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POTASH SITUATION AND FERTILIZERS

Peculiar Condition That Southern Farmers Are Much Interested In.

TWO GOVERNMENTS ARE UP AGAINST IT

Germany and Uncle Sam Have Matter Under Consideration. Diplomacy and Tariff Regulations Cut Figure—Virginia and Carolina Farmers Interested.

BY FRANK S. WOODSON,
Industrial Editor.

Two weeks ago, at the request of a number of farmers in Virginia and North Carolina, who are large buyers of commercial fertilizers, I undertook to get at the bottom of the "potash situation," as developed by recent action of the German government, which action, if not headed off in some way, will inevitably result in increased prices for fertilizers, which the Southern farmers must pay. In my researches on the subject I ran across an interview in the New York Sun with R. S. Bradley, of Boston, chairman of the board of directors of the American Agricultural Chemical Company. In comments on Mr. Bradley's talk with the newspaper man some injustice was perhaps done that gentleman. My attention having been called to that fact, I have sought further light on the subject.

More Light.

From reliable semi-official sources I learn that renewed attention is being directed to the predicament in which American farmers in general, and Southern farmers in particular, have been placed by the action of the German government in imposing a heavy tax on exports of potash to the United States. Since then several Congressmen and Senators from the Southern States have called on the President and the Secretary of State in Washington and urged action by this government for the protection of Southern farmers, for, as before stated, the "potash situation" has become a question of diplomacy and a matter of treaty between the two governments. Be it understood in the beginning that potash, which is produced only in Germany, is an essential in the manufacture of all commercial fertilizers and must affect prices.

The Law, and Why.

It is asserted, and has not been contradicted, that the tax law recently passed by the German authorities became a law at the instance of the German potash trust "and for the expressed purpose of depriving Americans of the benefits of their low-price contracts with non-syndicate potash mines."

Situation Summed Up.

The statement I have goes on to say: "The amount of this tax is more than the entire cost at the mines to consumers under their low-price contracts and makes the price on deliveries in the United States much greater than the old syndicate prices. The American contracts were made long before the law was passed. This law was enacted with the deliberate intention to destroy existing contracts, to coerce all mines into the syndicate, and so to bring about a return to high prices and take away the market made in America by low-price producers."

Notwithstanding this, every effort has been made to save American consumers from the consequences of the tax law, the effects of which are likely to be severely felt. The hope is expressed that President Taft and Secretary Knox, in whose hands the whole matter now rests, will be able to secure American farmers some relief. A representative of the State Department, who has been in Berlin endeavoring to bring about a favorable settlement, has just returned to the United States, and the action of the administration following the filing of his report is anxiously awaited by agricultural interests.

Hearing From the People.

And this is why the Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina and Virginia Congressmen and Senators are besieging the Department of State and trying to have Secretary Knox and President Taft sit up and take notice. These Congressmen have heard from their suffering constituents, and through them the Department of State is hearing from the same constituency.

That the potash situation may be made entirely clear, and that any errors I may have made two weeks ago in treating the subject may be corrected, I quote largely from the data received and above referred to, which data goes more explicitly into details than I did two weeks ago or that I have been able to do in the above.

From this circular I learn that about 700,000 tons of actual potash are annually produced; of this amount the United States consumes about one-fifth.

Up to July 1, 1909, the production of potash for twenty years had been absolutely controlled as to quantity and price by a syndicate, regulated by law, in which the German government participated as an owner of potash mines.

On the date stated, the syndicate was broken up by internal dissensions, and one important produced made contracts on a basis very favorable to American consumers for their supply of potash for the following seven years.

Prior contracts made in 1906 with independent fertilizer manufacturers in the United States provided that the price paid by them should be as low as that paid by any American consumer.

When, therefore, a contract was made on July 1, 1909, by a non-syndicate producer for potash to be delivered to the United States at a price about 80 per cent. less than the old syndicate prices, practically all American potash consumers were placed upon this favorable basis, and the control of the American market passed to the non-syndicate mines.

