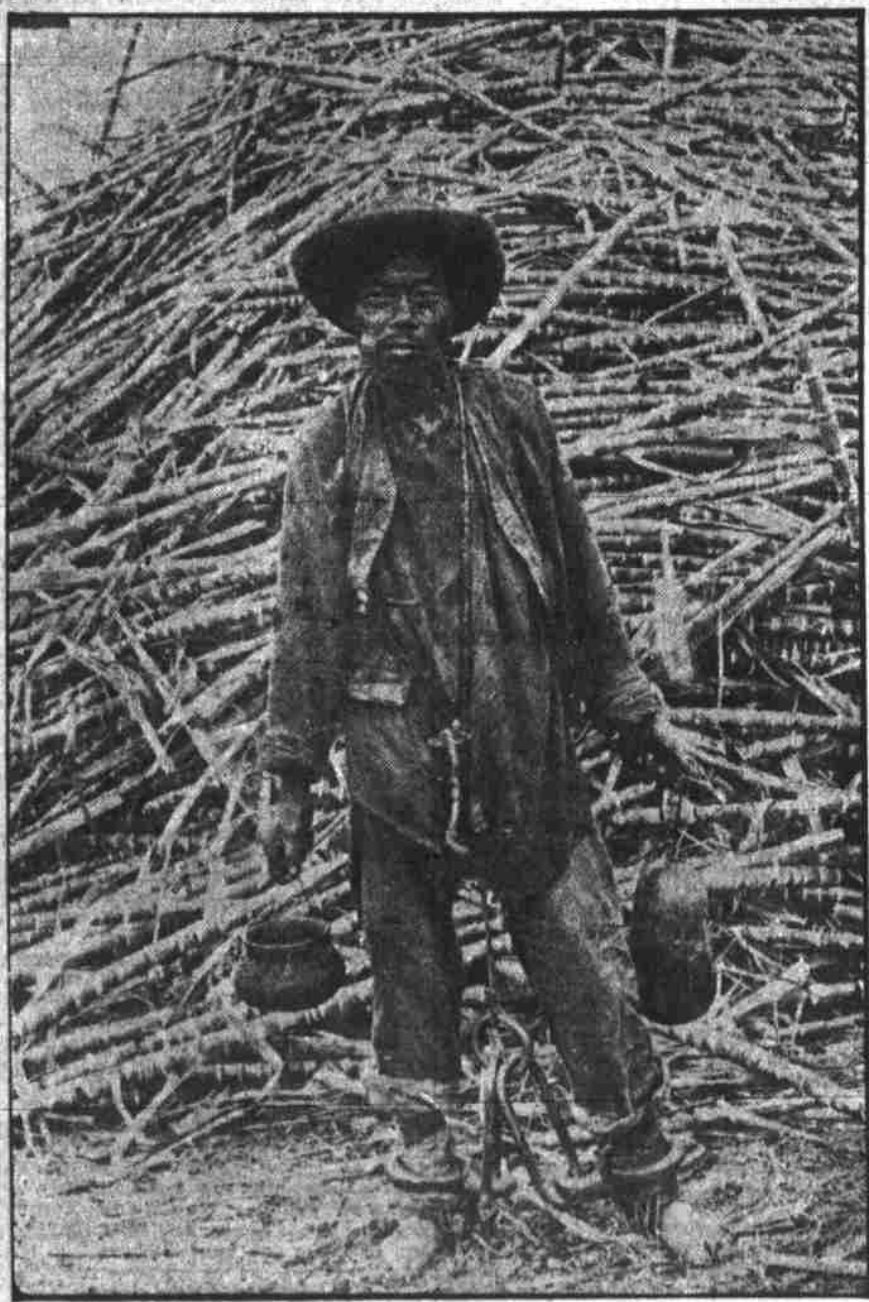


## Some Peculiarities Presented by Peru.

(By Frederic J. Haskin, Special Correspondent of The Journal.)



SHACKLES MAKES HIM FEEL IMPORTANT.

