Utah-Mexican Rubber Company.

Members of the Company and Employes in Front of the Plantation House.

Report of a Committee Who Visited the Plant; Consisting of John Henry Smith and Noble Warrum, Represen ing the company, and James Mack, Representing Sharebuyers—It Reaffirms the Report of a Former Committee Sent to Examine the Property Before Its Purchase By the Present Owners

Gentlemen:—

YOUR committee sent to inspect the property of the Utah-Mexican Rubber Company in the State of Tabasco, Mexico, and to investigate the work done upon the same, beg to submit the following report:

We left Salt Lake City on the 21st day of February, 1905, and reached the plantation on the 13th day of March following, the main delays and difficulties of travel lying beyond the City of Mexico.

In the course of time, when a small steamer is placed on the Tonala River, it will be possible to reach the plantation within 12 or 14 hours from the end of the railway at Coatzacoalcos. The river is navigable for light draft boats or launches from the plantation to the Gulf, according to soundings made by Supt. Cluff during the low water period last year.

We not only made a general investigation of the property and affairs of the Utah-Mexican Rubber Company, but visited other plantations, interviewed leading planters and exporters of rubber, and saw rubber itself in all its forms, from milk in the trees to commercial rubber baled for shipment to New York and Europe. Whoever has witnessed these things can not doubt the entire practicability of rubber culture or that it is destined to become one of the great agricultural industries of the world.

We have verified the report of the former committee that the land of the company is located in the rubber zone, that the soil is especially adapted to the cultivation of rubber, and that the climate is sufficiently moist and warm to produce the best results.

There is a small grove of cultivated rubber trees, from three to six years old, on our own lands, while wild rubber trees are scattered over the entire tract. In the same region, subject to the same rainfall and climatic conditions, are cultivated trees from six to ten years old, yielding rubber for exportation.

The soil, which is one of the chief things to consider, is a black vegetable mold overlying a loose, yellowish soil of great depth, and is identical with that upon which the best rubber groves are growing.

The rainfall of the locality, as a matter of general repute, is excessive and equally distributed, being over a hundred inches per annum, some years going as high as 150 inches.

As to what a six-year-old tree will produce there is a wide difference of opinion among Mexicans, but conservative planters, experienced in the culture of rubber, estimate from ONE-HALF TO ONE POUND at a tapping. The contention that rubber trees will not yield after being tapped once is a foolish one. They will stand frequent tapping, and if intelligently done, the yield should increase year by year. We saw great trees, over two feet in diameter, which had been tapped many years in a most barbarous fashion, yet the wounds had healed over and were themselves full of milk.

March, April, and May constitute the shedding season for leaves, at which time the sap is very thick and sluggish, being about eighty per cent pure rubber, so we were unable to make any satisfactory tests as to the flow of milk. In June and July, when the new leaves put out, the sap flows freely. We convinced ourselves, however, that the trees are full of milk, that the milk turns easily and readily to rubber, and that the trees yield to repeated tappings. Milk may be called the fruit of the rubber tree, and Nature, which makes no mistakes, provides the supply if the crop is properly handled in the proper season.

Nor is there any question about the rubber tree being hardy. No insect bothers it. It covers every wound with a rubber coating. And we saw fire swept clearings where everything else had perished, but the rubber trees which were alive and budding.

It was the prevailing opinion among natives and foreigners alike that the MEXICAN RUBBER TREE IS ONE OF THE HARDIEST AND THRIFTIEST OF ALL TROPICAL TREES. Our observations justified this opinion. In these characteristics it might be likened to our poplars.

It has been demonstrated, too, that the cultivated tree bears as well as the wild one, and it is certainly of more rapid growth.

Mr. Carlos Schweickhardt, of San Juan, one of the eighteen buyers and shippers of rubber in Tabasco, showed us a copy of the report made to the German government at the request of the department of commerce, in which he states that SEVENTY PER CENT OF THE RUBBER SHIPPED FROM THE STATE OF TABASCO IS TAKEN FROM CULTIVATED TREES.

Mr. Schweickhardt began rubber exportation in 1902, in which year he shipped but four tons; in 1903 he shipped twenty tons; in 1904, twenty-seven tons, and this year he estimates thirty-five to forty tons of rubber.

Owing to the complexity of the labor problem in Mexico and the difficulty in gathering an adequate force of workmen, we were almost a year in getting started. As a recompense for this delay we are pleased to state to holders of certificates in the first series that their acreage is planted with 240 TREES TO THE ACRE instead of 200 as originally contemplated.

A careful inspection of the plants set out indicated that the loss would be very light, some estimating that it would not exceed two per cent.

The land for the Second Series is being cleared and planted so rapidly that it will be completed within the current year. On this series 266 TREES ARE BEING PLANTED TO THE ACRE.

The task undertaken was enormous, and the amount of work actually accomplished is so great that we could not begin to realize it until we had seen it. The trees are set out in the open, and every plant is put in a hole of sufficient dimensions to permit the spreading of the roots. Experience has shown that trees grow two or three times as fast when planted in the open. On other plantations we had an opportunity to observe the difference between trees growing in the sun and others in the partial shade. It left no doubt in our minds that the BEST METHODS IS THE ONE PURSUED BY THE UTAH-MEXICAN RUBBER COMPANY.

Another matter we desire to call to the attention of our investors is that the very choicest of our land—that which is best adapted to the cultivation of rubber, is being planted. Every low place, or drain, where water is apt to stand, is not counted in the acreage.

