FINANCE AND COMMERCE

THE CLOSING QUOTATIONS OF MONEY.

Offerings and Sales at the Richmond Tobacco Exchange—Internal Revenue Collections—Foreign Advances.

NEW YORK, March 4.—A moderate inquiry for investment account and a limited speculative buying imparted a firm tone to the market in the early operations at the Stock Exchange. The improvement, however, was of slight proportions, and before the expiration of the first hour of business the trend of prices was downward. A period of inactivity followed, the disposition to await President McKinley's address before entering into new ventures being quite general. Then occurred rather heavy selling by foreign houses, London being credited with sales of 15,000 shares of St. Paul and other European favorites. The liquidations were said to be the result of the uneasiness felt abroad over the eastern situation. A break in British consols also had more or less influence on the timid holders. Shortly after midday the bears resumed aggressive tactics, and under their sales the market gradually declined. Vague rumors were circulated to the effect that the new administration intended ordering war ships to Havana at once to protect American citizens, and this added to the bearish feeling in the late trading. Another unfavorable development was the passage of the maximum freight tariff law by the North Dakota Legislature. This measure gives a commission power to fix freight rates and provides for a long and short haul clause. The loss in prices ranged from ½ to 2½ per cent. Sugar led, some of the sellers interpreting President McKinley's message as unfavorable to the socalled trusts. Omaha common reacted 2⅜ to 55¾. Leather preferred 2 to 58⅝, and Lake Shore 2⅜ to 167½. The declines in the other prominent issues ranged from ¾ to 1¾ per cent. Manhattan sold at 86⅝@87⅛, closing at the lower figure. The dividend question is to be settled on Tuesday next. A member of the Executive Committee is quoted as saying that the road practically earned 1½ per cent. for the quarter, but that a difference of opinion exists in the board as to the advisability of maintaining a yearly rate of 6 per cent. In the final dealings the market was quiet, but the undertone was weak. Net changes show losses of ½@2¼ per cent., the latter in Sugar. Total sales were 226,647 shares, including 41,800 Sugar, 25,300 St. Paul, 24,800 Burlington and Quincy, and 11,500 St. Paul and Omaha. The bond market was active and generally firm. The sales footed up $2,072,000.

MONEY AND EXCHANGE: Money on call easy at 1½@1¾ per cent., last loan at 1½ per cent., and closing offered at 1½ per cent.; prime mercantile paper, 3 per cent. Bar silver, 64. Sterling exchange firm, with actual business in bankers' bills at 485¼@485½ for sixty days and 487¾@487¾ for demand; posted rates, 486@488; commercial bills, 484@485¼. Government bonds firm. State bonds neglected. Railroad bonds firm. Silver at the board was quiet.

STOCK QUOTATIONS.

	Closing Stocks.
American Cotton Oil	12
American Cotton Oil pfd	55
American Sugar	115¾
American Sugar Refineries pfd	106
American Tobacco	74½
American Tobacco pfd	106
Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe	12⅝
Baltimore and Ohio	15½
Canada Pacific	54
Chesapeake and Ohio	17½
Chicago and Alton	158½
Chicago, Burlington and Quincy	76½
Chicago Gas Trust	70⅝
Delaware, Lack. and Western	155
Erie	14⅝
Erie pfd	33⅝
General Electric	34⅝
Illinois Central	93
Lake Erie and Western	17½
Lake Erie and Western pfd	67
Lake Shore	167
Louisville and Nashville	49⅝
Louisville, New Albany & Chicago	7½
Manhattan Consolidated	86
Memphis and Charleston	15
Michigan Central	94
Missouri Pacific	21⅝
Mobile and Ohio	21
Nash., Chattanooga and St. Louis	67½
New Jersey Central	94½
New York Central	98⅞
New York and New England	37
Norfolk and Western pfd	28
Northern Pacific	14⅝
Northern Pacific pfd	37½
Northwestern	106½
Northwestern pfd	154
Pacific Mail	29⅝
Reading	24⅝
Rock Island	67⅝
St. Paul	76¾
St. Paul pfd	135½
Silver Certificates	64½
Tennessee Coal and Iron	27⅝
Tennessee Coal and Iron pfd	80
Texas Pacific	5½
Union Pacific	6⅞
Wabash	6⅝
Wabash pfd	16
Western Union	82⅝
Wheeling and Lake Erie	3½
Wheeling and Lake Erie pfd	9⅝

BONDS.

