

Sao Paulo, Where Coffee Is King



Harvesting the Coffee Crop.

(Prepared by the National Geographic Society, Washington, D. C.)
 On the gentle sloping hillsides of the northern portion of a single state of the great Brazilian republic there are some 700,000,000 coffee trees. Here on a famous rich, red soil (terra rossa), under extraordinarily favorable climatic conditions, the state of Sao Paulo is producing annually close to three-quarters of the world's total coffee crop. Small wonder it is that this state ranks so high in the number and in the character of its population; in the development of its railroads; in its general commercial and industrial activity. Small wonder is it that the city of Sao Paulo is so full of life and energy; that Santos has become so famous a port, that the Santos docks and the Sao Paulo railway attract so many visitors. Coffee is the main spring of all this development. Coffee is the prevailing topic of conversation. Coffee is the key to the financial situation. Coffee is king.

As a famous waterfall, or an immense steel plant, or a great forest, or a wonderful view attracts the traveler, so this remarkable Brazilian coffee district has a fascination all its own for the "globe-trotter," or for the more leisurely traveler who seeks to know something more definite about our South American neighbors; or, more particularly, for any one to whom man's achievements in changing the face of nature by making the earth produce what he needs and what he finds profitable are a source of satisfaction and inspiration.

Journey of Great Interest.
 The heart of the coffee country can be reached in less than three weeks from New York. The voyage to find from Rio Janeiro is a delight which cannot fail to satisfy even those who are not naturally lovers of the sea. What can be more ideal for any one who is tired out with the wear and tear of a busy life than that voyage of two weeks from New York to Rio, over the calm seas and under the bright skies of the tropics?

From Rio de Janeiro a journey of about eight hours takes the traveler across the coast range of mountains (Serra do Mar) and along the valley of the Parahyba river to the city of Sao Paulo, which lies in a position of immense advantage to its commercial development. From the city of Sao Paulo the heart of the coffee country is reached in a short day's journey along one of the lines of railroad which go in a northerly or northwesterly direction across the open campos or through the scattering woodlands.

In about two hours after leaving the city of Sao Paulo the traveler begins to see the first considerable coffee plantations, and from that time on the journey is one of the greatest interest. Coffee is everywhere. Miles and miles of coffee trees stretch away, up and down the gentle slopes of the rolling topography, often as far as the eye can see—great broad waves of green, with the narrow lines of the red soil showing in marked contrast with the green of the leaves. It is a sight which is not soon forgotten. Here and there are small patches of forest which have not yet been destroyed to make way for the coffee. And then there come great stretches of rugged grasslands, partly used for grazing purposes, or locally for farming, where the soil is not right for the coffee tree.

Charm of the Fazendas.
 On the lower slopes of the hills or on the lowlands, standing out in marked contrast with the green coffee trees, are the white buildings of the fazendas—great, substantial stone and stucco manor houses, with wide verandas and large windows, surrounded by gardens filled with palm, and banana, and orange, and mango trees; the extensive outbuildings, for the stables and for the machinery, for the laborers and for the superintendent, being placed at a respectful distance from the manor house.

All these Brazilian fazendas have a peculiar charm—an appearance of solidarity, of comfort, of peace, and of prosperity—as they lie there, surrounded by the wealth of their coffee trees, with cattle grazing on the neighboring fields, and with ever-busy, picturesque Italian laborers caring for the precious crop, whose market prices are quoted daily in all the important papers throughout the civilized world. The coffee trees on a Brazilian plantation begin to bear in from two to

four years after they have been removed from the nurseries, where they grow in wicker baskets, under shade. The fruit, when ripe, is red, and resembles a small cherry, or cranberry, in general appearance. The coffee which we see in the grocery store is the seed of this coffee berry.

Normally each berry contains two seeds, flat on one side and rounded on the other, the flat sides being together. The seeds are imbedded in a sticky, whitish pulp, and are further themselves surrounded by two envelopes.

Before the coffee bean can be put upon the market the outer covering, the pulp, and the two inner coverings must be removed. It is customary to classify the methods of preparing coffee for market into the wet and the dry. They are alike, after a certain stage, and there is disagreement among experts as to the relative merits of the two in producing the best coffee. In the dry process the berries are dried before the pulp is removed, and then outer covering, pulp, and inner coverings are removed together. In the wet process the pulp is first removed in water, and the drying and removal of the inner envelopes come later. There is no absolutely hard and fast rule, invariably followed on all fazendas alike, in the preparation for market of the coffee beans.

