

## Banana Raising A Great Industry

To the writer and no doubt to many others, it has often seemed strange that the southern continent of this hemisphere has so little interest for the average citizen of the United States. Occasionally articles have appeared in the newspapers and magazines which have caused a little flutter of interest in some quarters but the interest seems to have been fleeting.

There has been much talk of Darkest Africa, and explorers galore have followed the famous Stanley and Livingstone into the dark recesses of that continent until I think I am safe in saying that the continent of Africa is, today better known than our own South America.

I feel sure that there is no quarter of the globe that presents to the imagination so much of romantic and sentimental interest and I might add commercial interest, as well as food for speculation in regard to the mysterious and unknown.

Tales of the Spanish Main are still and no doubt will be for many years to come, full of interest to all who read or hear from them. The exploits of the early Spanish explorers and settlers and the depredations of the buccaneers certainly furnish enough of romance and tragedy to satisfy the most exacting.

One surely cannot read of the magnificent Spanish dream of a great empire in the New World without a thrill of admiration mixed with a good deal of horror at their methods of founding it. Their ruthless destruction of a civilization, which was in some respects at least, even superior to their own, always rouses more or less indignation.

Still, after all, there is a tinge of sadness mingled with our indignation when we think of the rapid decadence of the dream, which has perhaps only been equaled by the decadence of the power and influence of the mother country itself.

Of the origin and history of the early civilization, existing when the Spaniards came, we know little or nothing and there seems to be very little prospect of learning more. Even of the actual present habitants of many parts of the continent we know almost as little.

We are familiar to some extent with a narrow belt along the coast and a little of the territory along the navigable rivers, but I think few realize how narrow this belt is.

It was the writer's privilege to spend a few weeks along the coast of Colombia just at the close of the late civil war in that country, and there is very little here that we are familiar with as twentieth century civilization and culture. Even in the neighborhood of Santa Marta, one of

the oldest of the Spanish American settlements, one may find within an hour's walk or ride, almost primeval forests where there is no sign of human inhabitants, much less, civilization, and the villages of mud and thatch whose inhabitants are almost pure Indians, although they speak the Spanish language.

A few hours' ride up the Sierra mountains takes one into a practically uninhabited wilderness where the tropical jungle is so dense that the path must be cut most of the way even for a mule train.

In reaching the wilderness one travels most of the way over a wild trail cut along the sides of the mountains, passing at long intervals, lonely coffee plantations. These are soon passed and the only signs of human life, past or present, are the old Indian Aztec roads made by laying boulders in rows with their flat sides up, usually two rows of large ones with a row of smaller ones on either side. And all of this within a day's laborious ride up the mountain. Then what lies within the vast stretches beyond?

Of course, the country, on all sides has been penetrated to some distance in a desultory way, but how does the world at large know of it?

Scientists from the great museums have made some long trips up the Magdalena, the Orinoco and the Amazon rivers and of the country along the latter considerable has been written.

The report comes from the upper stretches of the Orinoco of the vast table land having great fertility and a fine climate, teeming with a wealth of plant and animal life, but this is a report made from a bare book at the edge of the mysterious unknown country beyond, through which probably no white man has passed and emerged alive.

Savage beasts, savage men, and deadly fevers have all conspired to curtail the knowledge that has come to the outer world.

As the population of the world increases, these great garden spots must sooner or later be opened up and connected with the rest of the world by modern methods of transportation.

This the United Fruit Company has been quietly doing along the coast of the Caribbean Sea for a number of years and system has been developed whose magnitude few understand.

Stations have been established from San Marta, Colombia, to Bluefields, Nicaragua and there are important shipping points at Santa Marta, Colon, Bocas del Toro, Port Limon, Greytown, and Bluefields and I do not know how many more places.

## To Look Young

feel young and stay young—keep the blood pure, the stomach right, the bowels regular, the skin clear and the eyes bright with

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Whatever may have been said of the United Fruit Company as a trust and an oppressor of smaller concerns, it has certainly done great things for the places where its stations have been established and I have yet to hear of a case in these places where unjust discrimination or oppression has been practiced, while many who are in their employ and are doing business with them, speak of them only in the highest terms.

Perhaps Limon, Costa Rica is a good example and this has been changed from a little adobe and thatch tropical mudhole, with awful health conditions to a clean, modern flourishing town, with a small park which is the most beautiful I have ever seen.

The United Fruit Company's principal industry is of course, raising and shipping bananas, although they handle some other fruit and I think that this industry which is destined for many years to come, to be the leading one in that climate. The market for their suit in the United States seems to be almost unlimited, and the amount of the fruit consumed is only limited by the supply and price.

Some years ago while going from New York to Colombia. I made the acquaintance of Don Quiros, a wealthy Spaniard from San Jose, Costa Rica, who had very large interests in that city and the surrounding country. Among other things, he owned a banana plantation from which he was shipping about five thousand bunches of bananas a week to New York upon the boats of the United Fruit Company.

He told me that some years he had cleared above all expenses, as high as seventy per cent. of the original investment. A profit of from thirty to fifty per cent. is not at all uncommon.

