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Peru—its Products and Possibilities

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7. The papers finally return to the commercial geography department where a table of contents and an index are prepared, and the "book" goes into the list of reference books and display work of the department.

8. The cover of the "book" is drawn by a student from the commercial art classes, by one of the students of the class writing the "book", if possible.

9. When a student has finished his typewriting manual the teacher of typewriting sends to the commercial geography department for extra work for the student; in this manner we make typed copies of magazine articles, and file them for class use; we are also able thus to put into the hands of all the students at once clippings which would otherwise be available to only one at a time.

10. The stenography teacher uses assigned magazine articles on commercial geography subjects as dictation material; the wild scramble for the one library copy of the article is thus avoided, as the typed copy is handed in to the stenography teacher by each student in her class, and then comes to the commercial geography department.

11. During the second semester a second "book" on some nation is similarly worked up.

We feel that quite a little improvement in all lines of work correlated has come from this scheme, and that results justify the work.

PERU—ITS PRODUCTS AND POSSIBILITIES

ONE not thoroughly familiar with the geography of the West Coast of South America has a series of surprises in store for him. In the first place, strange as it may seem, the coldest day of our trip South, after leaving the coast of the Carolinas, was that crossing the equator. Instead of bright, balmy tropical weather, the skies were usually overclouded and the air cool and snappy all the way down the 1,000 miles of Peru's long coast line, though it lies wholly within the tropics. This is due to the effect of the Humboldt current, a great Antarctic stream which follows the coast northward to a point above the Equator and is comparable with the Gulf Stream of the Atlantic in its far-reaching effect on climatic conditions, though the effect of the Humboldt current is just the reverse of that of the Gulf Stream. It is this feature of Peru's climate which explains the common expression that Peru is a "white man's country," for while geographically it is tropical, climatically it is a temperate country.

But this cold ocean current is at the same time a curse to the

country, in that it prevents any rainfall from the Pacific breezes, the land being warmer than the water, while the high wall of the Andes prevents the rain-laden winds from the Atlantic reaching the West Coast. People along this coast speak of a rainfall fifteen or twenty years ago as one might speak of an earthquake in New York.

As a result of this we have a vast strip of land between the ocean and the coastal range, about two thousand miles long, including both Peruvian and Chilean territory, and from fifty to a hundred miles wide, which in climate, in fertility of the soil, and in other respects, is the equal of the narrow strip of our own country bordering the Pacific—except for lack of water. “Water, water,” is the great cry of the sparse population that is found in this region. Every available stream that trickles down from the snow-capped mountains is husbanded, and when turned upon the land renders it a veritable oasis.

On the slow coasting steamers that ply from port to port, it will take one ten days to make the journey along Peru’s extended coast. The ten or a dozen small ports, besides Callao, at which steamers stop, invariably mark the mouth of some small river which waters a fertile valley behind, but as often as not the water will all have been used in irrigation before reaching the ocean’s edge or will have disappeared in the porous sands several miles inland. It is on the oases produced by these rivers, dotted along the great coastal desert, that Peru grows practically all of her agricultural products, her sugar, her cotton, rice, fruits, etc., and it is here that her cattle are grazed. Of the agricultural products sugar is now king, although, in normal times, cotton is a close rival.

The Cerro de Pasco Mining Company, a large American enterprise, is at work up on the high plateau, at an altitude of 14,000 feet, and is accomplishing marvels in the mining of copper. It has meant, however, the investment of millions of dollars of capital, the building of railroads, the opening of coal fields, and the development of the copper mines on a gigantic scale, to say nothing of waiting fifteen long years for any returns. But now this concern is producing 75 per cent of the copper exported, and, aided by the present unparalleled prices of this metal, is entering upon a stage of well-merited prosperity. Peru’s annual production of copper is now over \$10,000,000.

Outside of its minerals, the cane sugar industry of Peru has been the basis of much of the country’s wealth, and has been the chief hope of forward-looking Peruvians. For Peru’s sugar land surpasses all other sugar producing countries, except Hawaii, in the acreage yield of sugar.—[Excerpted from *The Americas* for June.]