Alabama Class A)	104
Alabama (Class B)	104
Alabama (Class C)	98
Louisiana Stamped 4's	90
North Carolina 4's	102½
North Carolina 6's	124
Tennessee New Settlement 3's	77
Virginia 6's, pfd	5
Virginia Trust Receipts, Stamped	50
Virginia 2-3, 1991	62⅝
United States 4's, registered	111
United States 4's, coupon	113
United States 2's, coupon	93½
Southern Railway 5's	99
Southern Railway com	9
Southern Railway pfd	28¾

LONDON SILVER MARKET.

LONDON, March 4.—Bar silver, 29¾d.; consols, 111 11-16 for money and 111⅞ for the account.

RICHMOND STOCK MARKET.

Richmond, Va., March 4, 1897.

Sales—400 Virginia 3 per cent. at 73¾.

GOV. SECURITIES.	Bid.	Asked.
U. S. 4's, R. and C., 1907	113	...
STATE SECURITIES.		
North Carolina 4's, C., 1910	102	...
North Carolina 6's, C., 1919	124	...
Va. 3's, new, C. and R., 1932	73¾	73¾
Va. Century, 2-3, C. and R.	62¼	62⅝
CITY SECURITIES.		
Richm'd City 8's, R., 1904-1910	125	...
Richm'd City 6's, R., 1904-1910	112	...
Richm'd City 5's, R., 1920-1922	111½	...
Richm'd City 4's, R., 1920-1929	100	...
RAILROAD BONDS.		
A. and C. 1st 7's, R., 1907	120	...
R. and C. guar. in. 6's, R., 1900	103	...
C., C. and A. 2d 7's, C., 1910	117	...
Ga. So. and Fla. 5's, 1927	94	94½
Pet., Class A., 5's, R. C., 1926	109	...
Pet., Class B., 6's, R. C., 1926	115	...
Rich. and Meck. 1st 6's, 1921	75	76
S., A. and M., 1919	81	...
Southern Railway 1st 5's, 1994	90	...
Georgia and Alabama pref. 5's	103½	...
Georgia and Alabama consols	80	...
RAILROAD STOCKS.	Par.	
Atlanta and Charlotte	100	90 ...
Chesapeake and Ohio	100	17½ ...
North Carolina	100	115 ...
Petersburg	100	... 107
R., F. and P. div. obli.	100	... 108½
Richm'd and Petersburg	100	110 ...
Southern Railway pfd 5's	100	28½ ...
Southern Railway com	100	9 ...
Georgia and Alabama pfd	...	25
BANK STOCKS.		
City	25	... 28½
First National	100	163½ ...
Merchants National	100	165 ...
Metropolitan	25	26 ...
Planters National	100	235 245
Pet. Sav. and Ins. Co.	20	29½ ...
Security	100	... 105
State Bank of Virginia	100	126 ...
Union Bank of Richmond	50	... 115
Virginia Trust Company	100	109½ 111
INS. COMPANIES.		
Virginia State	25	... 23½
MISCELLANEOUS.		
A. T. Co. pfd	100	103 ...
A. T. Co. com	50	75 76

Quotations are for bonds maturing in not less than ten years.

GRAIN AND COTTON EXCHANGE.

Richmond, Va., March 4, 1897.

WHEAT—	Quotations.
Longberry	87 @92
Mixed	86 @92
Shortberry	85 @92
No. 2 red	91 @92
CORN—	
No. 2 Virginia	30 @31
No. 2 white	30 @
No. 2 mixed	29½@
OATS—	
No. 2 mixed	21½@22
No. 3 mixed	20½@21
Winter seed	35 @40
RYE	41 @42

THE COTTON MARKETS.

NEW YORK, March 4.—COTTON—Quiet; middling, 7 3-16c.; net receipts, 12 bales; gross receipts, 1,914 bales; exports to Great Britain, 185 bales; to the continent, 400 bales; forwarded, 201 bales; sales, 227 bales, all spinners; stock, 202,225 bales.

Total to-day—Net receipts, 11,758 bales; exports to Great Britain, 3,297 bales; to the continent, 1,470 bales; stock, 884,407 bales.

Total so far this week—Net receipts, 71,466 bales; exports to Great Britain, 42,350 bales; to France, 8,799 bales; to the continent, 32,677 bales.

Total since September 1st—Net receipts, 5,961,336 bales; exports to Great Britain, 2,571,345 bales; to France, 564,733 bales; to the continent, 1,917,826 bales; to the channel, 5,481 bales.

