

RHODESIA'S DEVELOPMENT

HOW THE BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY WILL SPEND \$15,000,000.

(Special Correspondence of the Deseret News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE.
SALISBURY, Rhodesia.—Within the past few weeks the British South Africa company has increased its capital to \$15,000,000. This company is perhaps the greatest land and development syndicate in the world. It competes with the Dutch company, which owned Java, and with the East India company, which had so much to do with making Hindustan a British possession. It is far greater than the Hudson Bay company was at the height of its power, and prospectively its riches are beyond the dreams of avarice. The company owns and controls the vast territories in this part of Africa which were acquired by Cecil Rhodes when he made his great expedition from Kimberley northward. He conquered some of the tribes and made treaties with others, and at the end had added to the British empire a principality greater than France and Germany combined. It comprised altogether almost one-half million square miles, going northward to the Congo Free State and Lake Tanganyika.

Mr. Rhodes was granted by the English crown the right to govern and develop this property, and he organized the British South Africa company for that purpose. It was started with a capital of \$5,000,000, and by 1894 its capital had been increased to \$15,000,000. All of this money has been spent on the property. Several thousand miles of railroads have been built, numerous towns established, many farms sold and developed, and gold mines opened, out of which \$45,000,000 or \$46,000,000 have been taken. So far no dividends have been paid, but the company has recently been meeting its expenses, and at the last meeting of the stockholders it was decided to issue 3,000,000 additional shares. This will bring it \$15,000,000, and this new money will probably make the syndicate pay big dividends.

A TALK WITH THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.

I am writing this letter at Salisbury, which is the capital of Rhodesia and where are also the offices of the British South Africa company. During my stay here I have had a talk with Sir William H. Milton, the governor of the colony. He is one of the chief officials of the syndicate and has been connected with the company from its beginning. He was the private secretary of Cecil Rhodes at the time the company was formed, and it is now eight years since he was sent here as the chief secretary and secretary for native affairs. He has been connected with the administration of Rhodesia since 1897, and he knows, like a book, the country and everything connected with it.

I met Sir William Milton at the government house, a beautiful one-story bungalow, which lies about two miles from the business part of Salisbury. The house is surrounded by well kept grounds filled with flowers and tropical plants. It is beautifully furnished, and the administrator lives quite comfortably here as he could in England, said Sir William H. Milton.

"You ask me to give you a bird's-eye view of Rhodesia. It would take a story book to give it in a short time and one with sharp eyes to see it all. Southern Rhodesia alone is an empire in itself. It is more than one-sixth larger than Great Britain and Ireland, and it has great areas of good farming lands. It is full of minerals. Within the past few years a number of small gold mines have been opened, and the output from these is steadily increasing both in quantity and quality. Gold mining in the Transvaal requires an enormous capital. Here it can be done upon a small scale, and we are finding good paying propositions scattered over the country. Those already discovered cover more than 5,000 square miles, and we now have several hundred companies and syndicates at work. We have already taken out something like \$3,000,000 or \$31,000,000 worth of gold, and we know that we have silver, copper, diamonds and lead. We have good coal mines at Wankie, about 200 miles northwest of Bulawayo, and we are producing something like 100,000 tons of coal every year."

FARMING IN RHODESIA.

"How about your agricultural possibilities?" asked I.

"We think them very great," replied the governor. "Much of the country is better fitted for stock raising than grain farming, but we have large areas which will produce corn and tobacco, and some which we think will raise cotton. There is no reason why Southern Rhodesia should not produce maize equal to that of your great corn belt. The grain is grown by the natives, and we have white farmers who now crop thousands of bushels of this cereal. We have some farmers who sell 10,000 bush-

els a year, and that at a considerable profit. We have lands which will yield 50 bushels and more to the acre, although the average is less than that."

"As to tobacco, Rhodesia cigarettes are sold everywhere throughout South Africa. Our pipe mixtures are in high favor and our cigars are popular. We are not trying to export any tobacco as yet for this continent takes all that we can produce. We expect to increase our yield from now on, and the time will come when we shall ship tobacco to Europe and, it may be, to the United States."