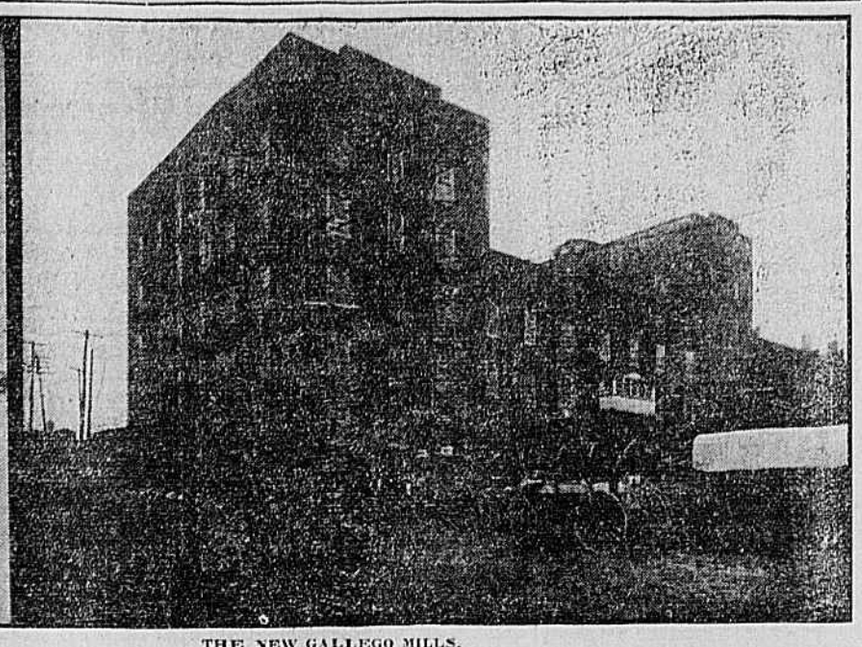
Retaliation for Low Price Making.

Upon the demand of the syndicate, and for the expressed purpose of de-

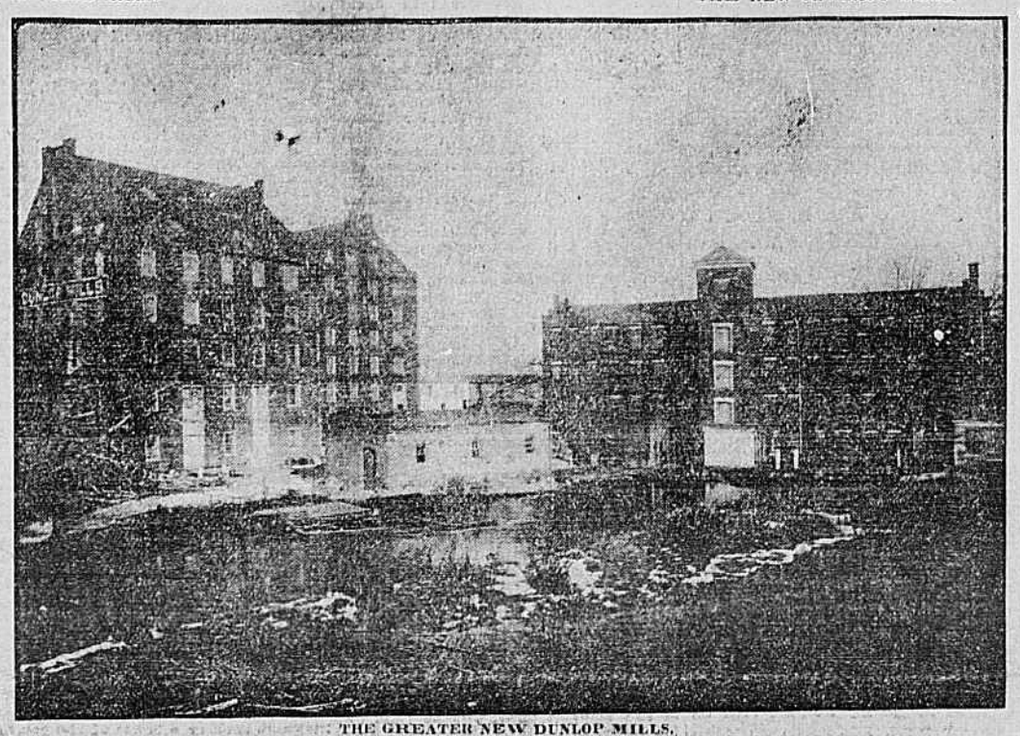
(Continued on Second Page.)

