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SOMETHING GOING ON ALL THE TIME

DEEPENING ALABAMA RIVER TO MAKE READY FOR PANAMA CANAL

Shipments by Water from the Central Coal Fields to Mobile the Prospect.

MILLIONS EXPENDED ON THE WORK.

Work on Tombigbee and the Black Warrior Rivers Is Progressing—New Orleans to Be Receiving Point — Pensacola a Depot.

Alabama is scarcely among the commonwealths that are finding fault with the United States government in respect to internal waterways improvements, for, no matter what may be the justification for complaint elsewhere, federal expenditures of $8,000,000 to make the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior rivers navigable from the central coal fields to Mobile is solid evidence that the state has not been overlooked on the score of appropriations.

For its motto, Alabama has, "Here we rest.' This may have its value in certain directions, but one thing is sure, the people are not indulging in much resting these days with the Panama canal inviting all that territory bordering on the Gulf of Mexico to prepare for business. Mobile is among the port cities waking up to the vast opportunities ahead, and the deepening of the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior is looked upon as one of the great agencies which are expected to bring much additional wealth to Alabama.

Almost central in the state, Birmingham, the Pittsburg of the south, constitutes the industrial hub of this southern commonwealth. Coal is as plentiful there as it is foreign to some of the New England states. But while Birmingham, of course, glories in this abundance of fuel material, to its particular advantage, there is so much of the "black diamond" lying around that the shipment of coal and coke has assumed immense proportions. The railroads are always more than willing to handle the freight but rates have much to do with finding a profitable market, and when it was considered that water is a natural transportation means, enterprising Alabama set about utilizing the sources.

While the work of the United States government on the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior is expected to be finished in the coming year, it can be said for the undertaking that the $8,000,000 appropriation was stretched out over more than 20 years. And now the wisdom of those who argued for this southern waterway improvement is more easily appreciated. It is not only that Mobile itself will be able to obtain its coal cheaper than ever before, but New Orleans will be made a receiving point for coal to be transshipped southward. By the use of dams and locks constructed on the two rivers, barges drawing six feet of water will be able to carry freight of all kinds to tidewater.

The solution of the inland waterways transportation question lies in the employment of barges of sufficient size to hold large shipments. The ordinary river barge is flat and wide. For use on the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior rivers there will be constructed steel barges, and while they will be 230 feet long and capable of carrying 1,000 tons of freight, they will be narrow enough to pass through the locks without interference. The advantage in this shipping by water may be gathered from the fact that the self propelling steel barges will haul at a speed sufficient to bring freight from the Warrior coal basin to New Orleans in 72 hours which is the identical time it takes to send it by rail. The cost by water will naturally be much less than by railroad.

In 1911 New Orleans used approximately 3,000,000 tons of coal, of which 1,100,000 tons was from Alabama. The remainder was Pittsburgh coal, which is transported down the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers at a cost of $1.75 per ton. Bunker coal is sold at New Orleans f. o. b. steamers at 3.25 per ton. It is anticipated that coal can be bought at the Alabama mines at $1.25 per ton, and that it may be delivered at New Orleans for 90 cents per ton, including selling cost and thus it may be sold at $3 per ton with a profit of 85 cents per ton and a canal charge of 20 cents per ton additional. The company that is back of the barge plan estimates that it can secure contracts for 300,000 tons of bunker coal during the first year of its operation.

There is shipped from the Birmingham district annually for New Orleans and the West outside coal and coke, raw material and general merchandise to the amount of 1,400,000 short tons. From the gulf ports into Alabama there is shipped about 1,400,000 tons, so that the barges need not return upstream empty after they have reached tidewater with their loads.

Regarding the barges to be used on the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior rivers, it is interesting to note that a young Dutchman, John H. Bernhard, conceived the idea of introducing in the United States facilities such as have been profitable in his native Holland. A few years ago Mr. Bernhard had to investigate the coal fields of Alabama, and he was struck with the possibilities for transportation that the rivers opened up, providing they were deepened sufficiently. Knowing then that the government was preparing for a good depth of water, the far-seeing Hollander set to work interesting certain people and as soon as the river route is complete the barges will be ready also.

