



Far to the South
NOSED into the lazy Magdalena river on the extreme northern coast of South America. This is one of the world's greatest rivers and the fourth longest in the Western hemisphere. White crested breakers crashed along the beach and the low shore-line of Colombia as we approached. A narrow channel with a set of jetties grewed us. Waters from the Magdalena were murky like those of the Mississippi, and a rip-tide formed where the river met the Caribbean.

Slowly, almost imperceptibly, we glided into the stream. Huge alligators slid off logs into the water. Turtles slipped into the sea. Pelicans squawked. Long eel-like boats, each with two big oblong dirty sails and manned by nearly naked natives, slid through the water. The boats resembled junks in the Wang-poo, south of Shanghai, before the days of the rising sun. Marshes with mango-roots spread out on all sides.

An hour later we docked at Barranquilla. Around us were dozens of shiny corrugated iron sheds. Kegs of oil, tins of gasoline and millions of bales of coffee. Tiny electrical powered trucks built in the United States, got busy with our cargo. They scooted in and out of great bales of merchandise with the alacrity of kiddy cars. But each of these modern versions is capable of lifting 2½ tons, and of drawing twice that number. Soon we were unloading tractors, trucks, automobiles, pipes, stoves, ice-boxes, radios, and taking on coffee, oil, plants, fruit, and—of all things—monkeys.

Julio Gerlein, a wealthy realtor, took me on a self-appointed tour of his city of 150,000—a complex city. Residential section lies on a hill; business section along the slopes. Former ultra-modern; latter passing through the process of growing pains. Two dirty brown office buildings four stories high. The rest yellow, greens, pinks and creams of one and two stories. Narrow streets jammed with traffic. Most stores with open fronts. Fantastic array of wares with no semblance of order. Stores exhibit American made automobiles, ice boxes, radios, typewriters, chewing gum, and in the same window German pianos, cameras, pipes and plumbing supplies. Dozens of drug stores chiefly carrying German medicines. A few agencies for German cars. Singer sewing machine has the most modern building. Clothing in the shops chiefly standard American makes. Few shops selling women's clothing. I was told most women make their own. Few restaurants, and no sidewalk cafes. At the town's principle intersection—a luncheteria where business men and office workers eat. Only a handful of women work in offices. Thus unemployment is at a minimum.

Every type of transportation cluttered the thoroughfares. There were thousands of automobiles, mouse-colored burros with their owners squatting akimbo, mule-drawn wagons, bicycles. Every "gentleman" has a chauffeur. Few owners drive themselves, and no wonder. Every one cuts corners; tears about at breakneck speed. Horns toot and screech and bellow. The humidity is acute.

Air travel spans the countryside. To Bogota, the national capital, is but two hours by air; \$50; it takes five days by boat and train. To Cartagena is 45 minutes by air; \$10; by boat it takes five hours.

Policemen wear Hindu topi helmets and dress in khaki. One of them, not over four feet tall, was directing traffic at a main intersection and though he gesticulated in the orthodox manner, drivers paid not the slightest heed to him. They tore past in every direction at breakneck speed.

Swastikas are painted on some buildings. The Nazis have a large club house and a two story school and kindergarten in Barranquilla. Germans own coffee plantations, oil wells, banks, stores, airplanes and real estate. No one seems to know the exact German population, but the estimates run between 10 and 20 thousand.

Just now in Barranquilla, because of the European war, only American and a few Japanese ships call at the port. Colombians are losing millions of dollars worth of coffee, fruit and oil which formerly went to Germany, France, Italy and other warring countries.

SEEING THINGS: Jesus Rodriguez, my driver, insisted I see the high spots of his town. The highest spot was the ruins of a monastery reached by a villainous, slimy dirt mountain road on the edge of a precipice. It cost three cents apiece to view the building in which the famed pirate Henry Morgan once lived, but the driver said apologetically that in addition to this fee he would have to collect \$2 apiece for road tax! The panorama, however, was really breath-taking.

Fun for the Whole Family

BIG TOP

By ED WHEELAN



LALA PALOOZA The Last Roundup

By RUBE GOLDBERG



S'MATTER POP—Hey, Soldier! That's Playground Business!

By C. M. PAYNE



MESCAL IKE By S. L. HUNTLEY

Signs of Spring