Lima, Peru.—South America has always been a rich field for enterprise. The first merry-go-round that was taken into the interior made its owner a fortune in a few weeks. It was patronized by everybody, from the members of the city council down to the school children. It was a sorry old machine that had traveled the rounds of many country fairs, circuits, and was about ready for the scrap pile, but it saw its palest days when its owner wandered this way. The natives "went against it right," to use the language of the proprietor. A barber put up his shop for tickets and rode them out inside of two days, and several citizens mortgaged their houses in order to raise money with which to purchase more rides. In a few weeks the lucky owner had taken in enough money to keep the wolf from his door for many a day. He finally traded the old merry-go-round for a half interest in the biggest store in town, converted his claim into cash, and went on his way rejoicing.

### No Numbered the Houses.

The man who furnishes the numbers for houses has been this way. He numbered them inside and out. In one little town he arranged with the authorities to be paid a certain price for each number he put up. His contract should have read "numbers to be attached to the door of each house," but he inserted the letter "s" and made door read plural. He put a number on every door of every house, inside and out, upstairs and down, and told them it was the latest style in the United States. There was some objection raised, but the agent glibly told them their city would soon grow, and when their mail was brought by carriers each member of the family could have letters and papers left at the door of his or her room. He collected his money and promptly shook the dust of that town from his feet. The inhabitants are patiently waiting for the place to grow so they can have their mail delivered in their rooms.

### The King of Graters.

The greatest grafter who ever visited Peru, and the most successful, was Henry Meigs. The accomplishments of all others are small compared to his operations. He was one of the boldest and most successful lobbyists in history. It is told of him that on a certain occasion, when he had a bill pending before congress, which he wished passed at once, that he went to a ball and selected for his partners the wives of the men who could vote his measure through for him. As he danced with them he left a \$1,000 bill in the hand of each, and told them if the bill became a law he would pay his respects to them in a similar manner the next time he danced with them. There was no delay in making his measure a law when it came up for consideration.

### Rocky Roads to Travel.

Railroads were Meigs' specialty, and he built them, no matter what the cost. The average resident of the United States does not properly appreciate the excellent transportation facilities he has at his command. If he ever travels on some of the railroads of Central and South America then he will think of those at home and resolve that blessed be their name. I saw a sign at one station, which stated that the morning train would leave at "8 o'clock or thereabouts." This meant that it might go at 8 sharp, or three or four hours afterward. If one of the officials happened to be going up the line, and a notion to hurry struck him, he might order the train out an hour ahead of time. Those two words "or thereabouts" could be given a very broad interpretation when necessary, and used to cover up a multitude of irregularities in the time table. The printed passenger regulations of the railroad revealed some astonishing privileges. It quotes the rates for first, second, third and fourth class passengers, and stated that travelers of the four class might carry one rooster or one pig, provided the rooster was con-

cealed in a sack, or the pig's nose was tied so it could not squeal. The regulations authorized a traveler of the first class to carry both a rooster and a pig if they were properly sacked and gagged.

The cost of constructing some of these little "jerk-water" lines was enormous. A contractor told me that 8,000 laborers died while he was building 115 miles of track through a swamp. The handling of this mongrel labor is an intricate problem. If you beat them it does little good. They will get up after a thrashing and kiss your hand. If you put them in chains they feel like martyrs. Instead of feeling disgraced the shackles seem to add to the native's sense of importance. He feels that he must be a bold, bad man to be treated in such a decisive way. It rather glorifies him in his own estimation.