THREE GREAT FLOURING MILLS IN ONE

THE OLD SHOCKOE MILLS.



THE NEW GALLEGO MILLS.



THE GREATER NEW DUNLOP MILLS.

REAL ESTATE AND BUILDING NEWS

Calmness and Serene Quiet Always Come Just Before the Christmas Time.

BRIGHT FINANCIAL OUTLOOK

Every Indication That New Year Will Open Up Brisk and Lively.

There is a calm and serene feeling in the real estate market. It is true that the sales of the past week, both within the city limits and out in the suburbs, were smaller than they have been for several weeks past, but this is just a feature of the holiday season which is right now at hand. The sales of the week amounted to not much more than $100,000, but they were all bona-fide sales, consisting mainly in residential property, and but little of the trading or swapping business figures in the results.

The outlook is in every way encouraging. The rumors of big deals that are likely to be closed up early in the new year are backed up by encouraging reports from the financiers. I have heard a number of reports that are exceedingly encouraging along this line, and they all tend to show that the financial conditions are all that dealers and speculators and permanent investors in real estate can wish for.

One of these reports is to the effect that one of the biggest financial concerns in the country has been considering real estate conditions in Richmond, greater Richmond, if you please, and the agent of this concern has felt no hesitation in making it known that money is now easy, much more so than heretofore. This means, as explained to me by men in position to know what they are talking about, that with the opening of the new year home builders and other folks who can count on real estate to furnish the security, will have little or no trouble in getting all the money they want for legitimate investment in and around Richmond.

Planning for the New Year.

All of this is encouraging to the agents, and while they are glad enough to have a quietness from now until after the holidays that will enable them to foot up the books and see just where they are at, it is very evident that they are planning for big things for the early months of the coming year.

It will take a week or two to complete these plannings, and so the indications are that they will not make any special efforts for that length of time, to rush sales. All of these things conspire to create a holiday lethargy in the real estate market, a lethargy that may and probably does mean mighty big things to follow close upon the heels of the holiday solistice.

Some Good Business.

In the meantime there is a little something doing. Quite a number of homes changed hands during the week, some of them being bought by speculators or investors, and not a few by people who are getting tired paying rent and want to live in their own homes. The larger number of these deals were made within the city limits, but many of them were made out in the suburbs. Intense cold weather, intense for this section—and who ever before head of so much long continued cold weather in this region previous to Christmas—is well calculated to congeal the ardor of a prospective suburbanite. Thus it happens that the agents who love to be eloquent on the subject of suburban delights have found some of their eloquence frozen in the spigot, the same way some of the suburbanites found the water that is supposed to course through their bathtubs. Towever, there has been some good business in the suburbs. Lots were sold in Westhampton, in Ginter Park, in Battery Court, in Woodland Heights and in some of the other delightful suburbs.

More Trolley Service.

There is a pleasing rumor to the effect that the Richmond and Henrico Railway Company have arranged to run their line out to Ginter Park, thus giving the suburb three trolly lines. W. F. Jenkins, the vice-president and general manager of the line, has recently bought a splendid lot in Ginter Park, and closed a contract with a builder to erect for him a splendid home.

Folks are guessing that the vice-president was just locating on his proposed line, and the fact that he has bought out there and is going to build has a tendency to confirm the report that the line will take in the park.

(Continued on Third Page.)

LEAF TOBACCO SALES FOR THE PAST WEEK

Large Deliveries in All of the Virginia and Carolina Markets—Too Large, in Fact. Heavy Sales Made.