A considerable water supply and a carefully planned system of small canals and of basins is needed in the wet method, and it is partly for this reason, as well as because of the preference of some fazendeiros for the dry method, that the wet method is not everywhere in use.

Harvest Lasts Several Months.
 The harvest begins in May and lasts into August, or even September. This is the dry season, so that the weather conditions are very favorable, not only for the harvest itself, but for drying and transporting the crop after it has been gathered. In picking the coffee, the boughs are pulled down with the left hand and held at the outer end, while the right hand is run along the bough from the base to the tip, thus stripping off the berries as well as many leaves and twigs. For the upper branches rude step-ladders are used.

The usual method of harvesting is to let the berries, twigs, etc., fall directly on the ground, where they are later raked together with wire rakes with rounded teeth, and the first rough sorting is made. The next stage is a winnowing by means of a wire sieve, the hand being used to pick out the twigs and leaves and the wind blowing away a good deal of the dust as the contents of the sieve are thrown up into the air and caught again several times. In a less common method the results of the harvesting are allowed to fall into cotton cloths spread out underneath the trees. This makes the gathering of the crop quicker. The berries are then assembled in sacks.

From this point on the berries are subjected to various mechanical treatments. Under the "wet method" they are washed, churned with hoes, allowed to soften, and are then run through a mechanical pulper. The seeds, still enveloped by their inner skins, are strained from the "mush" resulting from the pulping operations, and are then placed in basins to ferment slightly so that any remaining pulp will be loosened. They are then spread out on large paved surfaces to dry in the sun. When properly dried the seeds are gathered up and run through ingenious machines which rub off the skin. The particles of skin are sifted and blown out and the coffee beans—hulled, cleaned and sorted—fall directly from the last machine into the bags. When these contain 132 pounds each they are sewed up and are ready for shipment to market.

Along the roads, deep in red dust, six or eight yoke of oxen draw the heavy wagon, loaded with the precious sacks, to the nearest railroad station, in cases where the railroad does not come directly into the fazenda, as it often does.

Off to the south go the trains, first to the city of Sao Paulo, and then down the steep eastern slopes of the Serra do Mar to the world's famous coffee port. In Santos, coffee absolutely dominates the lives of the people. Coffee is everywhere—on the streets, in the warehouses, on the train. Every one is busy with coffee.

Imogene's Diary

By CLARA DELAFIELD

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March 19. Well, I've took the job. They don't pay me more than 50 per cent, but there's some class to it, believe me, Clara. Not that I think much of Mrs. Symes and that stuck-up, snooty daughter of hers, but Mr. Symes is a peach. He gave me a brown last night that made my heart go pitter patter, just because I spilled the ice cream over Mrs. D's new dress. Maybe I'll stay the weak out but I don't know yet.

March 20. I told her today strait I gotta have a feather bed and a alarm clock if she wants me to get up in time to wash the breakfast things. They're the laziest hulks I ever see in this family. She actually asked me if I couldn't get up in time to cook the breakfast if she lent me a dressing gown but she soon see I wasn't to be put upon.

There's a fellow called to see Miss Daisy this morning when he oughta have been at business. I don't like his looks much. I got my eye on him. March 21. I give notice this morning on account of Mrs. D coming into the kitchen and telling me she don't burn gas when there ain't no cooking, but I guess I'll stay a little longer. I'm to have the use of the car three times a week and I've got a rize to sixty for faithful servs. That's me, Clara.

That fellow was hear again last nite, sitting in the parlor with Miss Daisy with only one electric light burning. I call it scandalous and Mrs. Hudson who has the apartment below quite agrees with me.

March 22. The D car broke down when we was in the country and I had to walk half a mile to catch the trolley. The chauffeur put his arm round me. I'd have screamed only there was a house near by and I was afraid the folks would here. I give notice as soon as I got home but Mrs. D says if I'll stay she'll raise me to seventy-five and she never had a girl she liked so well before. I've decided to stay. The D's are a nice family, all except Miss Daisy and her fellow. Mr. D's got thick black I lashes and looks as if he'd murder you if you say a word to him.

