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WHITE SUGAR EVENTUALLY; WHY NOT NOW?

To any student or even to any casual observer of the sugar markets of the United States, it must seem very queer that now that we have reached March there are still some persons who cannot get an adequate supply of sugar to meet their current wants, and that the New York refiners from day to day are reported as "allocating" sugar among their customers, not having sufficient sugar to supply the entire demand, and yet getting wide margins between the current prices for Cuba 96 test and the fine white granulated that they are delivering. It would seem that the exportation of sugar is going on at high speed, and in some instances is called "refining on toll," and anyway the results are unsatisfactory to the American people. This has led to a large increase in the consumption of 96 test sugar and prominent sugar buyers all over the country have been led to buy these sugars in Cuba for their own account, and we can readily judge that sugar of 96 test or pure sugar, of perhaps 2 per cent moisture and 2 per cent non-sugars, will give a product that is fit for almost any purpose other than where a pure white color is desired. The slight caramel tinge that may attach to 96 test sugar is not only injurious, but really improves the flavor, as good candy can only be made at comparatively high temperatures that will bring out the light caramel flavor. The color may be objectionable, but the flavor is there and the genuine sucrose is there.

Our great confectioners, our manufacturers of preserves and of various syrups and our great meat packers all need

sugars in large quantities. They have various machines of their own for carrying on their own particular work, and they can do just as well by buying the so-called raw or 96 test sugar as by buying the very fine sugars that have been prepared by the great sugar refiners who pride themselves so much upon the extreme whiteness that they obtain by careful boneblack filtration. I was predicted nearly forty years ago by one of the gentlemen at the head of one of the present great sugar refining interests of the country that the refining of sugars up to pure whites would be carried on at the place of production before the lapse of many years. Nearly forty years have elapsed and yet the production of white sugar in the tropics has not very materially increased. It has been held down by the excellence of the work done by the sugar refiners and by the indifference in the tropics to the final results of sugar cane culture and sugar cane manufacture, as long as they came out slightly ahead at the end of the season. Modern labor saving devices have helped to lower the prices of sugar and so materially diminished the cost of production as to permit some profit at least to come to the actual producer, even though the great sugar refiners combine as do our other great monopolies, to crush the producer, finding that easier to accomplish than to crush the consumer with high prices.

In the city of New Orleans right after the U. S. Civil War, when the Louisiana sugar industry began to rise from its ruins, there were probably a dozen little so-called sugar refineries in operation in the city, where some enterprising merchants or engineers would have set up a single

DEAFNESS

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old Aspinwall centrifugal and bought low-priced sugars on the open market and washed them up into lighter or brighter and dryer sugars, reaching at times up to white sugar, and thus with these little miniature establishments, the whole outfit of which would be less than \$5,000, they would turn out handsome sugars, and did reasonably well.

Vacuum pans were not then in very general use and these enterprising sugar refiners were compelled to buy soft or open kettle sugars and from 100 pounds of reasonably good open kettle sugar they would not secure over 60 pounds of dry centrifugal sugar. These soft grains and the considerable washing required, led to these small yields, and the business was soon driven out of existence by the advent of the larger refiners, who proceeded more methodically and with filtering establishments and were able to secure much more final sugar.

Before the advent of the polariscope in Wall street, New York the old sugar refiners went about looking at muscovada or open kettle sugars that were offered by various brokers and by the sense of touch, feeling the harshness or softness of the grain, and by their observation of the dryness of the sugar they determined the intrinsic merit of the sugar of which the prominent grades were "good refining" and "fair refining," the polariscope test not coming into use until about 1870.

The recent sugar famine and the present inability or unwillingness of the American sugar refiner to supply the market with sugar, their preferences to export it, so that they may get great profits on sugar as well as on syrup made from foreign sugars, place them in a monopolistic position that would make a Chicago meat packer smile at his own native innocence. If three or four people have to control the more than four million tons of sugars that Cuba produces and that the United States consumes, it is time for our inventors, enterprising merchants and great users of sugars to get out of this labyrinth of difficulties. It can be done by the individual producers, as is now being done in Louisiana by the independent sugar planters, and can be done by the purchasers of the so-called raw sugars, by every preserve maker, every syrup maker and every meat packer in the country, and, in fact, by the merchants themselves wherever they have any power appliances which can readily

[Continued on 4th page]