Notwithstanding the cold weather and some other unfavorable conditions the deliveries of loose leaf tobacco in the Richmond market for the past week were very large, larger perhaps, than they ought to have been. Something over 1,000,000 pounds of the leaf was sold in the five warehouses, and with the exception of about 60,000 pounds of Burley that came from the counties of Orange, Fluvanna, Albemarle, Mecklenburg and Louisa in Virginia and from neighboring counties in West Virginia, all of the offerings were of the sun-cured stock.

The farmers have been advised not to market their goods too freely, that is to say not faster than the manufacturers can handle it. Possibly the farmers, or a good many of them, are ignorant of the fact that the leaf; the sun-cured stock the manufacturers buy to-day is not put on the market by them in the manufactured state for twelve months. Now to keep this leaf they have to put it in order, pack it away in hogsheads to be held for a whole year. For this purpose they have ordering and drying houses, and these houses and the machinery with which they are equipped have just so much capacity, and when they are choked up to the extent of that capacity the manufacturers must quit buying.

To illustrate: Suppose Bill Jones's ordering and redrying capacity is 50,000 pounds a week and the breaks get so heavy by the eagerness of the growers to market their goods, that he buys that 50,000 pounds the first sales day of the week. To buy any more the other days of the week he runs the risk of having the leaf to rot or greatly detoriate on his hands before he gets it in keeping shape.

While he is willing and anxious to pay the grower the outside price for the raw leaf, he is not so patriotic as to take that risk of having damaged goods on his hands, and as a natural result of too heavy breaks he keeps off the market the other days of the week, and when one or two or three manufacturers drop off the market, down goes the price of the weed, and then the farmers cry out, "We are in the hands of the trust," or something just as bad. It is a physical impossibility for the manufacturers of the sun-cured stock to handle the big crop of 1910 in three months, and if the growers of that big crop will insist upon throwing the same on the market within ninety days they will have only themselves to blame for lower prices. The thing to do is to take from seven to nine months to market the crop, instead of rushing it to town within three or four months, and the growers are now in financial condition to do just this thing.

The deliveries last week were larger than the capacity of the redrying and ordering shops of the manufacturers and consequently with two or three manufacturers driven from the market, prices necessarily weakened a fraction. However, the figures obtained on all really desirable goods were in the main satisfactory to the sellers, and many farmers went home with big Christmas money in their pockets.

The warehousemen were careful not to overload the floors, and they held the shipped goods back, giving the wagon deliveries first chance. Because of this package goods have accumulated in every warehouse in the town. These, with large Burley deliveries, will be put on sale to-morrow, so that the floors may be cleared for the wagon trade by Tuesday morning. Sales will continue from Monday to Friday, and then they will be called off until January 2.

The sales of reprized hogshead lots were comparatively small during the week and the probability is that there will be but little business doing in this line until after the holidays.

Petersburg's Tobacco Conditions.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Petersburg, Va., December 17.—The tobacco sales this week aggregated 500,000 pounds, carrying the sales for the season to over 1,000,000 pounds. The planters, with the aid of a light rain and the "water wagon," have brought in a large quantity of the lower grades of their crops, reserving the finer grades for a natural season. The receipts show well, well in color and substance for fillers. The buyers of fine shipping and fine dark wrappers have brought but little so far for the reason that no very fine grades of either have been yet offered. Samples of fine leaf shown indicate a very fine quality, but they will not be subjected to artificial moistening. After the holidays heavier receipts and better grades than those yet offered may be expected. We quote prices for dark tobaccos for this week as follows:

Sand lugs	$ 5.50	@	$ 6.75
Good lugs	6.25	@	8.00
Short leaf	7.50	@	8.50
Short wrappers	8.50	@	10.00
Medium leaf	9.00	@	10.50
Medium shipping	9.50	@	11.00
Good to fine shipping	11.00	@	14.00
Medium to good wrappers	11.00	@	12.50
Fine wrappers	20.00	@	25.00

Danville Tobacco Market.

Danville, Va., December 17.—The weather has not been very favorable for handling tobacco for some time past, but nevertheless receipts have been very heavy for ten days. The offerings have been generally in good condition, but much of the tobacco sold has been watered. Some exceptionally fine crops have been sold recently, but taken as a whole the week's deliveries have been below an average in quality.