A GREAT STOCK COUNTRY.

"How about cattle?"

It is in stock raising that the chief possibilities for Rhodesia lie. This is a natural stock country. In the days of Lobengula, the native king of the Matebele, these highlands swarmed with cattle, and were it not for the various pests a land would support a vast number. Indeed, it is estimated that if the hay were cut and the grass protected from fires we could feed something like 25,000,000 cattle in northern and southern Rhodesia. We are doing what we can to wipe out the diseases and at present we are as free from the various cattle pests as is any part of your country. We quarantine against all outside stock, finding that the natives respect the laws. Indeed, we are having more trouble from the whites than from the natives. To show you how little of the available country is used for stock I would say that we have only about 200,000 cattle in southern Rhodesia when we could support millions. We have 500,000 goats and about 200,000 sheep."

THE NATIVES AND THEIR LABOR.

"Can you give me some idea of your native population?"

"We have comparatively few natives for the size of the country. The population of Rhodesia is not larger than that of some of our southern states. We have, all told, only about 800,000 natives in our whole territory, and these are scattered over a country which is perhaps one-seventh the size of the United States proper. They are, as a rule, quiet and easily controlled, but they have not enough wants to make them a good working force. You see, the average negro can live on a few score of shillings a year. He needs several cattle and a corn patch, and in addition only enough cash to pay his taxes. We tax each man £1, or \$5, a year. This includes the tax for one wife. If he has more than that we make him pay 10 shillings a year for each extra wife."

"I should think that would be a premium on monogamy," said I.

"When we fixed the tax we thought it might be," replied the administrator, "but it has not. The natives can make money so easily that they can quickly earn the 10 shillings needed for every extra wife, and the extra wives more than pay for themselves in the work they do. The man who has the most wives is considered the richest, and he who has several as a rule does little else than keep his women up to their work."

MORE ABOUT FARMING.

Returning to the agricultural possibilities of Rhodesia, the administrator tells me that the country was greatly injured by the rinderpest and that it had quite a setback after the Boer war. The farmers are slow coming in, and I doubt much whether the company is satisfied with its success in inducing white immigration.

I understand that one of the great troubles in the land is rinderpest. Horses cannot be successfully raised here. They are soon attacked by a sickness which carries them off. In the past oxen were used to trek wagons over the country, but the rinderpest killed them by the thousands, many falling dead in their yokes. The cattle are now steadily increasing, and there is a fair prospect of the lands being restocked. Much of the farming is mixed, the average settler taking up from 500 to 3,000 acres and using a small amount for cultivation and the remainder for grazing. He will put a hundred acres or so in corn and employ the rest for cattle. The climate is such that the animals can feed out of doors all the year round, and about ten acres will furnish enough grass for one head.

In my trips about the country I see that corn is raised everywhere and that such oats as have been planted are doing well. The present demand for grain is such that the country cannot supply it, and in the past quite a lot of American corn has been imported. Good corn now brings about 2 cents a pound or more than a dollar a bushel. Much of it is sold in 200-pound sacks at \$4 and upward per sack. As to the tobacco, the administrator has not overstated the possibilities. These cigarettes sold here which are made from the native weed, and smokers tell me they are quite as good as any that can be imported from Cairo or Constantinople.

I asked Sir William Milton whether the climate of Rhodesia was fitted for



RAISING CORN IN RHODESIA. SIR WILLIAM H. MILTON, ADMINISTRATOR.

white men. He replied that the higher parts were very healthy and that the heat was altogether dependent on the altitude. All lands which are over 3,000 feet above the sea are suitable for Europeans, but it is only upon those which are 1,000 feet higher that European children can be born and bred. The latter area is not much bigger than the state of Maryland, and it has one of the finest climates of the world. The former is almost as large as California, and it is healthy. The rainfall

averages 28 inches. Here at Salisbury the altitude is about 4,000 feet, and in coming inland from the ocean I have crossed country which is more than a mile above the sea. The most of Rhodesia is a rolling plateau and as far as I can see much of it will some day be covered with the homes of white men.

