Journal of Geography

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjog20>

The Importance of a Consideration of Grades and Qualities of Goods

Edw. D. Jones^a

^a Assistant Professor of Commerce and Industry ,
University of Michigan , Ann Arbor

Published online: 20 May 2008.

To cite this article: Edw. D. Jones (1902) The Importance of a Consideration of Grades and Qualities of Goods, *Journal of Geography*, 1:10, 461-464, DOI: [10.1080/00221340208985902](https://doi.org/10.1080/00221340208985902)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00221340208985902>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Taylor & Francis makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications on our platform. However, Taylor & Francis, our agents, and our licensors make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors, and are not the views of or endorsed by Taylor & Francis. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Taylor and Francis shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to or arising out of the use of the Content.

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan,

sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden. Terms & Conditions of access and use can be found at <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

A knowledge of the exact truth on any question of natural science is not easily attained. The hail cannonaders base their reports of success upon such statements as "a black cloud was seen approaching, cannon was fired, and the cloud passed over without hail," or "it passed to one side and the hail did not fall on the protected vineyard, and there the hail ceased," or "the cloud broke in two, passing to the right and left, leaving the sky cloudless over the cannon." Now these are quite common cloud and storm phenomena, and they will frequently happen without cannonading. There is no way of telling by the sight of an approaching cloud whether or not it is accompanied by hail. Therefore, if the cannon be used every thunderstorm would have to be bombarded, although statistics have demonstrated that only one thunder cloud out of a great number contains hail. In other words there would be a tremendous waste of time, money and energy in unnecessary bombardments. After examining all that has been published during the past two years on the subject of hail prevention, I have to repeat the opinion heretofore expressed that we have here to deal with a popular delusion, and that efforts should be made to prevent its spread in this country. The great processes going on in the atmosphere are conducted on too large a scale for any man or any nation to attempt to control them. According to Professor Abbe, the energy expended by nature in the production of a hailstorm, a tornado, or a rainstorm probably exceeds the combined energy of all the steam engines and explosives in the world. It is useless for man to attempt to combat nature on this scale.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A CONSIDERATION OF GRADES AND QUALITIES OF GOODS

BY EDW. D. JONES, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR.

IT is to be feared that many teachers of commercial geography permit themselves to fall into a loose habit of speaking of the chief staple products of industry as if all portions of the supply of any one of these products were of the same quality and value. It is very easy to speak of cotton or wool or lumber or wheat as

one single and homogeneous product. Even text-books in commercial geography, in speaking of world commerce as regards a single article, often lump together indiscriminately the cotton of the United States, Egypt, Peru and India, or the wool of Australia and Ohio. This view of commerce permits of only the most broad and general consideration of the physical conditions and commercial usages which control industry. As a matter of fact, most of the great staples are, of course, composed of a group of quite distinct classes of products, and each class is subject to a considerable range of very significant variations in quality. It is practically impossible to explain the effect of physical forces upon production, in any close and accurate manner, without recognizing the variability in the quality of individual portions of the world's supply of any staple. And it is equally impossible to describe in detail the operations of any market, or even to prevent the international division of labor, without keeping in view the range of commercially recognized grades.

If we take cotton as an illustration, the commercial geography of the industry of cotton raising suggests at once a broad distinction between "Uplands" and "Sea Island" cotton, and within the first class such local products as "Gulf," "Memphis," "Texas," "Orleans," "Peelers" or "Benders." A recognition of grades clears up the problem why this country, although the greatest cotton supply area of the world, imports considerable Egyptian and some Peruvian cotton.

Almost all the cotton bought and sold in this country is handled on the basis of seven grades designated as fair, middling fair, good middling, middling, low middling, good ordinary and ordinary. Half and quarter grades are also recognized. The half grade is designated by prefixing the word "strict" to the name of the full grade below. The quarter grade below a full grade is designated by the word "barely" coupled with the title of the full grade. The quarter grade above a full grade is designated by using the word "fully" with the title of the full grade. Thus the complete list becomes as follows, the full grades being printed in italics:

Fair.

Barely fair.

Strict middling fair.

Fully middling fair.

Middling fair.

Barely middling fair.

Strict good middling.
 Fully good middling.
Good middling.
 Barely good middling.
 Strict middling.
 Fully middling.
Middling.
 Barely middling.
 Strict low middling.
 Fully low middling.
Low middling.
 Barely low middling.
 Strict good ordinary.
 Fully good ordinary.
Good ordinary.
 Barely good ordinary.
 Strict ordinary.
 Fully ordinary.
Ordinary.

The highly discriminating, not to say scientific, character of a market which is based upon such a classification of each sort of cotton (for length of staple and variety of cotton are not considered comparatively) must be obvious and the nicety of judgment required to successfully employ it is deserving of admiration.

As the buying and selling of cotton is regulated at New York by the Cotton Exchange, contracts for cotton are based upon 50,000 pounds of "middling" delivered from a licensed warehouse, at New York, during the month agreed. The price is quoted in cents per pound and varies with the month in which the cotton is to be delivered, according to the prospective relations of supply and demand. In order that other grades besides "middling" can be dealt in, a Committee of Revision occasionally fixes the excess or rebate of price which must be allowed according as a better or poorer grade than "middling" is delivered. A usual price quotation in a New York paper will, therefore, run somewhat as follows:

New York Future Prices—June 5, 1902.

	Open.	High.	Low.	Closing.
June	8.87	8.87	8.87	8.84 @ 8.87
July	8.77	8.77	8.67	8.69 @ 8.70
Aug.	8.47	8.49	8.42	8.43 @ 8.44
Sept.	8.00	8.01	7.96	7.96 @ 7.97

This reflects the day's varying estimate at opening and close and at highest and lowest points regarding the value of "middling"

cotton in New York, and these prices are revised almost daily for each of ten or twelve future months.

To this a statement of rates on and off "middling" is added as follows:

Fair	1.14 on.
Middling fair	0.80 on.
Strict good middling.....	0.50 on.
Good middling	0.32 on.
Low middling	0.14 off.
Good ordinary	1.00 off.
Good middling tinged.....	Even
Low middling stained.....	1.50 off.
Revision November 20, 1901.	

The elaboration of grades is no more complete and the consideration of differences of quality no more delicate for cotton than it is for wheat at Minneapolis or for pine as inspected by the Mississippi Valley Lumbermen's Association, or for wool, iron ore, silk, cheese, etc. The recognition of these grades is absolutely essential to accuracy and honesty of dealing and is one of the chief means by which industry is being made more scientific. Ignorance of them on the part of producers of raw materials is responsible for the scarcity of the choicest grades, and is the occasion of much loss to producers through neglect to take precautions, often very simple, and concerning apparently minor matters, which would raise the grade of their products and materially increase their returns.

GEOGRAPHY CURRENT

HYDROGRAPHY

Hydrographic Investigations in the Red River Valley of Minnesota and North Dakota.—The Red River of the North and its Valley occupy a unique position among the streams and valleys of the United States. Collecting the waters from between the two great northern arms of the Mississippi system, this river takes its course almost directly north, uniting with numerous streams draining the lake region of central Canada, and finally reaching Hudson Bay through Lake Winnipeg and the great Nelson River system.

The Red River Valley, besides bringing the Arctic slope for a distance of over two hundred miles within the United States repre-