### The Dunces Cap Game.

One contractor who has had lots of experience with them, says it does no good to punish them in ordinary ways. He said he had one fellow who was very shiftless, and who was a constant source of trouble. He kept up a running fire of talk with all those around him, and constantly shirked his work. Finally the contractor called him up from the trench, and said to him, "You are very tired. That is why you don't work better. Sit down here in the shade and rest. Have a drink of water, and cool yourself with this fan." The assistant leader had nothing to do but comply. His fellows began at once to tease him. He was in much the same position as the small boy in school caught at his mischief and made to wear a dunce cap. The big booby stood the fire of his comrades for awhile and then began to look like a baby. He begged to go back to work, and offered to work all the rest of his life without a cent's pay, just to show that he was in earnest. When he was allowed to get back in the trench he did not shirk again, and on that job, from that time on, all that was necessary to arouse some idler was to ask him if he wanted to come up in the shade and rest.

### Have Fun at Funerals.

The innumerable feast days cause much trouble among the laborers. They hate to work on a holiday. One contractor solved the problem by having a priest come to say early mass on the works, and giving his men a sort of barbecue later in the day. He gave them several sheep to kill, and several kegs of rum to drink after the day's work was done. They always had a jolly spree of it, but it did not matter so long as their usual time had been put in. These natives turn every function into a feast. They have just as good a time at a funeral as at a wedding. Once I had a little fellow working for me as chore boy. One evening he came around quite dressed up and invited me to his house. He said his brother was dead and the family were going to give a "gathering." I made up my mind to attend the "gathering." It proved to be a sort of wake. The corpse was laid out in one of the front rooms. When the guests arrived they would go in and take a look at the dead body, never failing to mention how natural he looked, and what a bright boy he had been when he was alive. This part of the ceremony over, they would join the crowd in the front yard, where there was a wash boiler full of ice cream, ready to be served, and plenty of liquors of a strong nature. They played kissing and hugging games all night, and it was reported to me next day as having been a very jolly party.

The customs of these days are very tame, indeed, compared with those of the barbarians who were the ancestors of the poor wretches we see about us now. When the Spaniards invaded the temples of the Inca sovereigns, during their search for treasure, they invariably found a room where human beings had been sacrificed. It was always a veritable chamber of horrors. In some dark corner would be the ugly, wooden idol in whose name all this needless slaughter was committed. The cannibal ceremonies of the past have been gradually reduced to harmless wakes at funerals, and wholesale sprees in which all hands get as jolly full as their hides will hold.

### Famous Chincha Island.

The Chincha islands are pointed out to every passenger on the ships which sail down the coast of Peru. They are volcanic rocks sticking out of the water, and are famed for the large quantities of guano which were formerly deposited on them. Guano is bird manure. It is valuable as a fertilizer.

These ocean rocks were favorite roosting places for millions of sea birds, and gradually became covered over with their droppings. Twenty-five years ago this stuff sold for \$100 per ton, and its sale in the markets of the world brought more money into the treasury of Peru than any gold mine on earth has ever produced. The supply seemed almost inexhaustible. For many years hundreds of ships were employed in transporting it to Europe and the United States. When the industry was at its height there would sometimes be as many as a hundred sailing ships waiting at the Chincha islands for cargoes.

The work of dispatching them was very slow, and it was not uncommon for a vessel to be waiting eight or nine months. Many a captain broke his heart at this waiting game. Great fraud was practiced by the Peruvian officials in charge. They would accept bribes and allow some captains to load ahead of others in the line. They would send those who refused to pay them to Callao to have their decks caulked, and force them to take their places at the end of the line when they returned.

Handling the guano was one of the nastiest jobs that men ever had to perform. When a deposit was disturbed the stench that came up from it was something dreadful. The men had to wear masks on their faces to protect their lungs and nostrils from the strong fumes of ammonia. Chinese coolies were imported to do the work, and many a poor devil, distracted from his awful task, deliberately jumped into the sea or down a chute into a ship's hold filled with guano, the fumes of which soon choked him to death. The industry has about died out because the supply is nearly exhausted, and the demand is growing much less.