Prices on low grades continued to be somewhat lower than at the opening of the crop, while the better grades have been firm at the top of the market. Some fine wrappers have brought as much as 50c., and fine cutters as high as 28c. this week.

Unless the weather is exceptionally marsh large receipts are looked for until the market closes for the holidays on the 22d instant.

As is usual at this season of the year, trade in redried tobaccos is quiet, but business has been fairly active for export account.

Bedford City Tobacco Market.

Bedford City, Va., December 17.—Notwithstanding the fact that the temperature has registered at and below the freezing point for most of the week and the ground has been covered with snow and the roads slippery with ice, the breaks at the warehouses have been the largest of the season. While little, if any, of the fine grades of tobacco has been offered, the prices obtained for inferior grades have been high, and the planters are well content with the results. While the number of pounds marketed could not be obtained, an idea of the quantities may be obtained from the moneys paid by the two banks in checks to the planters, which amounted to more than $15,000. This, of course, does not represent the entire amount that was paid for the week's sales, as that was cash transactions, commissions and sums returned the warehouses for loans for the cultivation of the crops.

Should the weather become mild and damp much tobacco will be rushed in. Most that has been sold thus far has been artificially ordered by water or steam, which

(Continued on Third Page.)

WORK TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO SOUTH

Southern Railroads to Co-Operate in "Back Home Movement."

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Bristol, Va., December 17.—"The Back Home Movement," inaugurated by W. D. Roberts, assistant industrial agent of the Carolina, Clinchfield and Ohio Railway, assumed definite shape when an invitation was forwarded from that railroad to the industrial agents of the Southern roads to meet in conference at Altapass, N. C., where ways and means will be devised for a co-operative movement by all the roads, with the following end in view:

1. To induce as many as possible of the thousands of Southern people who have emigrated to other States to return to the States of their nativiy.

2. To prevent further emigration, as far as may be possible, from the Southern States.

3. To induce an inflow of population from the Northwestern States, where the winters are long and extremely cold, and provisions for clothes and fuel incur a heavy annual outlay of money.

Mr. Roberts has succeeded in arousing a general interest in all parts of the United States, and has done more during the last six months towards making known nationally the advantages of the South than has ever been accomplished, perhaps, by any similar agency.

He is sending out carefully prepared statistics showing the money that can be made in the Southern Appalachian region by growing fruit, poultry, garden vegetables, corn, wheat, clover, alfalfa and various other grasses; broom corn, hogs, cattle and horses. He has dwelt particularly on the climatic conditions and the educational and religious environments.

As a result of it all, people are actually coming back home, and others who had never inquired about the opportunities offered by the South, are coming here, investing their money, and helping to develop the country.

Lynchburg Tobacco Market.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Lynchburg, Va., December 17.—John D. Oglesby, of the Lynchburg Tobacco Warehouse Company, Inc., makes the following report of tobacco sold on the Lynchburg market:

Sold week ending December 9	439,400
Sold week ending December 16	992,000
Increase this week	552,600
Sold from September 1 to December 16, 1910	2,668,600

Sales this week were the largest of the season.

The greater part of the offerings consisted of inferior and medium grades, and all such grades show activity and realized good prices, the average price being higher than the corresponding week last year. All grades of tobacco are in splendid demand, at quotations below:

Lugs, common	$ 5.00	to	$ 6.00
Lugs, good	6.00	to	7.75
Leaf, common	6.00	to	7.50
Leaf, medium	7.75	to	9.50
Leaf, good	9.50	to	11.50
Leaf, fine	11.50	to	13.50
Leaf wrappers	15.00	to	26.00

SEED POTATOES ARE MADE AT HOME

Mountainous Sections of Virginia Can Grow as Good "Cobblers" as the North.

EXPERIMENT STATION'S WORK

Most Interesting Facts That Have Been Brought Out by Actual Demonstration.

