

COFFEE GROWING IN THE DUTCH EAST INDIES

VAST QUANTITIES OF THE FRAGRANT BERRY RAISED IN JAVA, ALTHOUGH THE BEST OF THE PRODUCT COMES FROM SUMATRA—UNITED STATES THE CHIEF CONSUMER.

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SAMARANG, Java, May 22.—From the coffee island of Java I write these coffee notes for the great coffee-lovers on earth. The Irish are famous as whiskey-drinkers, the English as tea-drinkers, the Germans as beer-drinkers, the French as wine-drinkers, but the Yankees lead the world as coffee-drinkers. We consume almost half of the coffee grown upon earth. We annually use about 300,000,000 pounds, or, on the average, more than 30 pounds a year for every man, woman and child among us. Our coffee bill in 1900 was more than \$25,000,000, and within 10 years we have spent as much as \$375,000,000 for coffee alone.

We take the best of the Java coffee. The exporters here tell me that the cream of the product of this island and Sumatra goes to the United States, and that the most of it is at such high prices that it sells only to the rich. We take the bulk of the coffee of Brazil, and of recent years are buying much from Central America. Our consumption is on the increase, and there is no doubt that we shall be spending from \$50,000,000 to \$100,000,000 annually for coffee during the rest of our national life.

Coffee in Our Colonies.

The matter is being studied by the Agricultural Department in Washington, and within the next few years experimental coffee plantations will be established in the Hawaiian Islands, in Porto Rico, Samoa and the Philippines. At present the only coffee-producing country we have, the product of which is of much importance, is Porto Rico. It grows some of the best coffee of the world—coffee which is better than the average product of Java, but which, owing to the lack of knowledge as to its expropriation, is sold chiefly in France and Spain. Porto Rico produces 34,000,000 pounds of coffee a year, and its product might be made 10 times as great as it is now.

The Hawaiian Islands are just beginning to raise coffee. There are about 300,000 acres there which are now being developed, and the plantations are being established. During my stay in Honolulu I was told that coffee-raising netted 40 per cent on the investment, and that the island of Hawaii had already extensive estates, and that more were being laid out. In the southern part of the Philippines, on the island of Jolo, I found a German named Khuck who has planted about 25,000 trees. I went over the property with him and found every tree loaded. The trees are only three years old, but they were breaking down with fruit, and Mr. Khuck told me that he had already been offered 14 cents a pound for his crop.

I have traveled through the biggest coffee districts of Brazil, Mexico and Porto Rico, but I have never seen such magnificent trees as those on the island of Jolo. The plantation was cut out of the forest, and its proprietor told me that it has required little cultivation.

Adapted to Coffee-Raising.

Most of the Sulu archipelago is adapted to coffee-raising. Very luxuriant trees at Zamboanga, on Mindanao, and I doubt not coffee plantations would be successful throughout that island, as well as on the islands farther north. Luzon was at one time noted as a coffee producer, but the trees were destroyed by the blight. Of recent years the scientists have been experimenting to counteract this disease, and the probability is that the Philippine islands will some day produce a large part of the 300,000,000 pounds of coffee used by our people.

You may remember that one of the best brands of the coffee of the past was "old Government Java." This name from the coffee plantations owned by Holland on this island. For many years the Government was the chief coffee-grower here. It had thousands of acres of coffee estates, which it managed by forcing the natives to work upon them, in lieu of taxes. These estates yielded a vast revenue. From 1851 to 1871 Java turned into the Dutch treasury about \$200,000,000, and the most of this came from coffee.

The Government is business a good deal of coffee today, but the business is gradually going into the hands of private parties. During my stay in Java I have visited a number of the Government plantations and have also gone over some of the private estates. The Government lands are worked on shares with the natives, the Dutch getting the lion's share. When

Marshal Daendels took charge of the Government many of the native princes had coffee estates which they ran with forced labor. The Dutch East India Company took its tribute in coffee from them, and arranged with them to buy the balance of their crop at just about 1 cent a pound. Daendels urged the people of the highlands all over the island to plant coffee, and he remitted taxes on this account. This policy was continued later on, and shortly after the English left Java every family of certain districts was required to keep 1000 coffee trees in bearing on certain of the village lands and to give or sell two-fifths of the crop to the Government. It had to clean and sort the coffee and deliver it to the public warehouses. Here they were paid about 3 or 4 cents a pound for it, and this, notwithstanding the same coffee was selling for as much as from 15 to 20 cents a pound at the seaports nearby. At the same time the Government gave percentages to the chiefs of the various villages according to the quality of the coffee produced in their respective districts.

