

adequately supplied with raw materials with every prospect of reasonable operation in 1936. The number of desiccated mills actually operating increased by four in 1935.

GENERAL: The year 1935 was a pretty good one for the copra and coconut industries. The average price of copra for the year was nearly double that of 1934 and there was at all times a market, either in Europe or the United States, for copra and oil. For the first time in five years producers of copra were unable to break even. There was not, however, any big margin of profit in the business. The general increase in world prices for fats and oils, accentuated by a temporary shortage in the United States and elsewhere, swept copra and coconut oil up with it, but owing to the excise tax the improvement in coconut oil was far less than in other competing products.

The most significant development in the American oil market during the year was the swing from inedible to edible business. Coconut oil looked expensive to inedible buyers while appearing reasonably priced to edible buyers. This tendency, if continued, is not a healthy condition for it brings the Philippines into greater competition with the American farmer and dairyman than if the oil goes to its normal market, that for soap and other inedible purposes. It is to be hoped that some modification of the tax law may be evolved which will permit the resumption of the previous and more reasonable consumption percentages. Incidentally, the Philippine Government has not as yet recovered

any of the proceeds of the excise tax guaranteed it by the excise tax law. These proceeds are being held up pending the determination of certain suits brought against the Government based on the legality of the excise tax law.

What 1936 has in store for us is problematical, but general opinion seems to favor a continuance of erratic markets, with demand largely spot, for at least six months to come. Prospects are good for a normal Philippine copra crop.

The Egg-Sucking Dog

The harvest-home festival at the plantation this story concerns was given early in December after the rice had been out and some of it bundled and shocked. Searching for eggs for the custard, to be made with coconut milk, the landlord found that a dog had got into the hen run and sucked 16 eggs, leaving few for the custard. Going again to the plantation the next morning, he took along his shotgun and one shell; if the guilty dog came around he intended to let him have it.

Because a good deal of rice in the sheaf had been stolen of nights, a few sheaves at a time, the thieves sometimes even cutting the rice, a watchman had been hired to patrol the fields and supervise the tenants during the cutting, drying, shocking and stacking. This night the watchman was given the shotgun, and told that after his rounds at midnight he might fire the gun and come back to the house and sleep. So the young man did, but as soon as he fired the gun 15 men who had been in lurking, rose

and surrounded him, overpowered him and seized the shotgun.

He made a fight to keep the shotgun, but this was vain; gun and all, he had to go along with his captors across a river boundary and a distance of 4 to 5 kilometers to an open lot in a village where more than 100 men and women, communists, whom he counted, were going through a drooping ceremony of folk song, adapted to the new faith, and fervid exhortations from leaders.

Already he had taken thought of his life by ceasing resistance and volunteering to join up with his captors. So, the ceremonies over, he was quartered in a hut with his 15 captors, a brace of whom slept either side of him, with legs over his, to make sure that he lay quietly without trying either to retrieve his gun, or make away with any of the several pistols they had, and attempt escape.

The night following he joined 60 of the band on a foray; visiting a distant rice field where the grain had been shocked, each man took a bundle, and thus provided, all returned to the headquarters village. Here each family of the 60 was given a bundle of rice; *luzons* were soon sounding from busy pestles, and by daylight when the constabulary might be coming along, all the rice had been hulled and sacked.

This day vigilance over the young involuntary recruit began relaxing after early in the morning, as was told him was ceremonial custom during initiation, he was given a communist haircut. It proved to be close cropping. He then washed

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his head in the coldest water he could find, knowing it would provoke a headache. This was his subterfuge to get to the river, to bathe and ease his fever—and it worked because he had been such an earnest thief in the night and won his comrades' confidence.

Only one companion went with him to the river, who scurried back to the house at the call to breakfast. Opportunity thus rising, the young captive forced the river and made his escape naked to a breechcloth with his clothes under his arm; and ran for his life down the road to the next village, where, on necessity his appeal, he was let ride a bicycle away home, where he peddled to police headquarters at the town hall and made his report. That afternoon posses of police and constabulary sallied forth on the route of the communists, looking for the inseparable Fifteen and summarily arresting, along the way, men at the houses where these men had made intermediate halts with their prisoner. They took a man from each household, and tightened their dragnet round the villages involved.

The puny results to date are charges against one man found with letters from the captain of the Fifteen on his person—one letter ordering ammunition to be got and brought from town by a comrade who lives there; and the arrest of this comrade at his home, where an unlicensed German-made 25-calibre pistol with ammunition was seized as evidence, along with some papers.

The dog sucked the eggs wanted for the harvest festival, and the constabulary, a faithful plantation employé running deadly risks to inform them, find the countryside honeycombed with thievery and revolt. This was the initial outbreak of Lope de la Rosa and his followers. Of the Fifteen, 3 have been captured.