FROM BEIRA TO THE CAPITAL.

I came to Salisbury from the Indian ocean by the Rhodesia railway. This

begins at Beira, and after crossing Portuguese East Africa runs across Rhodesia to Bulawayo, where it connects with the main line of the Cape to Cairo railroad. The distance to Salisbury is 374 miles, and it took us two days to make it on account of the recent floods of some of the rivers. Our first 200 miles was through the Portuguese territories. These are low and unhealthy. We rode for hours through swamps, where I was told that the construction of the road has cost a

man's life for every tie in the track. We were shown one bridge where eight men were eaten by crocodiles during its building. We now and then passed through swarms of locusts, and our car windows had to be covered with wire screens to keep out the mosquitoes.

TRAVELING THROUGH RHODESIA.

As we approached the western end of the Portuguese colony the land rapidly rose, and at Umfali, on the borders of Southern Rhodesia, we came into mountains equal to the most beautiful of the Alleghenies. Here the track wound this way and that in horseshoe curves, so that, standing on the rear platform, we could sometimes look into the eyes of the engineer on the locomotive. We passed through thick forests and finally came out upon a high rolling prairie covered with luxuriant grass. There are but few farmhouses and few native villages. There are no fences anywhere, and the land looks as if it did when God made it. There seem to be plenty of water, and the country appears fitted to support a large population. The prices of lands are, I am told, something like a dollar an acre, and more or less, according to location. I doubt much, however, whether the markets and the present state of the country would warrant the coming of American colonists.

THE CAPITAL OF RHODESIA.

I wish I could show you this capital of Rhodesia. If you could lift it up and drop it down in the United States it would not be out of place. Indeed, it would look much like some of our best southern towns of 3,000 population, except that these buildings are finer, more artistic and more substantially built. The material used is chiefly stone and brick, the roof being made of galvanized iron. The residences are bungalows, with wide verandas running about them and with low, overhanging roofs. Every home has a garden about it filled with the flowers and plants of both the tropical and temperate zones. There are roses and morning glories, as well as flowers which would grow well in Florida or Cuba.

The business blocks are chiefly of stone. There are many large stores with well displayed windows and stocks of goods which would be considered excellent in any of our cities of three times this size. One can buy anything he needs and many American things are sold. I see our canned goods and American cottons among the articles in the windows, and out-

side the farm-implement stores are plows from Moline, Ill., and reapers and mowers from Chicago and Springfield, Ill.

A TOWN OF CLUBS AND RACE TRACKS.

I find Salisbury much alive. It is a modern town, of fun, clubs, public amusements and high prices. It has its social swim and it has its cricket grounds, golf fields and tennis courts. The high fences of the latter are covered with morning glories, and the balls are thrown back by hedges of green leaves spotted with flowers of bright blue. The little city has a library without the aid of Mr. Carnegie. It has three banks and a chamber of mines. It has a hospital, a half dozen churches, and a newspaper which comes out every week.

Everything in the town is high priced. I took a ride in a Jimkhana driven by a negro, and the charge was 37 cents in gold. I could have had the same service in Shanghai, China, with a pig-tailed coolie as my horse, for 5 cents in silver. I went out in an automobile for a day last week, and the charge was \$30 therefor. I took a glass of mineral water this morning. It contained one-half pint, and I had to pay 37 cents for it. The man who sat next to me at dinner was charged 62 cents for a Scotch highball. A cup of tea at a railroad station costs 25 cents, and all other things are about the same proportion. My hotel rate here is \$4.37 a day, with the hungry eyes of the waiters are always asking for fees. I usually buy photographs wherever I go in addition to my own photographer. The price here for making 8x10 copies is \$1.25, and when I asked the photographer this afternoon to make me a rate of \$10 per dozen he hemmed and hawed and said he couldn't really afford to print them at all.

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