Futures closed barely steady; sales, 151,000 bales; March, 6.87; April, 6.91; May, 6.96; June, 7.01; July, 7.04; August, 7.06; September, 6.72; October, 6.62; November, 6.64; December, 6.69; January, 6.74.

NEW ORLEANS, LA., March 4.—COTTON—Futures quiet; sales, 44,200 bales; March, 6.75; April, 6.76; May, 6.80; June, 6.83; July, 6.86; August, 6.71; September, 6.48; October, 6.59; November, 6.41; December, 6.43.

LIVERPOOL, March 4.—12:30 P. M.—COTTON—Demand good; prices easier; American middling, 4d.; sales, 12,000 bales; American, 11,400 bales; speculation and export, 1,000 bales; receipts, 13,000 bales; American, 12,100 bales. Futures opened quiet and demand moderate; March, 3 58-64d.; March and April, 3 57-64@3 58-64d.; April and May, May and June, and June and July, 3 58-64d.; July and August, 3 58-64@3 59-64d.; August and September, 3 56-64d.; September and October, 3 50-64d.; October and November, 3 46-64d.; November and December and December and January, 3 44-64d. Futures quiet at the decline.

12:45 P. M.—American spot grades, 1-32d. lower; American middling, fair, 4 13-32d.; good middling, 4 3-32d.; middling, 3 31-32d.; low middling, 3 25-32d.; good ordinary, 3 21-32d.; ordinary, 3 15-32d.

4 P. M.—March, 3 56-64d., value; March and April, 3 56-64d., value; April and May, 3 56-64d., buyers; May and June, 3 56-64@3 57-64d., buyers; June and July, 3 57-64d., sellers; July and August, 3 57-64d., sellers; August and September, 3 54-64d., buyers; September and October, 3 48-64@3 49-64d., sellers; October and November, 3 43-64@3 44-64d., sellers; November and December and December and January, 3 52-64d., sellers. Futures closed easy.

NEW YORK PRODUCE MARKET.

NEW YORK, March 4.—FLOUR—Quiet, steady, and unchanged. Southern flour dull and unchanged.

WHEAT—Spot market dull; winter weaker; spring firmer; f. o. b., 85½c.; ungraded red, 70@86c. Options were dull, opening at ⅛c. advance, declining ¼c., rallying ½@⅝c., and closing firm at ⅝@½c. over yesterday; No. 2 red, March, 82⅝c.; May, 81¼c.; June, 80⅝c.; July, 79⅝c.; September, 76⅝c.

CORN—Spot dull and firm; No. 2, 26c., elevator; 30c. afloat; steamer mixed, 26⅝c.; new No. 2, 27c.; yellow, 27c. Options were dull and firm at unchanged prices; March, 26c.; July, 31c.

OATS—Spot steady. Options dull; May, 21½c. Spot prices: No. 2, 21½@21¾c.; No. 2 white, 23½c.; No. 3, 20½c.; mixed western, 20@23c.

HAY—Unchanged.

HIDES—Firm and unchanged.

WOOL—Active and unchanged.

BEEF—Steady and unchanged; beef hams strong at $18.50.

CUT MEATS—Quiet, firm, and unchanged.

LARD—Quiet and firmer; western steam, $4.35; city, $4.05; May, $4.45. Refined dull; continent, $4.65; South American, $4.90; compound, $4.0@4.25.

PORK—Quiet, strong, and unchanged.

BUTTER—Active; State dairy, 10@18c.; do. creamery, 13@18½c.; 23-25ins. 19c.

EGGS—Steady; State and Pennsylvania, 13@13½c.; western, fresh, 13c.; southern, 12½@12½c.

COTTON-SEED OIL—Quiet and unchanged.

ROSIN—Dull and unchanged.

RICE—Firm and unchanged.

MOLASSES—Steady and unchanged.

PEANUTS—Quiet and unchanged.

COFFEE—Steady at 5@15 points down; March, $8.95; April, $9.00; June, $9.05; January, $9.05@9.10. Spot Rio steady and dull; No. 7, $9.62½.

SUGAR—Raw dull and nominal; fair refining, 3¼c. Refined dull and unchanged.

FREIGHTS TO LIVERPOOL—Quiet and unchanged.

CHICAGO MARKET.