### England Not on Map.

A British minister has just been sent to Bolivia, and this is the first representative England has had in that country for nearly 40 years. The last diplomatic agent sent there arrived at the capital on a feast day and immediately applied for an audience with the president. It did not suit his majesty to receive ministers on that particular day, so he sent word for the Englishman to come around some other time. This rebuff rather nettled British dignity, and the president was very much surprised to receive a letter a little later, saying that the accredited representatives of Great Britain were not accustomed to being put off on pretexts by presidents or anyone's else. Then the president got ruffled. The upshot of the matter was that the British minister was tied to a mule, head backwards, and driven out of the country in this undignified attitude.

When the outraged Englishman finally reached a cable office, he communicated the account of his woes to the British foreign office. The story goes that the official in charge, without taking the trouble to look up Bolivia's geographical position, ordered a battleship to be sent to insist upon proper amends being made for the insult. This is a great joke, for the reason that Bolivia is an inland country and has no port at all. When the British head of foreign affairs got down his map to look up Bolivia he took his pen and scratched a line through it, thus severing all diplomatic connection with it. When the president of Bolivia heard of this, several months afterward, he retaliated in smart fashion. An American firm was getting out some new geographical maps, and he wrote them: "Leave England blank on maps in our school books." This was many years ago, but there are still many of these old geographies in circulation which show no British red.

## SHIPBUILDING OF WORLD LAST YEAR

According to published statistics of last year's shipbuilding, the number of vessels launched in the whole world was 2,441, with a tonnage of 2,679,531 and an indicated horse-power of 2,832,486. For 1902 the number of vessels launched was 2,394, with a tonnage of 2,716,670 and an indicated horse-power of 2,917,254. More than one-half the new tonnage of 1903 was produced within the United Kingdom, England turning out 871 vessels of 796,226 tons, Scotland 362 vessels of 464,583 tons, and Ireland 25 vessels of 168,261 tons. With the exception of the United States, no foreign country launched an aggregate tonnage equal to the Clyde alone, which built during the year 277 vessels of 446,889 tons. The statistics show that there were decreases on the Clyde, the Tay, the Forth, the Wear, the Tees, the Harbours of the Thames, in Ireland, Germany, France and Holland, and increases on the Forth, the Mersey, the Humber, the English channel, in the colonies, the United States, Russia, Norway and Sweden. Italy, Austria, Hungary, Japan, Denmark, Belgium and China. The Clyde decrease was not so serious as expected, last year being a record year.

### PROPELLER DEVICE.

An invention by George Lasher, a local coppersmith, will be of interest to all mariners along the coast. It is a marine engine governor, and has been designed for the purpose of regulating the speed of a propeller. In a storm at sea the propeller is frequently thrown above the surface of the water, and as no resistance is met with in such cases it makes many unnecessary revolutions a minute. As a result the shaft is put in an enormous strain, and the propeller itself is frequently broken. There has been no means of regulating this matter.

The invention is made entirely of copper, and consists of a small standpipe fitted with air pumps, to which are attached an ingenious arrangement which controls the speed of the propeller at all times and under the most trying circumstances. A model which has just been completed has been subjected to a thorough test, and proved more than satisfactory to those who are interested in the device. The model will be shipped to San Francisco tonight on the steamer Oregon. It is being sent to Henry Christie, a master mechanic in the employ of the Dollar line of steamers, who will make practical experiments with it. P. A. Ganty, Angus Gor and J. Holtsman of this city have assisted in financing the project, and are confident that it will prove a success and supply a real want.

For many years Mr. Lasher, the inventor, served in the United States navy, and has had more or less experience with ships the greater part of his life. Some time ago he became convinced that there were too many accidents happening to vessels on account of the constant and frequently unnecessary strain put upon the shafts and propellers, and he set about the task of discovering a means to overcome the imperfection which exists.

### BROKE A SHAFT.

While coming up the river yesterday the steamer Albany broke her shaft. It is stated to be probable that a new one will have to be procured in the east, and the steamer will be tied up for several weeks. The Albany belongs to the Western Towing and Transportation company, and she has been in commission towing logs for the Portland Lumber mill. Until the necessary repairs are made to the vessel the No. 1 Wonder of the Shaver line will take her place.

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