

EAST AFRICAN RECORD

FURTHER INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AT JINJA

Attention was drawn in the first issue of this journal to the development at Jinja of the first steel rolling mill in East Africa. During 1963 plans for a number of other major industrial undertakings have been announced, which on completion will serve further to emphasize the position of Jinja as the foremost industrial centre of its kind in East Africa. Five major factors are involved in this development: firstly, the astute investment of very large sums of money by the Madhvani group of companies, a source that already underlies much of the economic life of the Jinja area in agriculture as well as industry; secondly, government support for Jinja's developing role as the industrial focus of Uganda; thirdly the availability of large quantities of power from the Owen Falls hydro-electric station, power that is cheaper at source for major plants than elsewhere in Uganda, together with the possibility of constructing a second dam a few miles downstream at Bujagali Falls should the need arise; fourthly, the general geographical situation of Jinja in the economically focal lake zone of Uganda, well served by communications; finally, the ready availability of plentiful supplies of labour, water and land for industrial use in Jinja and the immediate vicinity.

The accompanying map shows the location of the existing major industrial establishments in and near Jinja, and the proposed location, where known, of the various developments now mostly in the planning stage. Work has already commenced on the construction of a large grain mill, to be operated by the Uganda Grain Milling Company Ltd.; grain supplies will come to a large extent from Kenya, but the plant is designed to serve the Uganda market. The Chillington Tool Company of Wolverhampton is to establish a tool factory at Jinja, and the Madhvani group is developing a new textile mill (Mulco Textiles Ltd.) and a plant for the manufacture of safety matches using both local and imported wood. A paper sack making factory using imported pulp will shortly be built to serve the Uganda and Kenya market. Jinja has also been able to attract the Dunlop Rubber Company to invest £300,000 on the development of a factory where one million bicycle tyres and 1.6 million inner tubes will be made each year. Of these various new developments, Mulco Textiles Ltd. is likely to employ 1350 persons; the Chillington tool factory and the match factory will respectively employ about 150 and 100 persons.

These developments seem to indicate that Jinja is consolidating its position as Uganda's foremost industrial centre, and is in fact on the verge of a major period of further expansion. The exploitation of a major source of hydro-electricity in 1954 did not engender as rapid an expansion of industry as many had hoped; and

during the late 1950's Jinja was very much a stagnant backwater as far as development was concerned. This situation now seems to have changed for the better; confidence on the part of major investors has been restored, and Jinja seems set to play an increasingly important role in the economic advance of Uganda.

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