CHICAGO, ILL., March 4.—WHEAT—There was a stronger market for wheat to-day, although the early hours of the session did not give much promise of improvement. The opening was slightly higher than yesterday's close, a recession following. Towards noon prices took on a firmer feeling, which they held to the close. Liverpool opening cables were lower, but the decline was not sufficient to express complete sympathy with American weakness of yesterday. Later ones showed improvement, and about the time they were received a drop of ½ a point in English consols was announced. This latter was taken to indicate a feeling of unrest in European politics, and, accordingly, shorts took fright and covered freely, lifting the price about ¾c. Before the close they had settled back a trifle. May wheat opened from 75⅝@75¾c. to 75¾c., sold between 74⅝c. and 75⅝c., closing at 75½@75⅝c.—¾c. higher than yesterday. Cash wheat was firm and ½c. higher.

CORN—The corn market was inanimate and uninteresting. Even the few scalpers who make a specialty of trading in this grain seemed to have forsaken it. Commission houses had a few insignificant orders, the execution of which constituted to-day's trade. May corn opened at 24c., sold between 23⅞c. and 24c. and 24⅛c., closing at 24@24⅛c.—a shade over yesterday. Cash corn was in fair demand and steady.

OATS—This market attracted no attention, there being no activity or inclination to transact business. What alterations in prices there were were not due to any new developments in the situation or to any recent intelligence, but entirely depended on the action of wheat and corn. As those grains were irregular, oats were likewise somewhat erratic. May oats closed ⅛c. higher than yesterday.

PROVISIONS—Trade started slow in the product market, prices opening at about the final quotations of yesterday. The hog market was steady and provisions exhibited the same feeling. Packers were good buyers later, prices advancing on their purchases. English houses maintained a bullish attitude on product. May pork closed 7½c. higher than yesterday. May lard 2½c. higher, and May ribs 5c. higher.

HIDES—Firm: natives, heavy, 9½c.; light, 8½c.; native cows, heavy, 8½c.; light, 8½c.; butt brands, heavy, 8c.; light, 7½c.

The leading futures ranged as follows:

	Open.	High.	Low.	Close.
WHEAT—				
March	74⅛	74¾	73⅞	74½
May	75	75⅝	74⅝	75½
July	72⅛	72¾	72	72⅝
Sept	70½	71	70⅝	71
CORN—				
March	23	23	22¾	23
May	24	24⅛	23⅞	24
July	25⅛	25¼	25	25¼
Sept	26⅝	26½	26¼	26½
OATS—				
March	15½	15½	15½	15½
May	17	17⅛	16⅞	17⅛
July	17⅞	18⅛	17⅞	18⅛
MESS PORK—				
May	$8.15	$8.22½	$8.15	$8.22½
July	8.30	8.35	8.30	8.32½
LARD—				
May	4.12½	4.17½	4.12½	4.15
July	4.22½	4.27½	4.22½	4.25
SHORT RIBS—				
May	4.22½	4.30	4.22½	4.30
July	4.32½	4.40	4.32½	4.40

Cash quotations were as follows: Flour was quiet, firm, and unchanged; No. 2 spring wheat, 73⅝@74⅝c.; No. 2 red, 87½@88c.; No. 2 corn, 22½@23c.; No. 2 oats, 16½c.; pork, $8.05@8.10; lard, $4.05@4.15; short rib sides, $4.15@4.25; dry salted shoulders, $4.50@4.75; short clear sides, $4.37½@4.50; whisky, $1.17.

CHICAGO LIVE STOCK MARKET.

UNION STOCK YARDS, ILL., March 4.—CATTLE—Receipts, 11,000 head; market firm early, later declining; common to extra steers, $4.50@5.40; stockers and feeders, $3.35@4.25; cows and bulls, $1.90@3.75; Texans, $3.50@4.25.

HOGS—Receipts, 33,000 head; market firm; heavy packing and shipping lots, $3.50@3.75; common to choice, $3.50@3.75; choice assorted, $3.70@3.80; light, $3.60@3.77½; pigs, $3.20@3.77½.

SHEEP—Receipts, 14,000 head; market slow; inferior to choice, $2.75@4.50; lambs, $4.50@5.15.

NAVAL STORES.

WILMINGTON, N. C., March 4.—ROSIN—Firm; strained, $1.50; good strained, $1.55.

TURPENTINE—Firm; machine, 27½c.; irregular, 27c.

TAR—Firm at 95c.

CRUDE TURPENTINE—Nominal; hard, $1.30; soft, $1.80.

CHARLESTON, S. C., March 4.—TURPENTINE—Dull at 27c.

ROSIN—Quiet. Quotations: A., B., C., D., E., and F., $1.60; G., $1.45; H., $1.50; I., $1.60; K., $1.70; M., $1.75; N., $1.80; W. G., $1.85; W. W., $2.05.

