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Cromlix Rubber.

GENEROUS RETURN ON CAPITAL ANTICIPATED.



Condition of the Estate.

The sixth ordinary general meeting of the Cromlix Rubber Estate and Produce Syndicate, Limited, was held on April 11, at the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Moorgate Place, E.C.4. Mr. J. L. Anstruther, J.P. (the chairman), presiding.

The Chairman said: Gentlemen, the notice of this meeting, together with the report and accounts, having been in your hands for the usual period, I propose, with your permission, to take them as read. As there was sufficient land available, the directors decided to open up an additional 34 acres, thus increasing the total planted area to the round 1,000 acres. This work was undertaken during the past year, when a 6½ acre block was planted in August and the balance of 27½ acres in December. The former is coming on very well, and I have no doubt it will be the same with the latter. Allowing 27½ acres for sites, roads and waste land, we are left with 59 acres jungle—a very necessary reserve for the provision of firewood.

You will see from the balance sheet that at December 31, 1915, the uncalled capital amounted to £5,765 14s. The expenditure for the current year is estimated at £3,961 6s on capital account and £1,698 1s. 8d. on revenue account, or a total of £5,659 7s. 8d. To meet this expenditure a call of 1s. per share was made payable on January 11 last, and the balance of 2s. per share will become payable on September 15 next. You will thus see that our capital is just sufficient to take us comfortably up to the end of the current year. By that time what will we have in return for the £40,000 subscribed? We shall possess Bukit Jahl estate, in one of the very best rubber districts in the Federated Malay States. With 1,000 acres of this








estate all planted with rubber, well drained and roaded and clean weeded, we shall have provided two bungalows, coolie lines, hospital, school, all with water supply laid on also factory and necessary equipment for preparation of smoked sheet rubber. The cost will then amount to approximately £40 per acre—a very moderate figure when the high cost of labour and all materials (especially since the water started) is taken into consideration. I feel sure you will agree with me that to accomplish this means great care and close supervision on the part of all concerned—directors, agents and manager. It will probably be necessary towards the end of the year to issue a few more shares in order to provide working capital. We hope we may be able to issue these at a premium, but, should this disastrous war not be over by that time, we do not anticipate that there would be any difficulty in arranging a temporary loan for the purpose.

A Clean Estate.


This estate is so clean that we are again able to report a saving under this heading. The estimate for 1915 was 54.86c. per acre per month, but the actual cost works out at 48.60c., a figure only possible as the result of having kept the estate clean-weeded from the very start. The estate is not only free from weeds, but also free from pests and diseases, regarding which the visiting agents in his latest report writes:—"There is at present no fomes or, for that matter, any other disease present. White ants give a certain amount of trouble, but are kept well in hand."



As stated in the report, our visiting agent informs us that the growth of the trees on Bukit Jalil has been fully up to expectations during the year. In my speech last year I said: "The directors do not propose to commence tapping until the work can be done economically." This work might have been started last October if we had adopted the usual course of girth making (viz., 18 ins. at 8 ft. from the ground) as our starting-point. But the cost would have been high and it would have been necessary to suspend the work during the months of wintering. It was therefore decided to raise the standard to 20 ins. at 3 ft. from the ground, which is all to the good of the tree, and commence tapping after the wintering of the trees for this season was ended. Our manager hoped to make a beginning this month and then go straight ahead. The labour force is sufficient and the health of same satisfactory. Our estate manager, Mr. Wilkinson, has justified our expectations of his ability to successfully manage the estate, and has carried out his duties to the entire satisfaction of the directors and agents.




In conclusion, I feel confident in expressing the opinion that we possess a first-class property, well managed in every way, and if anything like the present price of rubber is maintained the shareholders may look forward to a generous return on their capital. We are fortunate in having with us to-day the chairman of the Klanang Produce Company, Mr. D. K. Michie, who returned only a few days ago from a visit to the F.M.S. While there he was good enough to visit Bukit Jalil estate, and after the accounts have been passed I am sure you will all be



glad to hear what he has to say. It was not part of his programme to visit this estate, but so many Klanang shareholders are interested in the Cronlix Syndicate he knew we would appreciate a visit from him. I now beg to propose: That the report and accounts, as printed, for the year ended December 31, 1915, be received and adopted.

Mr. John Gibson, J.P., seconded the motion.

Condition of the Estate.



Mr. D. K. Michie said that the chairman had really told the meeting all there was to say about the property. He could, however, say that he had visited the estate as recently as February last and had passed through all the clearings, every one of which showed very good growth for its age. In the oldest clearings—in which the growth was very fine, especially in the lower parts and the hollows and ravines—there was a large number of trees ready for tapping, and arrangements were being made at the time of his visit to commence the work as soon as the trees had put on fresh foliage after the wintering season. From next year onwards the increase in the yield of latex should be very rapid, and, as the world was apparently able easily to absorb the increased production of rubber from the Middle East, he thought that the prospects of the shareholders in the company left very little to be desired. He might add that the impression which the estate manager, Mr. H. B. Wilkinson, had made on him was that he was a man capable of doing full justice to his charge. He did not think he need say more.

The resolution was unanimously adopted.

On the motion of Mr. Gibson, seconded by Mr. E. Jenner Davies, J.P., the retiring directors, Messrs. J. L. Anstruther and E. Walker, were unanimously re-elected.