They established rules of culture, or organized nurseries to provide the best of the dried beans.

I asked how the government managed its estates, and was told that the villages were required to plant the coffee under government supervision. The officials see that the land is properly cleared, the plants set out and the trees cultivated until they come into bearing. The people are paid for this work. After this the trees are divided up among the families of the village, each having as much as it can attend to. Each family is responsible for its own trees and their product. The different members of the family gather the berries, carry them home and dry them in the sun. When thoroughly dried they are put into wooden mortars and the hulls pounded off. The chaff of skins and hulls is then winnowed, and the beans are carried to the warehouses and sold to the government at 15 florins a picul, or at \$6 for 133 pounds.

This is too cheap for the natives to make anything. They are not interested in the business, and they will not cultivate the plants carefully. I am told that if the price were doubled, there would be a great deal more old government Java, and that of a better quality. At present the best Java coffee is raised on private estates.

The government coffee warehouses are scattered throughout the coffee districts, and they are also to be found in the larger cities. I visited one in the town of Pocomo, where I stopped on my way to Bromo volcano. It was a building of

woven bamboo walls and a roof of red tiles, with a cement floor. On the wide porch in front of it were scales for weighing the coffee, and within, piled up like so much oats on the floor, was a little mountain of green coffee beans. In the pile were two wooden scoophovels for bagging the coffee, and two half-naked men were at work preparing it for shipment to market.

Near the door, sitting cross-legged upon the floor, before a table a foot high, was a turbaned Javanese in spectacles. He was the native government official who bought the coffee and sent it to the seaports. He told me that the government is now paying less than 5 cents a pound for its coffee the same that we pay our retailers 50 cents for in the United States; so you see the Dutch are not doing a losing business with the natives.

I was much interested in the coffee nurseries. These are of great extent. In places they cover the sides of the hills, great sheds roofed with bamboo and filled with thousands of bamboo pots, each containing a coffee seed or plant. Some of the plants were just bursting forth; others were a few inches high, and some a foot high. The plants are set out in the same earth in which they grow in the nursery. They are put only a few feet apart and are shaded when young. At first they are kept free from weeds, but when the trees grow, the shade from the coffee keeps down the weeds.