SAVANNAH, GA., March 4.—TURPENTINE—Firm at 27½c.; sales, 291 casks; receipts, 91 casks.

ROSIN—Firm; sales, 1,009 barrels; receipts, 1,846 barrels. Quotations: A., B., C., D., E., and F., $1.45; G., $1.50; H., $1.60; I., $1.70; K., $1.80; M., $1.85; N., $1.90; W. G., $1.95; W. W., $2.15.

ST. LOUIS MARKET.

ST. LOUIS, MO., March 4.—FLOUR—Unchanged.

WHEAT—Higher; May, 87½c. bid; July, 72½@72⅝c.

CORN—Steady; receipts, 81,845 bushels; shipments, 96,135 bushels; March, 20¼c.; May, 21⅝@21¾c.

OATS—Steady; March, 17c., nominal; May, 18c.

PORK—Standard mess, new, $8.45; old, $7.90.

LARD—Prime steam, $4.00; choice, $4.05.

BACON—Shoulders, $4.75; extra short clear, $5.00; clear ribs, $5.25; clear sides, $5.62½.

DRY SALTED MEATS—Shoulders, $4.62½; extra short clear, $4.62½; clear ribs, $4.75; clear sides, $4.87½.

Other articles unchanged.

CINCINNATI MARKET.

CINCINNATI, O., March 4.—FLOUR—Quiet; winter patent, $4.50@4.75; fancy, $4.15@4.30; spring patent, $4.35@4.70; do. fancy, $3.40@3.70.

WHEAT—Nominal; No. 2 red, 90@90½c.

CORN—Quiet; No. 2 white, 24½c.; No. 2 mixed, 22½c.

OATS—Dull; No. 2 white, 20c.

LARD—Steady; kettle, $4.75; prime steam, $4.00.

DRY SALTED MEATS—Steady; shoulders, $4.37½; short ribs, $4.37½; short clear, $4.50; clear bellies, $4.75.

BACON—Steady; loose shoulders, $4.62½; short ribs, $4.75; short clear, $4.75; clear bellies, $5.25.

WHISKY—Steady at $1.17.

NEW YORK DRY GOODS MARKET.

NEW YORK, March 4.—Trading in the dry goods market to-day, while showing no increase in any of the departments, was fully up to that of the preceding days of the week. Prices are steadily held.

TOBACCO EXCHANGE.

Richmond, Va., March 4, 1897.

Sales of new dark loose tobaccos on the Richmond (Va.) breaks to-day: Shockoe warehouse sold 7,520 pounds; highest price, $7.25. Crenshaw's warehouse sold 3,800 pounds; highest price, $9. Total, 10,320 pounds; highest price, $9.

Private sales reported to the secretary of the Richmond Tobacco Trade to-day: Leaf (dark), 15 hogsheads; lugs (dark), 4 hogsheads. Total, 19 hogsheads.

The tobacco inspector reports to-day: Inspections—Bright, 19 hogsheads; dark, 21 hogsheads and 7 tierces. Reinspections—Bright, 36 hogsheads; dark, 43 hogsheads.

Shockoe, Thorton's, Alleghany, Old Dominion, Davenport's, Planters, Crenshaw's, and Seabrook's tobacco warehouses report to-day: Receipts, 24 packages; deliveries, 44 packages.

United States internal revenue collections on tobaccos for the city of Richmond, Va., to-day: Cigars and cigarettes, $2,149.80; plug tobaccos, $2,397.36. Total, $4,547.16.

A fine break of bright loose tobaccos at Planters warehouse for to-morrow. First sale at this warehouse.

Fair breaks of new dark loose tobaccos at Shockoe and Crenshaw's warehouses for to-morrow (Friday), March 5, 1897.

The "Petersburg Record" of Wednesday, March 3, 1897, says:

Mr. F. W. Jones, an old tobacconist, sold at Oaks warehouse this week dark wrappers at $25 per one hundred pounds. This is the highest price this season. He also sold a lot at $19. This tobacco was raised by Mr. H. A. Smith, of the county of Brunswick.

The market is active and all fine grades are in demand.

Receipts this week, 469 hogsheads; sales of loose, 657,155.

The following will show the movement of tobacco during the past week at the various warehouses:

	Receipts.	Loose.
Farmers	106	185,700
Oaks	52	57,980
Centre	103	133,765
Moore's	97	137,020
West Hill	111	142,770
Total	469	657,155

Inspected to date, 490.
Same time last year, 960.