Sure to Win!

Retired from the civil service and living on an annuity wisely purchased, everything over a living minimum he spends in the sweepstakes. And he can't lose, not because he ever wins, but because of that annuity. In the first sweepstakes he spent about P1,500. Winning nothing, he worked out a system and risked a

larger sum in the second sweepstakes. Buying a string of numbers in every series, he thought he had the grand prize in a network of numbers all his own. He boasted he had 1 chance in 150; and friends, unimpressed by such odds, thought so what: if in a bowl of 150 marbles you must pick blindly the 1 blue one in the midst of 149 white ones, your chance is slim.

So he failed of the grand prize, and finding it out, tore up his tickets. Then it turned out that he had won about P450 in minor prizes, only his tickets were gone. To collect, he hired an agent who was to get P150 and give him the remaining P300; but according to him, he got the short end and the agent the long end. Anyway, it cost him a good deal to post a 10-year bond assuring the sweepstakes management against loss when it paid him. Such is anger.

His system was so nearly perfect for the third sweepstakes that he wanted to bet he had the grand prize in the bag. Things turned out otherwise, all he won were some tiny sums in participation tickets—in all no more than a few pesos. This has quieted perceptibly his former volubility about his system and its certainty of bringing him the grand prize. But he is perfecting it still further for the next sweepstakes. And what matter? It amuses him, and he has his annuity.

MANILA HEMP

By H. P. STRICKLER
Manila Cordage Company

During December the market opened steady, but before the middle of it was reached, buyers in foreign markets encouraged by a few cheap sellers from the Philippines held off in the hope of bringing about a lower level of prices. These tactics were more in the nature of testing the strength of the local market, which has been on the whole firm all throughout.

The period from December 10th to December 20th was marked by low quotations made in London and New York, but in answer sellers in those markets practically withdrew from the market with the result that the low quotations

became only nominal, and a stalemate ensued which lasted until the last week of the month, under review.

Seeing their tactics useless, foreign buyers began to raise their quotations which was in the nature of a confession of defeat, but the month closed before their prices were high enough to attract sellers.

Reflecting the condition of foreign markets, our local markets maintained an obstinate firmness which lasted during the entire month. The small volume of business done was at full prices, materially above the nominal and fictitious level ruling in consuming markets.

Prices of Loose Fiber in Manila Per Picul

November 30th (Nominal)	December 31st Business
CD..... P22.00	CD..... P23.50
E..... 20.00	E..... 20.50
F..... 18.50	F..... 19.25
I..... 17.50	I..... 18.50
J..... 15.00	J..... 15.75
G..... 13.00	G..... 13.75
H..... 9.75	H..... 10.25
J2..... 12.00	J2..... 12.00
K..... 9.25	K..... 9.75
L1..... 8.75	L1..... 8.75
L2..... 7.25	L2..... 7.50

Narrative of Last Year's . . .

(Continued from page 17)

ented by output and development, prospects and capitalization, property and management. It seemed to be enough to send a stock down, in a new company, for a mill to go into production. Naturally, many speculators took big losses. There were failures among brokers, too, and some bad tales in connection with them. Abra Mining could illustrate the broad situation. That stock held up tenaciously, long sold far above par with Ipa, for example, a producing mine, though Ipa is an unproved field and Benguet, that has the operating contract, has no announcements of ore proved up or plans for milling.

Philippine mining lost outstanding figures during the year; among them, in Baguio, J. F. Whitmarsh and Dr. N. M. Saleeby, the latter having been the surgeon at Notre Dame hospital in charge of the excellent laboratories Benguet installed. Dr. J. F. Reed of Manila has succeeded to the place at Notre Dame. George Cushing's death was another loss to the industry; he was an aggressive young engineer.

There were notable changes of position among the big fellows on the professional side. H. W. Evans gave up the superintendency of Balatoc because of ill health, and D. W. Butner of Benguet took his place. George Scarfe, geologist, left Benguet for Consolidated Mines; G. T. Geringer, Baguio Gold for Sulu Mining; W. G. Donaldson, Benguet (where he made a record at Ipo as superintendent for Consolidated Mines); G. J. Montague, from Balatoc for a trip around the world and retirement; C. M. Eyo, of Benguet, to the United States for indefinite stay; J. E. Moore, Gold River's superintendent, resigning and going to the United States when the mill had to shut down.

L. W. Lemox took over the superintendency of Benguet Consolidated.

The year's tendency was one of expansion, in the Bicol region southeast of Manila, in Masbate, and in Mindanao. There is small chance that any of these more southern fields will surpass Baguio while Balatoc and Benguet keep pouring forth bullion the way they do; but there will be more and more doing in them, and Masbate is likely to be well established this year as a great mining field.

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