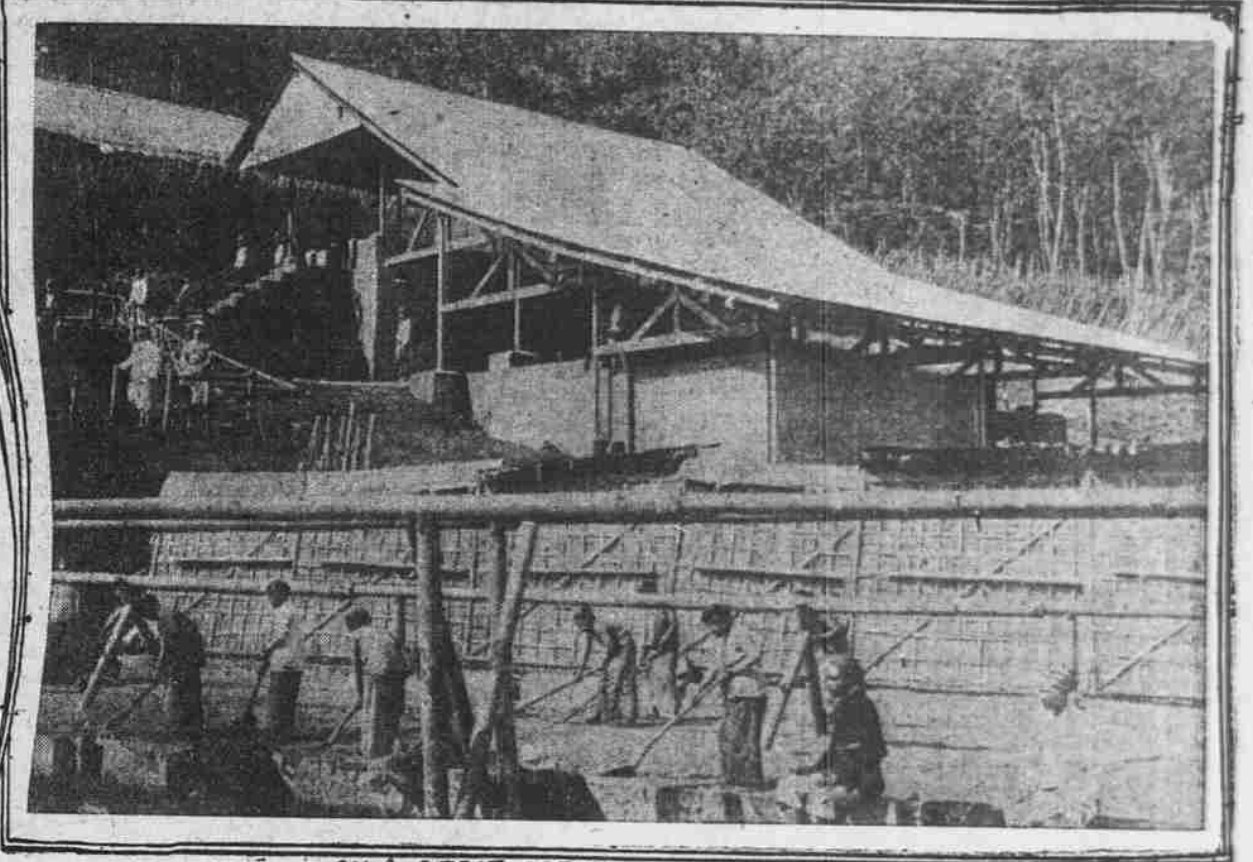
I wish I could take you on a pony-back ride through these coffee estates. They



GIRL CARRYING HOME IN A BAG



JAVANESE WOMEN PICKING LIBERIAN COFFEE.



ON A GREAT COFFEE ESTATE.



DRYING COFFEE ON A PLANTATION.

are interspersed with forests, and there are many monkeys, great, long-tailed black fellows, which jump from branch to branch and from one tree to another. You see them squatting at the roots of the branches and creeping around the tree trunks, grinning and chattering at you. Now you will see one clinging to a limb 200 feet above the ground, and now catch sight of one jumping 15 feet from one tree to another.

The vegetation is everywhere luxuriant. There are palm trees and banana plants. There are all sorts of winding vines. The very plants seem to love one another; the trees twist themselves about their fellows and grow up together. Even the dead branches are covered with green; they are clothed with orchids and moss, the green and flowers of the air forming a winding sheet over the dead branches. There are orchids everywhere, and such orchids! Here one has wound itself around a branch like a necklace; there one equates like a monkey at the root of a limb, and farther over are great masses of green, out of which come blossoms of many hues.

The soil of Java is exceedingly rich. The land is one of volcanoes, but its volcanoes spout forth mud instead of stones, and this mud is of a chocolate brown, which, when dry, becomes a fine dust many feet thick. In the coffee district it has a reddish tinge, and is probably impregnated with iron. The best coffee regions are from 200 to 400 feet above the sea, and some of the very best are in the Praeger or mountainous provinces of Western Java.

In conversation with some of the chief American coffee exporters at Batavia, I was told that the very best Java coffee of today comes from Sumatra. It is from the District of Padang, and is of the Arabian variety. It brings a higher price in Batavia than the best Java sold in our ordinary stores brings at wholesale in New York, so that what is sold as pure Java for from 25 to 40 cents a pound in our stores is in all probability not Java at all. The best Java and the Sumatra Java cost the wholesalers in New York at least 30 cents a pound. The exporters

here tell me that more so-called Java coffee is consumed in the United States alone than is raised in all the Dutch East Indies, and this, notwithstanding that a great deal of the product goes to Europe. I was told during my stay in Brazil that the most of the Java coffee sold in the United States was really Brazilian coffee, and I do not doubt the statement.