Messrs. Frazer & Tompkins, tobacco commission merchants, No. 108 south Twelfth street, Richmond, Va., in their weekly circular, make the following comments for the week on tobacco:

BRIGHTS—Unchanged. Wrappers and fillers continue in fair demand and cutters and smokers dull; very little doing.

SUN-CURED—Receipts and offerings of new loose light. Market weak and prices lower.

NEW DARK—Receipts of new loose continue to decrease. Good to fine leaf in good demand at quotations. Other grades lower and dull. All good to fine leaf in hogsheads continue in active demand, while medium and common leaf and lugs are dull. Receipts increasing.

And quote prices current as follows:

SUN-CURED TOBACCO.

Lugs	$ 1.00@$ 3.00
Short leaf	2.00@ 6.00
Long leaf	6.00@ 8.00
Wrappers	9.00@ 15.00

BRIGHT TOBACCOS.

Smokers—	
Common	$ 5.00@$ 6.00
Medium	7.00@ 9.00
Fine	10.00@ 11.00
Cutters—	
Common	10.00@ 12.00
Medium	15.00@ 17.00
Fine	20.00@ 22.00
Fancy	@ 25.00
Fillers—	
Common	2.25@ 3.50
Medium	4.50@ 5.50
Good	6.00@ 8.00
Fine	9.00@ 11.00
Wrappers—	
Common	10.00@ 12.50
Medium	12.50@ 15.00
Good	25.00@ 30.00
Fine	35.00@ 40.00
Fancy	45.00@ 50.00
DARK TOBACCOS—REORDERED.	
Lugs	$ 1.75@$ 3.00
Short leaf	3.50@ 5.50
Long leaf	7.00@ 10.00
Selections	12.00@ 15.00
NEW TOBACCOS—DARK.	
Lugs	$ 1.00@$ 1.75
Short leaf	2.50@ 3.50
Medium leaf	4.00@ 5.00
Long leaf	6.50@ 7.50
Selections (stemming)	8.00@ 12.00
Wrappers	9.00@ 15.00

MARINE INTELLIGENCE.

PORT WEST POINT, MARCH 4, 1897.

ARRIVED.

Steamship Accomac, Thompson, Norfolk, passengers and general cargo.

SAILED.

Steamship Accomac, Thompson, Norfolk, passengers and general cargo.

The Annual Debate.

The annual public debate of the Mu Sigma Rho Society of the Richmond College will take place in the College Hall this evening, beginning at 8 o'clock.

The question for discussion is, "Resolved, That the government should own and control all its railroad systems." The handling of this problem devolves upon Messrs. Oscar L. Owens and George N. Skipwith, for the affirmative, and Messrs. Herbert L. Norfleet and J. Alfred Garrett, for the negative. Others who will take part in the exercises are: Messrs. B. Mercer Hartman, president; Walter S. McNeill, reader, and Ernest O'Bannon, declaimer.

The arrangements for the debate are in charge of a committee, as follows: Messrs. Montie L. Rea, chairman; Alfred R. Willingham, Thomas B. McAdams, C. Burnley Lankford, and Calder T. Willingham.

VALUABLE TO TOBACCO MEN.

How Fragrant Havana Tobacco Can Be Produced in Virginia.

COLONEL WHITEHEAD'S EXPERIMENTS

Interesting Information Furnished by Consul-General Fitzhugh Lee—Havana Tobacco Can Be Produced in Virginia and North Carolina.

Colonel Thomas Whitehead, Commissioner of Agriculture, has lately been engaged in experiments which will doubtless prove of the greatest interest to the tobacco growers of Virginia. Colonel Whitehead says:

"Believing that the tobacco planters of Virginia might, if successful in the experiment, secure some benefits from a protective tariff, from which agriculture had never received any heretofore, and satisfied that the Tidewater section of Virginia could produce the same tobacco now that it produced when found in the mouths of the Indians, and thence grew into a great trade, literally making a great State, I started the experiment for testing whether the fragrant Havana cigar tobacco could not be produced in Virginia and North Carolina as it has been (and better) in Florida and California.

TIDEWATER TOBACCO.

"I had these facts: The finest smoking (to say nothing of chewing) tobacco was produced in Tidewater Virginia—so fragrant, so exhilarating, so tempting, that despite the opposition of Church and State, it succeeded in becoming a great commercial tree, and led as the money crop in the marts of the world.