March 23. Well, it's all through and I'm going tomorrow. It's all about Miss Daisy and her bo. I told Mrs. Hudson they was sitting up together till past midnight late nite and she says, "Clara, you don't you do something about it?" So I spoke to them tomlite and said I wasn't used to such goings on and I come of decent folks and eleven o'clock was quite late enough for any young fellow who was honest and meant business.

Mr. Page—that's her bo's name—smiled a kinda bitter smile and sed in that case he'd go. Miss Daisy was quite nasty about it and I had to put her in her place. When that fellow had gone Mrs. D come into my room—of course I'd told her I was going the first thing in the morning. She said she'd always liked me and if I'd stay she'd raise me to eighty per cent and let me have the car and pay for me to take lessons in chaffooning, and I could have every afternoon and evening off. So I sed I'd think it over. Now I dunno what to do. Ain't it hard on a lady when she's alone in the world with no one to advise her?

Anyway I told her I'd think it over, and she went out quick because she heard Mr. D coming back. March 24. Ten o'clock and I'll have to be getting up soon. It's queer Mr. D hasn't gone to bizness this morning. From where I lay I can here him walking up and down in his room, muttering. I guess there's been some family quarrel over that Page fellow.

I've decided not to stay after tomorrow. So I'm going to tell Mrs. D she can get a new girl tomorrow. Wild horses wouldn't keep me hear now.

March 24 (continued). It's terrible, terrible. I don't no what to do. I'm all-fired and my hearts broke and I shall go softly all my days. I can't write down the awful thing that's happened. When I went into the kitchen Mrs. D was there washing up the dishes and I tole her I'd decided to go and she said, "Is that so, Clara?" That nettled me and I said, "Yes that's so, Amella," and she went out and called Mr. D who had been pacing up and down in his room all the morning. He come in and—I don't no what happened but he sprung at me like a tiger and the first thing I new I was lying on the kitchen floor with a punch in the I, and he was gone to bizness, and he sed if he foun me hear when he come back, he'd kill me. And Mrs. D's turned against me and won't let me

stay, and I'm packing, and I got to look for another place. That's the reward of faithful servs. The world's ingratitude, but Mr. D's the loveliest man in the world, and he'll never no how tenderly I could have loved and cared for him.

Ah well, such is life. She says I can have the alarm clock. My eyes turning a beautiful brown. I shall think of Mr. D every time I look at it.

The Ruling Passion.
 "There's no hope, my friend," said the doctor, gently. "You must try to be resigned."
 "I could be resigned to die, doctor, but for one thing."
 "And what is that?"
 "I've been following a serial picture for weeks at the Palace, and now I'll never know what became of Bertha the bandit queen."

Smiling Porches.
 More houses are being built with inclosed porches than ever before; you may walk down long streets of dear little homes whose porches smile at you through tiny panes of glass. You pass medium-sized places with grounds, comfortable houses set back from the road, and large mansions—in every one somewhere you catch the glimpse of an enclosed porch-room Old-fashioned houses follow suit, and back of the rounded Colonial pillars are fitted small-paned glass partitions that inclose the porch as efficaciously as though it had been built that way in the beginning. In the summer these are lifted out, leaving the porch as before.—The Designer.

Canada Pushing Honey Industry.
 It is expected that Ontario's honey crop next season will be marketed largely on the co-operative system, as a result of the activities of the committee appointed recently by the Ontario Bee Keepers' association, and with the assistance of the Ontario government. The honey will be graded and have a registered brand for the protection of consumers. Each package will have a distinguishing number, by which it can be traced back to the producer.

"1 Franc Or."
 Numismatists have been gladdened by the news that a single gold franc has been struck as the monetary unit which is the basis of all financial transactions of the League of Nations. It is a piece of gold about one-third the size of an English farthing, with the inscription on one side, "S. des N. (Societe des Nations), 1921," and on the other "1 franc or." In American currency it is equal to 0.1925 dollar. Apart from there being only one gold franc, the remarkable thing about it is the shape, which is octagonal, and maybe it will act as a protest against the continued use of round coins, which does not enable one, say, to tell the difference by feeling between a six-pence and a half-sovereign.—Christian Science Monitor.

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