Notwithstanding this, a great deal of pure Java goes to the United States, but it brings very high prices and it is sometimes used to flavor other coffee. The pure article cannot possibly be sold cheap, so when you are told you are getting a bargain in pure Java coffee don't take it.

The finest Sumatra coffee comes from the descendants of Arabian plants. It is very carefully cultivated, and after being picked, is sorted by hand. In the warehouses here I have seen scores of Javanese girls squatting down, with basket trays of coffee in front of them. They handle almost every grain, putting the small one into one place and the larger ones into another, sorting them as carefully as though they were grains of gold.

As the coffee comes in it is of a rich olive green color. It is left for some time on the floor of the warehouse, when it turns a light yellow. No coloring matter whatever is used, and the coffee is shipped as pure as it is on the plantation. The best varieties are sent to New York in sailing vessels which carry nothing else. The coffee steams and cures during the long three months' voyage, thereby so much improving its flavor that sailing vessels are preferred to steamers. Coffee, like wine, improves with age, and up to a certain limit the older it is the better it is.

Some of the private estates of Java are perhaps more scientifically managed than any other coffee lands of the world. At Singar, a vast plantation near Batavia, everything connected with the curing of the coffee is done by machinery. The trees are most carefully cultivated and the greatest care taken to produce fine fruit.

I saw there one machine which cleans 20,000 pounds of coffee in a day. It re-

moves the dried pulp to a powder, but does not injure the grain. After this the coffee is further cleaned in a simple faning mill. One of these machines costs about \$25 in gold. I should think they would be of great value in Porto Rico.

The finest of the Java coffee, as we know it, is from plants of Arabian descent. It was this variety that was affected by the blight. The trees are small, slender and delicate, coming originally from the hills of Yemen in Arabia from about the same region as the Mocha coffee. In that country the Mocha coffee still grows, but there is so little of it that it is safe to say that not a grain of it comes to the United States.

Sold as Mocha. Twenty-five years ago about 10,000 tons of Mocha coffee were exported, but it is said that the production is now not half that, and that it is all consumed in Mohammedan households. During my stay in Brazil I saw thousands of bags of coffee which I was told would be sold as Mocha, and I visited warehouses where there were sorting machines, in which the little round grains were picked out from the rest, to be put into bags and sold as Mocha.

The coffee most raised in Java today is the Liberian coffee. It is a coarse, large-grained variety. The beans are three times as large as the real Mocha, and they have a different flavor. The Liberian trees are stronger than any others. They have larger leaves and they grow thick and stout. They produce far more than other varieties and trees have been known to yield 16 pounds. They will grow at a lower altitude and in Liberia are found wild not far from the seashore.

This tree has been taken to Java because it will withstand the blight and other parasites, and also on account of its prolific bearing. The plantation on the island of Jolo has nothing but Liberian trees, and I understand that there are large plantations of similar trees near by in Borneo. I doubt whether this coffee would sell well in the United States, although there is a good demand for it in Europe. FRANK G. CARPENTER.

congratulation to most employers that they have such warm partisans. Between the clerks there is more or less good comradeship, although, of course, everybody does not know everybody else, and there are cliques and factions, with their little hostilities and jealousies. Let there be a general appeal for aid for some one of their number in distress, and there is a unanimous response. They are very human, after all. In such a complex, heterogeneous mass it is remarkable that so much brotherly kindness, so little of selfishness exists. The irksomeness and dullness of the life cannot wholly obliterate the fact that they are toilers together; the least they can do is adding to each other's burdens.

Humanity is much the same the world over, and the girl behind the counter possesses the same possibilities for perfect womanliness as does the woman to whom she sells goods. Many a woman, in a more fortunate position, from a worldly point of view, has cause to envy her.

A girl may dignify any position she holds, and this is what the aspiring, half-educated herd should learn to appreciate. The woman who can say "shop girl" with a curl of the lip and a tone of disdain shows her ignorance. She is stupid in not having kept sufficiently abreast with the times to know that "shop girl" is usually unites as synonymous with "gentlewoman" as "customer."