"Second. That the population of Virginia was still composed of those who had inherited a knowledge of tobacco in all its phases. Its cultivation and adaptation to particular soils, its curing to secure color, texture, and flavor, the manner necessary to the best quality, the effect of the seasons, were all known intuitively to the Virginian born and raised on the plantation. Third. I had many years ago seen the experiment tried on a small scale with perfect success as to fragrance and color with seed imported from Cuba. Fourth. In the experiment station and Departments of Agriculture the people had the means of testing soils, fertilizers, and the analysis of plants far ahead of any past generation, and last I found from reliable cigar manufacturers that imported Cuban wrappers cost not less than $3 per pound, and fillers over $1, and that California and Florida tobacco produced and handled by a population without the tobacco experience that Virginians have naturally, sells for prices greatly beyond what is received for the best Virginia tobacco. For these reasons, I wrote to my old commander, General Fitz Lee ("may his tribe increase") to see if he could secure me genuine fragrant Havana seed from a plantation and from a reliable planter. Promptly I got the seed, and put a short notice in the papers, and have received and filled hundreds of applications. I received the following letter from Hon. W. J. Hubard, of Buckingham:

MR. HUBARD WRITES.

"Centreville Postoffice,
"Buckingham County, Va.,
"February 16, 1897.

"Captain Whitehead, Commissioner of Agriculture:

Dear Sir,—Some days ago I noticed an article from you upon tobacco, a subject that I have for some years felt great interest in, and I write to ask you to send me some seed (Cuban), promising that it shall have a fair trial.

"Permit me to express the regret that, owing to press of business, I suppose your article was so limited, and I write to suggest that you give the tobacco growers another letter with information upon character of soil, manner of preparing the land (that is, whether deep or shallow ploughing is best in first breaking the land), with the subsequent method of cultivating, caring and handling the same, for both the wrapper and filler, as from my limited experience and observation, I take it that each would require a different soil, &c., to produce the highest class. This information could be easily obtained from General Lee, and would, I have no doubt, be greatly appreciated by all persons interested in tobacco growing.

"Will you pardon me for calling your attention to the shipping tobacco of this State? Analysis shows that Virginia produces the highest type (that is, tobacco containing more of the essential elements) than any other State, and that, owing to this, is less capable of being adulterated than any other, and for this reason has fallen under the ban of manufacturers as, owing to the fact that it contains a large per cent. of oil, it will not act as a sponge to absorb foreign matter. Hence the preference for Western tobaccos now. Whilst this is, no doubt, all very well for the manufacturers it is directly against the interest of the consumers, as it requires him to use more tobacco; especially is this true of all limestone tobacco belts, and it has been a matter of not only regret, but surprise, to me that our Virginia tobacconists did not take a just view of their own product, and educate the public as to the true merits of one of our greatest farm products, just as was the case with the Connecticut seed leaf. Asking that you will pardon this lengthy letter, I am,

"Very truly, your friend,
"W. J. HUBARD."

FORMULA PREPARED.

"Desiring to do all I could to carry out this experiment, I prepared the formula below, based upon my own personal experience and that of the best Virginia planters upon an investigation of the cultivation, etc., in Florida and California, and now advise those who receive the seed to look carefully into this formula and into the paper prepared in Cuba sent here by General Lee, and then use then the Virginia experience applying it to every phase of the subject in the selection of soil and cultivation, priming and topping, cutting and curing and handling and ordering, and I hope there may be money in the move for our people, who sadly need it.

The following from Gen. Fitz. Lee is in reply to the number of questions and answers which I asked him to get from experienced and successful producers of the best Havana tobaccos:

GENERAL LEE'S INFORMATION.

Q. Character of soil—Sandy, clay or loam, new or old land?

A. The soil of San Luis (San Luis, the finest tobacco of Vuelta Abajo) is sandy and gravelly, and has been cultivated for the past 25 or 30 years.

The soil of Remartes (Remartes de Guano, the farthest point west of Habana) is deep and sandy, and has been under cultivation for a period of from 15 to 20 years.

Q. Number of plants to acre, mode of cultivation, topping and priming?

A. The production of one "Caballeria" (about 33 1-3 acres) may be estimated at 150 bales, and the number of plants on one "Caballeria" at 500,000.

The nursery for the young plants is made in beds, either on cultivated land or on land previously untilled, from July to October, when the planting season begins, terminating in the month of January. When the time comes for transplanting the young plants from the nursery the ground is improved for their reception by being ploughed four times in contrary directions, after which it is raked and smoothed with a "plana," which is a piece of heavy wood. Then furrows are cut at a distance from each other of 60 to 70 centimetres, in which the plants are planted at intervals of 25 to 30 centimetres.