Large profits are made along the coast of Colombia where irrigation is depended upon, but the Isthmian and Central American climate, where there is sufficient rain fall, is better.

The amount of this fruit that is shipped to the United States is almost inconceivable. Ships carrying from ten to thirty thousand bunches are landing daily at New Orleans, Mobile, Philadelphia, New York and Boston. From their farms at Bocas del Toro alone, the United Fruit Company is shipping three or four such cargoes a week.

There are perhaps few great industries, especially in agricultural lines, about which the general public knows so little as that of raising bananas. Many have a vague mental picture of a grove of trees which live year after year and bear bunch after bunch of bananas, and we often hear the desire expressed to see the fruit ripening upon the trees and to taste the luscious fruit that had ripened as nature intended. In fact, it is considered the unpardonable sin to allow a bunch to ripen upon the tree.

The banana tree springs from a great bulk somewhat like a lily bulb and a single shoot seldom, if ever bears more than one bunch of the fruit. The bulb lives and throws out new shoots or suckers from time to time and often when the bananas are ready to cut from one shoot, another from the same bulk will be growing up and perhaps in bloom. After the bananas are cut the shoot is cut down and rots upon the ground.

The process of planting a new banana grove is, I am sure, quite different from what most people imagine. Low, rich soil is usually chosen and this in the tropics is always covered with a dense growth of timber. Good banana land can be purchased for very little, but it costs a good deal more to prepare and plant an acre than the original cost of the land.

First a gang of men is sent though with machettas to cut the rank undergrowth which unsally grows so thick that it seems as if a rabbit could scarcely force his way through. After the undergrowth has been cut down a gang of laborers follow to do the planting. The banana bulbs are cut into pieces called "bits," each "bit" containing one eye or sprout, the process being similar, in a way, to the cutting of seed potatoes. These "bits" are planted in rows much like a young orchard and then the remainder of the forest is cut down and allowed to

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**DO YOU REALIZE** that you don't realize and won't realize until it is too late what you are passing up if you don't buy this stock at \$3.00 per share before the price advances. Well, if you don't realize it now you will when the opportunity has passed, then you will tell your friends that you remember when you could have bought Cardiff Coal & Coke Company's stock at \$3.00 per share; in fact, you had almost made up your mind to buy it, but you didn't know whether the coal would burn or not because it was so close home. Did you ever see any coal that wouldn't burn?

Orders for either Coal or Stock or any information about either will be cheerfully furnished by **C. H. CALLANDER**, at the Callander Navigation Co. or **J. C. LEE**, at the Northern Hotel.

### SIR ROBERT HART RETIRES.

PEKIN, Mar. 27.—Sir Robert Hart, who is returning to England after many years at the head of the Chinese maritime customs, was received in farewell audience yesterday by the Empress and the Dowager Empress of China. Sir Robert has been fully 54 years in the service of the Chinese government. The audience was of unusual duration. The empress cordially thanked Sir Robert for his services to the country and made him a number of gifts. The empress also manifested his appreciation.

### Best Healer in the World.

Rev. F. Starbird, of East Raymond, Maine, says: "I have used Bucklen's Arnica Salve for several years, on my old army wound, and other obstinate sores, and find it the best healer in the world. I use it too with great success in my veterinary business." Price 25c at Chas. Rogers & Son's drug store.

### REFUGEES LEAVING.

PORT AU PRINCE, Mar. 27.—The refugees in the various legations in Port Au Prince, to the number of 75, will leave here for Kingston today on board the German cruiser Bremen. All but two of the refugees refused the government's guarantee of safety if they should elect to return to their homes. They preferred to live out of the country. The U. S. gunboat Marietta arrived here yesterday from Guantanamo. The U. S. cruiser Des Moines has been here for some time past.

### Silver Aluminum Jelly Moulds Free.

Individually Molded desserts are now considered the proper thing. The moulds are hard to get outside the large cities, but users of JELL-O, The Dainty Dessert, can get them absolutely free. Circular in each package explaining and illustrating the different patterns. JELL-O is sold by all good grocers at 10c. per package. Do not accept a substitute or you will be disappointed.

### GIFT TO Y. M. C. A.

CHICAGO, Mar. 27.—A contribution of \$25,000 to the anniversary fund of the Young Men's Christian Association, was made yesterday by Mrs. T. B. Blackstone. Announcement of the gift was made by the citizens advisory committee which is in charge of raising the \$1,000,000 fund.

### Notice to Our Customers

We are pleased to announce that Foley's Honey and Tar for coughs, colds and lung troubles is not affected by the National Pure Food and Drug law as it contains no opiates or other harmful drugs, and we recommend it.

as a safe remedy for children and adults. T. F. Laurin, Owl Drug Store.

### IMPRISONED IN OLD MINE.

SPOKANE, March 26.—Paul Emanuelson and Rasmus Rasmussen, timbermen, were imprisoned by a fall of waste in an abandoned working in the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mine at Wardner, Idaho. The men are working tonight in an effort to rescue them if they are still alive.

Lane's Family Medicine will give you a digestion that will permit you to eat good things instead of "health foods" of various sorts that are as palatable as hay.

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