Alabamans are loud in their praises of the constructive work under way, of which Major Flagler is in charge with G. K. Little, of Tuscaloosa as his immediate assistant. The people who reside along the rivers are witnesses to the fact that the government employes have been true to their tasks, that there has been no lagging behind in dredging or in lock and dam construction. The activity of the authorities also has had a wholesome influence on the negroes of the state, who are aware that the new industrial and commercial era ahead can mean to them only prosperity, providing they take advantage of the educational opportunities. Illiteracy is something that all the southern states have to deal with, and in the measure that river and railroad improvements have been made, in that measure have the people taken fresh courage.

The Holland steel barges that are to go up and down the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior rivers in Alabama will mark a new period in inland transportation. But the effect of the increased freight traffic will be felt beyond the mouth of the river at Mobile. For 75 miles to the east lies Pensocola, Florida, with one of the best harbors on the Gulf of Mexico. Here it is purposed to establish an immense coal depot from which shipments may be made to the central and South American republics, as well as to Panama.

In a general way, it is the opening of the Panama canal that is calling forth much of recent activity along the gulf coast, and Mobile, New Orleans, Galveston and other ports are feeling the tremendous importance of the great event impending when the west and each coast of America become joined by ocean communication. In the strictest sense, Mobile is not on the coast, for it lies some 30 miles up the river. Pensacola has a magnificent harbor—30 miles across—half an hour from the open sea, 30 to 50 feet deep, 30 to 35 feet across the bar. But Pensocola was served until very recently by only one railroad. There are two more roads on the ground now, with others looking over the territory.

While Mobile is up the river, the city has the advantage of half a dozen independent railroad systems, which have steamships as auxiliary service. Private capital is constructing at present large terminals of steel and brick and concrete docks, to take care of the business anticipated.

Mobile has become known as the city on the "line of least resistance from the Panama canal." There are operating at present from the port of Mobile 16 regular lines of steamships, while what are known as "tramp" steamers continually enter the harbor. The Chamber of Commerce and the Busines League are doing a great work for the uplift of the community. Even though it is one of the most historic cities of the South, no other locality has taken on such modern ways as has Mobile, and the city is proud of the fact that one of its sons, Senator Morgan earned the title of the "father of the Panama canal idea."

As for Alabama furher inland there is Birmingham as a testimonial to southern energy linked with northern enterprise. Birmingham is practically a new city, for its progress began with the centering there of a great iron and steel industry. As the home of the Tennessee Coal and Iron Company, Birmingham attained considerable publicity when the United States Steel Corporation question was in the air.

And so the Tombigbee and the Black Warrior rivers are being looked upon today in Alabama as the great coming factors in inland commerce. Between now and the completion of the government work the people along those water routes have time to bestir themselves and when the last lock is finished for uninterrupted traffic of those steel self-propelling barges, there should be a pretty thorough understanding of the possibilities that this improved navigation means will have brought to Alabama and its citizens.

WOMEN HOLD IMPORTANT POSITIONS IN LIBRARIES

Certain Lines of Work in Large Cities Monopolized by the Fair Feminine — Mary Plummer's Record.

New York, July 10.—Nine out of every ten persons employed professionally in the forty branches of the Public Library system of New York are women. Miss Mary Wright Plummer of the Library School of the New York Public Library is of the opinion that this proportion is fairly representative of the whole country. Women's aptitudes seem particularly available in the work, which, in utilizing them, has brought out one of the most curious paradoxes in economics—the difference between woman picking a leisurely, not to say lazy, way through an unsystematized, unbusinesslike round of domesticity, and the same woman, urged on by circumstances, or a finally irresistible greater inclination, and set down at a desk in executive capacity.

Unsystematic and unbusinesslike though she may have been in the domestic round, the same woman at the desk discovers unexpected executive ability, unexpected capacity for handling detail, and unexpected accuracy. It seems to be a matter of training—that will doubtless some day be rightly applied in the domestic round. Applied in the library round it has resulted in a professional class that is becoming more and more highly specialized, more and more effective, and more and more one of the educational reliances of civilization.

Twenty-five years ago the specialization idea took form in the library world in the first library school in the country. It was an adjunct of Columbia College, and after some years of growth and activity, was moved to Albany, to become the New York State Library School. Other schools of similar plan and intent have followed, the newest of which is the New York Public Library School, Miss Plummer, who was a student in the first school, is the principal of the last, having been in the interim the director of the Pratt Institute Library School.

All Done in a Summer.