For the past two years the Virginia Experiment Station at Blacksburg has been conducting a co-operative experiment with the Truck Experiment Station at Norfolk, to determine whether is is practical to grow potatoes in the mountainous sections of the State, to be used as seed in the Tidewater trucking section. The leading varieties of potatoes grown at Blacksburg were sent to Norfolk and planted there beside Northern grown seed of the same varieties. The results seem to indicate that growing seed potatoes in the higher altitudes of Virginia for use as seed in the trucking sections is practicable and should be profitable.

Professor Johnson's Views.

T. C. Johnson, of the Truck Experiment Station, reports: "In looking over the notes on the potatoes sent from Blacksburg as compared with potatoes obtained from the North, we find that the yield where the potatoes were native was up to that of the Maine grown seed. Comparing the Cobblers you sent with the Cobblers grown in the North, practically no difference was perceptible; the Virginia upland seed seems to be doing as well as the Northern grown seed. I would suggest that you pay special attention to the varieties used in Tidewater Virginia. Possibly 95 per cent. of the potatoes planted for early market are Irish Cobblers, hence other varieties would not be in demand. Our people in Eastern Virginia used about 135,000 barrels of potatoes for seed purposes during the season 1910. A large majority of those were obtained from the North. The prevailing prices were in the vicinity of $3 per barrel, delivered at railroad points in Virginia. In order for people in Western Virginia to get their potatoes used here, it would be important for them to make it to the financial advantage of our people. If the seed potato work could be localized in the upland portion of the State, it will amount to quite a large sum for that section."

Done at Blacksburg.

As to yields which may be expected from Irish Cobbler potatoes, the Experiment Station at Blacksburg states: "Land which will bring forty to fifty bushels of corn should produce from 200 to 300 bushels of potatoes, when a fair quantity of commercial fertilizer is used. Our average yield of this variety for the past two years has been 263 bushels of remarkable tubers. This is on land that usually produces about twenty-five bushels of wheat or about fifty bushels of corn per acre. The only fertilizer used was 100 pounds of sulphate of potash and 300 pounds of acid phosphate per acre. The potatoes followed clover, the second crop of clover being plowed under."

How to Do It.

In growing a good seed potatoe it is very necessary to spray with Bordeaux mixture several times during the season in order to prevent blight and other fungous diseases. Each spraying costs from $1 to $2 per acre. During the seasons of 1909 and 1910 three sprayings per season at Blacksburg gave an average increase of fifty-four bushels per acre over unsprayed potatoes, besides producing smoother and better potatoes. The altitude at Blacksburg is 2,250 feet. The higher the altitude at which the seed potatoes are grown the earlier crop they should produce for the truckers, and earliness is the chief requisite. Probably it would not pay to grow seed potatoes for the truckers at an altitude less than 1,500 feet.

Farmers in Valley and Southwest Virginia, and other high altitude sections of Virginia, who are interested in growing seed potatoes for the trucking section are invited to write for further information to the Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station, Blacksburg.

Will Increase Output.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]

Pocahontas, Va., December 17.—The Pocahontas Consolidated Collieries Company, of this place, will put into operation the first of the year an additional 100 coke ovens, which will increase the output of coke as well as coal for the next year very materially.

MONEY IN WHEAT OF VIRGINIA MAKE

The Dunlop Mills and Their Immense Foreign and Domestic Trade.

RICHMOND'S BIG MILLING INDUSTRY

Richmond and Virginia Mills Can Keep Wheat Growers Busy All the Year Round. Demand for Virginia Grown Grain Largely Exceeds the Present Supply.

BY FRANK S. WOODSON,
Industrial Editor.

Away back yonder in what Uncle Remus would call "de fore de war days" Richmond was a great milling town, but when the Crenshaws and the Haxalls and the Gallegoes were in their prime all of South America got its flour from this town, and every dust of it was made from wheat grown along the James River. In those good old days the James River farmers raised wheat to beat the band. The big plantations below and above Richmond were crowded with slave labor, and wheat was the big money crop for the owners of those broad acres and the owners of those many slaves.

Great ships used to come in here from Brazilian and other South American ports loaded with coffee, and Richmond was the coffee distributing centre of this country. The same ships went back to Rio de Janero and other South American ports "loaded to the gunnales" with flour made in Richmond from Virginia-grown wheat.