It means something to be a good clerk. It means the possession of the traits which make a man manly or a woman womanly. The sooner My Lady before the counter recognizes this and allows it to control her shopping list the sooner will the girl have less cause to despise her, as well as fewer occasions to wonder if the fool-killer is not slighting his work.

HARRIET SINCLAIR PHILIPS.

THE GIRL BEHIND THE COUNTER.

(Continued from Page Twenty-five.)

ony of nature she enters into no one has ever been able to discover. She is a remnant of the days of inquisitions and refined tortures. Even the proprietors feel a resentment toward her for consuming the time of their employes, disconcerting them and trying one's patience. She is merely a systematic "pricer," who has seldom any intention of buying, and who, still less frequently, buys.

Perhaps the most "difficult" woman who appears in the afternoon is the arrogant Mrs. "Impressed-With-Her-Position." She has a majestic sweep as she approaches the counter. Her manner of addressing the girl is open affrontance. She is the type which cannot see why, with the new-fangled cash boxes and highly modernized delivery system, the stores cannot provide something more mechanical to serve

her—something, anything, that she and her kind could more completely ignore. The mere consciousness that the one who waits on her is of her own sex irritates her.

She does not know, poor, tawdry bit of cheap aristocracy, that the girl before her heartily and justly despises her. She thinks the girl envies her for her fine dress and would-be fine airs. She does not know that the girl is mentally comparing her with another woman—the "natural-born lady," as they say in the South—the real gentlewoman, who has a correct estimate of eternal values and believes in the aristocracy of honest labor.

It is this one high type of womanhood that redeems the whole sex in the girl's mind. She knows that the girl has a heart to feel slighted, a mind to draw fair comparisons, a temper to show scorn for pettiness, and usually a fine nature to ap-

preciate true courtesy. She knows, too, that in the process of handling goods and hearing managers, clerks and frequently members of the firm discuss their value, the girl learns more than ever she can about what is offered for sale, no matter how extensive her shopping may be. It is to her advantage to hear the girl's opinion, for it is a law among salespeople, when thus deferred to, to give the benefit of an honest judgment as though buying for their own use.

When night comes and time has been compelled to bear things with imperturbable calm and smiling patience. Instead of flying over the counter and boxing Miss Insolence on the ears, she has smiled and

smiled and coiled those smiles into dollars for the firm.

On one occasion the wife of an eminent clergyman was heard to remark patronizingly to a girl who had made out a long list of goods, in a neat, legible hand, "Why, I can read what you write! So unusual!" The girl waited until the change came back. Then, after counting it out with deliberate exactness, she remarked, smilingly: "You see, I can count as well as write."

Mrs. Dominic looked amazed. "What did you say?" she demanded. "That I had the benefit of the public school system in my youth," the girl answered, sweetly. Now that woman has never been quite sure that the girl did not mean some impertinence, but it has never dawned on her that she herself was at fault in the matter; that's something quite beyond the comprehension of women of her sort.

The relations between employers and employes in the great department stores is a subject of more or less speculation, and one not understood by outsiders. Many of the ideas current are most erroneous and unfair to all concerned. The average employer is a man of humane sympathies. Toward the girl clerk he evinces a marked degree of consideration and kindness. It is most unusual for a woman applicant or employe's necessity to be taken advantage of by him.

Respect and courtesy are measured by him to the girl clerk, full as generously as to any other woman in the work-a-day world. The matter of wages is being adjusted in the saleswoman's favor, thus doing away with one of the strongest arguments against girl's clerking. The girl is loyal to her employer and to everything pertaining to the house. It is a matter of

congratulation to most employers that they have such warm partisans. Between the clerks there is more or less good comradeship, although, of course, everybody does not know everybody else, and there are cliques and factions, with their little hostilities and jealousies. Let there be a general appeal for aid for some one of their number in distress, and there is a unanimous response. They are very human, after all. In such a complex, heterogeneous mass it is remarkable that so much brotherly kindness, so little of selfishness exists. The irksomeness and dullness of the life cannot wholly obliterate the fact that they are toilers together; the least they can do is adding to each other's burdens.

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