Her experiences in making the new school assume form out of a void. Immediately following the announcement of Mr. Carnegie's grant last May, makes a record in celerity. Plans that had been little more than hopes had to be pulled down out of the clouds, publicity had to be secured, library commissions had to be interested, a faculty had to be assembled, announcement circulars had to be prepared, patronage had to be secured, and there was just one summer to do it in, and nobody but Miss Plummer to do any of it.

The circular came out in June. On June 8, the first application was in. On July 1 the registrar, Miss Ernestine Rose, former librarian of the Chatham Square branch of the New York Public Library, began the work of answering inquiries, sending out circulars and ordering supplies. By August 1, there were twenty-one applications. On September 8, when the examinations were given, sixty-seven persons took them at the school, thirteen took them in other parts of the country, and five or six entered on college records. Thirty-seven students were accepted representing thirteen States and Canada, and seventeen probationers were put on the lists.

The school has just closed its first year with a class of thirty-two, all but one of whom are women, and twenty of whom will return for the second-year work. Entrance examinations for the 1912-1912 terms were held last week, and the second class to enter for the first-year work will probably total about forty, five of whom are men.

For the first year the School provides a general course, divided up in instruction, study, and practice, the work being classified under aministration, technique, bibliography, and criticism. The subjects are taught by the regular faculty of the School, with assistance from members of the library staff, and lectures by visiting librarians. Nor is attention wholly confined to the distinctively professional topics, lectures of civic and literary import being provided for their broadening and inspiring effect. Satisfactory work in the course is recognized by a certificate.

The Second-Year Course.

The faculty which has assisted Miss Plummer during the initial year consists of Miss Agnes Van Valkenburgh, as head cataloguer, instructor in cataloguing, indexing, and conductor of the fiction seminar; Miss Mary Sutliff, Miss Ernestine Rose, Miss Ida Mendenhall, and Miss Margaret E. Bennett. The second-year course, to which highly recommended certificate holders are eligible, is one conferring paid positions in the library and its branches, with courses of lectures, for which no fee is asked. This assures a living to self-supporting women who wish to avail themselves of the added advantages offered in the second year, and the popularity of the arrangement is suggested in the number of first-year students who will return for second-year work. This year's work is recognized by a diploma, and graduates are free to take positions in any part of the country, the School acting as reference.

Still another phase of the School's work that has its economic value has devloped out of the Public Library's need of assistants qualified for the lowest grade of the library service. The task of securing these assistants has been assigned to the School. Applicants between eighteen and twenty years of age take the entrance examinations and, if accepted, are placed for one month each in four assigned branches. At the end of the four months the eligibles are recommended for vacancies in the D, or lowest, grade of the service. This is paid work, and insures a monthly income to the worker.

No resume of the School's year of history would be complete, perhaps, without some mention of the School's samovar, because the work of no group of women is complete without its social side, and the samovar has played its seemingly predestined part in developing that side. Gathered around it, at school teas, the student body quickly found itself, selected its School pin, and formulated an esprit de corps that is expected to interassociate itself with the School's work more and more satisfactorily year by year.

LOVESICK PRINCE TAKES HIS OWN LIFE

Was Enamored of an American Girl—Once Stationed at Washington—Visited States in 1911.

Paris, July 10.—The European edition of the New York Herald says that Prince Ludovic Pignatelli D'Aragon shot himself with a revolver and lies in a grave condition. It is doubtful if he will recover.

He came recently to the United States where he fell in love with an American girl, but the disparity in their age stood in the way of their marriage and it is alleged that in despair the prince attempted to take his life.

The prince is a Spaniard and was at one time secretary of the Spanish legation at Washington. He has been variously reported engaged to American women but the engagements have been denied. He visited the United States in 1911 being a conspicuous figure in the social activity of New York and Hot Springs.

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Hearing of Dr. Morse's Indian Root Pills, I thought they were worthy of a trial. My surprise was indeed great. From the very first I experienced relief. Continuing with them I found my troubles were slowly but surely leaving me, and before long I once more knew what it was to be free from the harassing effects of the ailments that had long sickened and weakened me. So great is my faith in Dr. Morse's Indian Pills that I shall never on any account be without them."

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WARREN, Pharm. Chemist, SOUTHAMPTON, ENG.

On a recent trip to California, Bert Walker says the Pullman porter acted as though he wanted something from the passengers. "What do you want?" Bert asked him. "Oh, anything you see fit to give, boss," replied the porter. "All right," said Bert. "Boys, let's give the porter three cheers." They did.