Then Came a Change.

In the course of time they got to raising wheat in the Argentine Republic, and the wide-awake Brazilians built mills to grind up that wheat; and to make it pay more largely, Brazil caught on to the protective tariff idea, and its Legislature or Congress, or whatever the ruling body of that country may have been called, made tariff laws that cut America in general, and Virginia in particular, off from that prontable trade. That was the undoing of the Crenshaws and the Haxalls and the Gallegoes of Richmond, and the big Richmond flouring mills went into a temporary state of inocuous desuetude that lasted several years. The old Haxall-Crenshaw Mills, the Dunlop Mills and the Gallego Mills practically retired from business, and the probability is that they would have gone entirely out of existence had it not been for some wide-awake young men, young then, who, having studied the map of the world, concluded that South America was a very small part of the earth, and there were some other foreign fields for progressive Richmond to conquer in a commercial and in a flour-making way.

Young Blood in Evidence.

To go into the details of just how the whole thing came about would be intensely interesting, but the details would take up too much space, more than I have at my command for this issue. It is sufficient to say that some years ago, how many I would not like to say, a young man, young then, named Warner Moore, conceived the idea that Richmond was just as well located for the big milling business as it was in the old days. He and his associates went to work along this line, and before the sleeping folks, who were bewailing the fact that Richmond was not doing the good flour and grain business it used to do, knew what was in the air, they had gotten the Gallego Mills, the Shockoe Mills and the still more famous Dunlop Mills all under one control. Very well did these young people know that because of the curious tariff laws South America was lost to Richmond as a customer for flour, but they had Virginia for a market, all the South for a market, and there was Great Britain and Germany and Holland and the West Indies and all of the balance of the world that was not walled in by absurd tariff laws.

Shipping Facilities.

And then came along the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway and built a line from Richmond to Newport News and made Newport News a great shipping point for all kinds of products of this great country. Warner Moore and his crowd saw their opportunity, and right well have they improved it. Today Richmond is grinding more wheat and shipping more flour to foreign ports than it did in the old days when it swapped Richmond flour for South American coffee, a great deal more. The foreign shipments are now made to all parts of Great Britain, the leading markets supplied with the famous Dunlop brand of flour being Liverpool, Hull, London and Manchester, in England, and from these points all markets in England; Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dundee, Leith and Edinburg, in Scotland; Dublin, Belfast, Cork and other points in Ireland; Amsterdam and Rotterdam, in Holland; various points in other countries; to saw nothing of the immense trade in Havana, Santiago and other points in Cuba and the West Indies. All of these foreign shipments go from Richmond in enormous carload lots to Newport News and thence by ship direct to the ports named, and from those ports they are distributed by rail all over the countries which recognize these ports.

Home Trade Is Enormous.

But the foreign countries I have named are not all of the territory the Dunlop Mills have conquered in the flour line.

To say nothing of their immense local trade, and it is something immense, for there is no nook or corner in Richmond or in all Virginia in which the Dunlop flour is not known and not used by the far-seeing housewives, the company has spread out to other Southern States, and their trade in the two Carolinas, in Georgia and in Florida is simply enormous.

The combined mills employ not less than 300 men and women in one way and another. Their pay roll is great, their barrel and bag account is enormous, their drayage bills are exceedingly large, and in one way and another they distribute a vast deal of money every week that gets loose in the trade channels of Richmond.

Leaving out the local sales of this big concern, I do not think I overestimate the figures when I say that this one concern brings to Richmond about $3,000,000 of outside money every year. That is something like $10,000 every working day in the year. That is a whole lot of money for distribution, isn't it? And that brings me to the point I am aiming at, and if anybody thinks I am writing all of this account as an advertisement for the Warner Moore-Dunlop-Gallego Mills combination, then that anybody is greatly mistaken.

Virginia's Big Chance.

By close questioning I have found out that these mills have to get 80 per cent. of the wheat they grind into flour for foreign and domestic shipment from the West and the Northwest. They prefer the Virginia wheat, because experience has proved to them

(Continued on Third Page.)