Fifteen or twenty days after planting the tobacco is hoed, the weeds are removed and fresh earth is heaped round the plant, and if the soil is good and the weather favorable in 20 or 30 days topping may be commenced and the plants should be examined and freed from insects. No plant should be topped unless it has between 12 and 16 leaves.

Q. Cutting and curing?

A. The time for cutting is very variable, as it depends entirely on the maturity of the plant, which is indicated in the first instance by a pimple which makes its appearance on the leaf, and later on by the leaf itself turning a light orange color. The leaves are cut in pairs, called "mancuernas," which are placed on rods 4 1-2 yards long called "cujes" (withes). After cutting, if the weather is good, the tobacco leaves are exposed to the sun for two or three days on "tendales" (drying apparatus), and then taken to the curing houses, which are closed hermetically should the wind blow from the north or northeast, but thrown open should a southerly or humid wind prevail. It takes two and a half months before the leaves are completely dry and ready to be "empilonado," i. e., piled up. This operation consists in collecting carefully 150 or 200 "mancuernas" or pairs of leaves from the withes and tying them together by their centres by means of a fine piece of "majagua," which is the bark of a Cuban tree and closely resembles bast, after which they are built up in heaps. This must be done in damp weather, and for this reason is generally deferred till the months of May or June.

Q. Stripping and packing?

The time during which the tobacco should be "piled up" cannot be determined with any degree of certainty. If of a good quality it should be "piled up" from forty to fifty days. But if straw-like, fifteen or twenty days are sufficient, or as soon as the first fermentation subsides when the leaves are stripped from the stalks and made into sheaves and sprinkled with a fine sponge with an infusion obtained by steeping a certain quantity of stalks in clear water and stirring every twenty-four hours until the water becomes the color of sherry. The process is known as "blandureando." During the night the leaves are gathered and heaped up in seroons. This is called to "dar burro." The first thing next morning is the "abertura" or sorting of the wrappers, fillers and scraps. The wrappers are then examined by experts and classified under different names and in classes ranging from first and fifteenth—"quabrados" (broken) and "resagos" (refuse.) The leaves are then sheaved. Four leaves making a "monojo" (handfull) and eighty "manojos" a bale. The bale is made by placing four "yaguas," which are the lower and broader extremities of dry palm leaves bound together by three strings in a special frame. The "monojos" are then arranged on the "yaguas" in two rows of three layers each, two layers of thirteen "manojos", and one of fourteen. The "yaguas" are then bent over and the strings pulled tight and secured on top, and finally another cord is fastened round and the bale is complete.

VALUABLE INFORMATION.

Condensed directions for producing cigar tobacco from fragrant Havana seed:

For Tide-Water Virginia—

Bottom land, sandy and gravelly, loam preferable, deeply plowed, thoroughly harrowed before planting, and if necessary, plowed with cultivator and harrowed smooth. Laid off in rows checked three by three feet. Plant late in the evening, and if possible, after a shower. Careful planting will insure quick start and vigorous growth. Stem down the plant, keep out all grass and work thoroughly with cultivator until the buttons appear on. Top none under twelve leaves and up to the button. Use no rank manure. A commercial fertilizer of 8 per cent. phosphoric acid (ava.), 5 per cent. potash, k. 20, derived from sulphate potash, and 4 per cent. ammonia, derived from nitrate soda and dried blood. Put on 500 pounds to the acre. Cure by sun or air. Flue-curing would do for fillers, but might lessen the fragrance. In curing and handling follow Cuban directions modified by personal experience.

Middle Virginia—

New ground with sandy top soil. Growth, hickory, dog-wood, white oak preferable. Keep middle of rows well broken at first.

Piedmont—

Black rock land, south-eastern side of foot-hills. Growth hickory, dogwood, white oak and huckleberry slopes. Rows, three and one-quarter feet by two feet in hill, plant or ridge, made by turning plow. Coulter middle of rows, first working.

Valley—

If tried in this section select lightest sandiest lands and follow directions as to Piedmont. The bright tobacco lands of Southwest Virginia could probably make decided success on southern exposure.

Blue Ridge Division—

Follow directions for Middle Virginia. Southern exposure in Floyd, Carroll, and Grayson, in the valleys would succeed.

The same directions for cultivating, topping, harrowing, curing, handling, etc. modified by the Virginia personal experience of the planter applies to any section. The Southern Planter for January and February contains a full description of the tobacco culture in Florida, which will repay the reader.

THOMAS WHITEHEAD,
Commissioner.

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