The weather was exceptionally good while we were in the tropics and we spent almost a month in canoes and on horseback looking over the country of which the property of the company is no small part.

We were well received and courteously treated by the officials of the state and municipality, and entertained royally by Mr. H. H. Vatter at "Los Soldados" plantation on the Tonala river, and by Mr. A. G. Weiss at his beautiful rubber plantation on the Mescalapa. We obtained much valuable information from these gentlemen both of whom are men of intelligence and experience. On the plantation of Mr. Weiss we took many measurements of young trees—three years old with a diameter of 6 to 7 inches and others 17 months old 3 to 4 inches in diameter. The soil upon which these trees were growing was in every respect similar to our own—ours having the advantage in quality.

We were also fortunate in meeting Mr. Raas of the Hidalgo Plantation Company who is marketing rubber from 8,000 trees from six to fourteen years of age; Mr. W. H. Mack of the Sanborn Development Company; and Dr. Hall who has planted for himself 160 acres and has one tree that he taps every month in the year for experimental purposes.

In talking with these gentlemen and with others who have made a success of rubber culture, we learned that the success of the business depends on three essentials: Soil, climate and management.

Our soil is second to none. The climate is already producing the finest rubber in the tropics. And we believe the company has made no mistake in placing the work in the hands of Supt. Cluff, who is tireless, competent, persistent and full of faith in the enterprise.

The trip was one of many discomforts and some hardships but it was enjoyable, profitable and instructive.

We were accompanied to the tropics by Messrs. L. C. Farr and John A. McAllister of Logan and B. F. Grant of Salt Lake City.

JOHN HENRY SMITH,
JAMES MACK,
NOBLE WARRUM,

Ten Year Old Wild Rubber Tree. Measures 2 feet 3 inches in diameter, height about 60 feet.

Members of the Rubber Company in a Nursery of Young Rubber Trees.

POSSIBILITIES of RUBBER CULTURE

Much has been said regarding the possibilities of rubber culture, and some pessimistic views have been entertained. The above report should surely dispel all such ideas.

Rubber is one of the staple industries of the country. The demand is constantly increasing while the supply is constantly decreasing on account of the natives destroying the wild rubber tree through careless and vicious tapping. This has caused rubber to advance in the last two years from 98 cents to $1.55 per pound.

SOMETHING ABOUT THE TREE.

It is noted for being free from attacks of blight or any insect. It has been demonstrated that the rubber tree is as much a native of Mexico as the sage brush is of Utah. The soil and climate are adapted to its growth. Tapping, if properly executed can be done without injury to the tree, and trees have been known to live from fifty to one hundred years subjected to a most barbarous tapping; knockers kickers and objectors notwithstanding.

There may be rubber failures as in all other business enterprises there are some times failures, but they will be due to mismanagement on the part of such companies as are seeking to obtain immediate profits and who fail to plant and properly cultivate the trees.

The affairs of this company are managed by a board of directors consisting of well known business men of our state which should be a guarantee to investors that its affairs will be properly managed. John Henry Smith President; W. S. McCornick, Vice President and Treasurer; Directors, Joseph F. Smith, W. S. McCornick, John S. Bransford, John Henry Smith, Thos. R. Cutler, James T. Hammond, Moses Thatcher, B. F. Grant, W. B. Preston, John A. McAlister, Aquila Nebeker.

A RUBBER FOREST.

HOW THE HINDUS EAT.

Toward the upper end of the ghats is the burning ground. There are no steps here, but a slope of beaten dirt. Stop half an hour and you may see every step of the cremation rites. Sitting on stone ramparts above, to right and left, are friends and relatives of the dead ones. The figure to the right, hudled up in a bright green wrap, is of the lowest cast of Hindus and keeps the mat shed near by where the sacred fire for igniting every corpse is for sale. You hear hoarse, loud cries of "Ram! Ramana!" and behold a burial procession is coming down the slope. Four men carry the corpse slung between two bamboo poles, and cry to the god Ram. He is the personification of filial love, and thus it is meet that they should call him to witness. They swing down the river and immerse the corpse. It is wrapped in a white shroud stained with red blotches. Then they lift the head slightly out of the water and remove the shroud from the face, splashing water five times upon the mouth. Others in the meantime are building a wooden pyre, made of fagots sold near by and when finished standing three feet or more above ground. The corpse, its dark color showing through the dripping shroud, is then placed on the wooden altar and covered with fagots. This done, all but two mount the ramparts and watch the final ceremony. Of the two remaining, one pours oil upon the wood from a small clay dish, while the other goes to the firehouse above. He soon returns with a long straw wisp blazing at one end. He advances to the corpse's head, touching it with the wisp, and then circles the pyre five times, touching the head each time until the fifth, when he places the blazing wisp beneath the feet and the whole pile bursts into flame. When all is consumed the ashes are raked into the river and float away to bliss eternal.—Outing.

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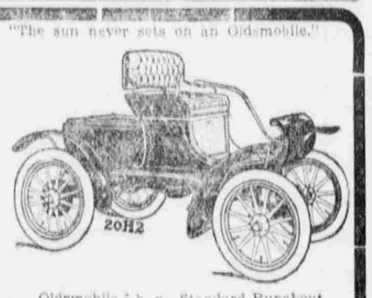

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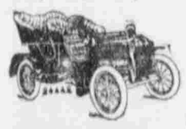

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