location Here After Look Around

While looking for a location in the northwest, L. G. Prescott, formerly of Forsyth, Montana, found nothing which impressed him so much as Salem, which is the reason why his name now appears on the front of a store at 328 North Commercial street.

For twelve years, Prescott repaired watches for employees of the Northern Pacific railroad at Forsyth. In addition to watchmaking and handling a full line of jewelry, he specializes in agate cutting and mounting.

FRENCH CANAL COMPLETED

A canal five miles in length and 65 feet wide, connecting Marselles with the Rhone canal and the French inland water ways system, has been completed after 15 years and an expenditure of more than \$70,000,000.

J. C. PENNEY CO. ADDS TO STORE

BUILDING ON NORTH LIBERTY TO BE EXTENDED

Better Service to Patrons Will Be Result—To Remodel the Exterior

Extension and remodeling of the present J. C. Penney Co. store on North Liberty street between State and Court, is a progressive step which this forward looking institution has started in Salem during the closing months of the year which has just ended.

Besides giving the additional space for display of goods within the store, which is so badly needed, this piece of construction, costing \$20,000, will make possible the remodeling of the store in conformity with the uniform plan which the nation-wide mercantile firm seeks to use in all of its 745 stores.

The extension will lengthen the building by 60 feet, while the construction of a balcony will increase the available space even more. The balcony will house the ladies' ready to wear and millinery departments.

The exterior of the store is also to be remodeled, and will be equipped with new and up to date fixtures. An oil burning heating system will be included in the equipment, replacing the wood burning furnace.

Manager R. H. Smith of the local store is greatly pleased at the opportunity which this enlargement gives his organization to give wider and more convenient service to its patrons. The construction was planned and will be supervised by the company's construction and real estate department, with J. M. Dolan in direct charge.

The part of the company's property at the rear of the present building, where the addition is to be built, has been made ready, and construction will begin as soon as the plans arrive from the eastern office.

Patrons of the J. C. Penney store are well acquainted with the quality of goods which they handle, and they also know that it is

a big organization. Little, however, is known of the working of that organization and of the relation of the employees to the company. To furnish a better idea of that relationship, some paragraphs from an article which recently appeared in the "Chain Store Age" are reprinted:

"Every male employee of the J. C. Penney Co. is a potential partner. Hence, the great majority remain with the company permanently.

"And for this reason the company can afford to invest in educational advantages extended to workers, because the investment will yield a continual profit, not with a changing personnel but with a more or less fixed though constantly enlarging personnel. And this continuing profit is a practical value recognized in these terms: a better understanding of company policies and principles on the part of the employee; a clearer idea of unusual service to the public and, therefore, increased individual efficiency."

The educational activity of the J. C. Penney Co. is carried along four separate lines: through the house organ, the "Dynamo," store meetings, semi-annual conventions and the business training course.

The editorial policy of Dynamo, defined in a recent issue, is to produce a magazine "devoted to our individual aims, to the setting forth of the principles and policies of this business, of illustrating these principles and policies in action; of extending to every reader some opportunity for self betterment; of stimulating thought, arousing the imagination to give one confidence in ambitious enterprises, to place the raw material of knowledge, skill, purpose and service in our business, clearly, simply and effectively before our readers."

The second factor of educational activity mentioned above is store meetings. In practically all the stores of the J. C. Penney Co., the sales force and manager come together once or twice a month, in some instances oftener, to discuss the lessons of the business training course or some educational feature having to do directly with the merchandise in hand or some matter of actual

store operation peculiar to the individual store.

"At the present time three national conventions are held at nine points. For example, the fall conventions of 1926 sessions were at New York City, Cleveland, St. Louis, Kansas City, Atlanta, St. Paul, Portland, Oakland, Calif., and Salt Lake City.

"A principal feature of the educational work of the J. C. Penney Co. is the business training course. This course was inaugurated four or five years ago. It consists primarily of 17 lessons designed to instruct the student regarding the principles and policies of the organization, the science of salesmanship, merchandising and managerial and personal efficiency."

DOGS MOVE RAIL CARS

Novel Method of Transportation Prevails In North

NOME, Alaska. (AP)—Sheer novelty of transportation is the claim to fame of the Pupmobile railroad between Nome and Shelton, for the trains are minus both locomotives and engineers.

The motive power is furnished by husky dogs and the railroad crew is composed of the passengers themselves. Operation of the trains consists solely in wielding a whip, except in cases where two trains meet between sidings. In that contingency, the one with the lighter load is lifted from the track while the other passes. Then the "engine" is hitched on again and the journey continues.

The railroad has 87 miles of narrow gauge track. It was built in the early days of Alaska mining to connect Kougak mining district with the coast, and was bought by the Territory three years ago. It is now operated by the Alaska road commission for the public use.

JAPS BUY BICYCLES

The bicycle is holding its own in Tokyo. The number increased from 15,210 in 1912 to 177,713 in 1926.

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