



perienced Japanese to plant it. They have 99-year leases. Ten thousand hectares have been planted, another 10,000 hectares are being planted. At 20 centavos to 30 centavos a day, native and Chinese labor is plentiful. Some disease has appeared, not very serious. Plants are said to grow 50% larger in thickness and height than in Davao, but the strippers are as yet little experienced and for this reason the fiber is not up to Davao's in quality.

Rumor is that a British syndicate has leased 100,000 hectares in North Borneo for Manila hemp. It would probably be imprudent to seed such a tract, larger than all Davao's together. Enterprising Japanese in Davao are reported as making progress with a modified stripping machine that does not require twisting the tuxies round a spindle for cleaning. This would make shorter fiber more merchantable, since use of the spindle by the present method tangles fiber ends into waste that must be cut off and sold as tow. An improved machine would extend the useful period of Davao plantations, since the older the plants the shorter the fiber—until after fifteen to eighteen years yields run below commercial values.

But it has been established that run-out fields in Davao can be restored to fertility for Manila hemp and successfully replanted. Yields are somewhat reduced, but the fiber is stronger and finer, hence of more merchantable grade. Borneo is probably a more genuine threat to Commonwealth hemp than Sumatra was. Let us hope not.

### Looking Forward . . .

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when Borneo will not belong to Holland nor to Britain, and has in it nothing but immediate advantage.

But could Washington and the Commonwealth (that is to say, Washington in behalf of the Commonwealth) bring any real pressure to bear in case Holland and Britain were cold to the proposal outlined?

We think the pressure available is considerable. Holland and Britain enjoy many courtesies from the Commonwealth, the rule of *quid pro quo* may be applied—such states are familiar with it: Chamberlain invokes it just now, with Italy, has it in mind with Germany. Holland wishes to have a bank here, and gets it; she wishes to land commercial airplanes here, and will be granted the privilege; besides, she runs many ships to the Commonwealth, and hauls between the Commonwealth and the United States. These are all courtesies, and Britain's here, with two banks, are more extensive. If it came to a matter of swapping, the Commonwealth would have a good deal to talk about. But if the secretariat were established, that this paper proposes because the need of it is so obvious, and the case were worked up as it should be, the conversations should never descend to swapping. Holland and Britain should see at once that an ethnic drive inimicable to the Commonwealth should not be driven into Borneo.

As soon as a democracy is launched anywhere, it has, of course, to look to its boundaries: on every hand it finds nought but opposition, quiescent or active according to circumstances, and it must shoulder through and make room for itself. Problems strikingly similar to the border problems confronting the Commonwealth of the Philippines now, confronted the United States when that federation was founded—with the expectation in:

Europe that it would be shortlived. Some men argued the unimportance of these problems, but wiser men felt their vital importance from the outset and exerted unceasing effort until in James K. Polk's administration they were all resolved. All this was difficult indeed. Circumstances affecting the Commonwealth should yield much more easily.

In America's case, resolution depended upon how the general elections turned; the south and the west blew hot on the questions at issue, the east blew decidedly cold—save for the patriotic apostasy of John Quincy Adams. With Washington handling the situation, the Commonwealth will not have to face this—consistent policy may be expected.

At any rate, the case of Borneo shows clearly, we think, that the machinery for America's successful handling of the state affairs of the Commonwealth is not all in place; that parts are lacking, at Manila, and by all means ought to be provided without delay. We think it also shows that diplomatic questions may be unique to the Commonwealth, that the mere routing of these questions through the state department at Washington is far from being enough for their solution. There must be an office devised, interested in these questions solely. Nor is at all remarkable that the foreign affairs of a people numbering seventeen million persons really require such an office, the Commonwealth's location being what it is. It would rather be remarkable if anything less would be found to serve in the circumstances.

The least that can be said is that Washington, in behalf of the Commonwealth's future—that future associated with the United States or not—must bestir herself with all possible cupidity and intelligence, and without delay.

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