

DO YOU KNOW GOOD COFFEE?

Frank G. Carpenter Tells How the Brazilians Make It

A Visit to Santos, the Chief Coffee Port of the World—How the Crop is Handled, Grading Coffee—Mocha and Java From the Same Bag—Among the Coffee Tasters, Painted Coffee and Factories That Make Coffee Substitutes.

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SANTOS, Brazil. As you sip your coffee this bright Sunday morning let me give you some moving pictures of the Brazilian port through which it comes to the United States. Nearly all the coffee consumed in America passes through Santos. The city is the chief coffee port of the world. It handles more of this product than any half dozen ports upon earth. It is the gateway to the vast plantations of Sao Paulo and for a greater part of the year a steady stream of coffee bags flows down into it from the Brazilian highlands and then takes the ships which carry them to the United States and to Europe.

Everything in Santos is coffee. The town is built upon coffee beans and the fortunes of its citizens rise and fall with the prices of coffee. The people here believe in coffee. They talk nothing else and as they talk they drink. They drink so much of this beverage that they grow sallow and the muscles of their faces twitch continuously. When one of them sits in a chair, resting his toes on the floor, his knees bob up and down with nervousness and his whole system seems afflicted with St. Vitus' dance.

The street traffic of Santos is coffee. Huge automobiles, piled high with bags, move this way and that. Heavy carts similarly loaded are hauled by mules among the motor machines, and a grove run across the roadways with great bags on their shoulders.

The coffee scenes begin at the wharves. I came here from Rio de Janeiro on the good ship Arlanza. The Arlanza is a Royal Mail steamer of 10,000 tons. It has a heavy draft, but it made its way easily up the deep tropical river and stopped at the wharves of Santos amid ships taking on coffee for all parts of the world.

Landing, I took my camera and made snapshots of the loading. Upon many of the steamers the coffee was being carried on the backs of men. They took the bags from the warehouses, carried them to the decks of the steamers and dropped them into the holds. In this process a dark stream of porters flows from the wharves to the steamer. The men go on the trot, each loaded with a bag of 132 pounds. Some of them carry the bags on their shoulders, leaning them against the back of the head; others raise them to the crown of the head, holding the ends of the bags with the hands as they run up the boardwalk to the deck. The men are brawny and full-chested. They have necks like that of a bull, the muscles of which have been turned to iron by the enormous weights which from boyhood they have been accustomed to carry on their heads.

Many of the steamers are now loaded with endless belts like those upon which wheat is carried from place to place in our great elevators. These belts run upon carriers which begin in the basement of the great coffee warehouse and wind their way under the floor until they reach the wharves. Here they rise and travel overhead and empty their loads into the holds of the steamers. The bags are dropped on to the belts and are not touched again until they are packed in the hold. As they move along through the air they seem to be fairly alive. They look like gigantic mice or seals crawling along.

Leaving the wharves, I went into the warehouses. There are more than a score running for a mile or so along the docks. They cover acres and are packed from floor to roof. The bags are laid up like cordwood, and a warehouse may be a solid mass of these bags of coffee. In one of the warehouses the men were loading. Great, lusty fellows, they were bare to the waist and barefooted. Their muscles were like those of prizefighters, and all were broad shoulders and thick necked. I took out my watch and counted their speed. They dropped the bags on the chute at the rate of one every second. At every time my watch ticked 132 pounds of coffee upon the traveling belt and started on its way to the hold of the steamer. The hourly stream measured a little less than 8,000 pounds and every twelve hours something like 100,000 pounds of coffee were loaded by each of the belts.

This work begins in July and keeps on for months. At times more than 50,000,000 pounds are loaded in a single day, an amount sufficient to give every man, woman and child in the United States one-half pound and leave some to spare. At the same time more Brazilian coffee is being loaded at Rio de Janeiro and at Bahia and elsewhere. The total crop of the

country is two-thirds that of the whole world. In some years it has amounted to in the neighborhood of 20,000,000 bags, and of this 15,000,000 have come from Santos alone. In 1913 the crop was more than 13,000,000 bags, and its value was over \$200,000,000.

Of the coffee crop of Brazil more than half is sold to the United States, and that at a cost of something like \$76,000,000. We take in the neighborhood of three-quarters of a billion pounds of this coffee every year, and should we stop drinking it, the people would have a panic and millions of them would be on the edge of starvation. Our annual coffee imports are over 1,000,000,000 pounds, or more than fifty pounds for every one of our families. In other words we use a pound of coffee a week to every family in the United States.

In another letter I shall describe my visits to the coffee plantations. Some of them have millions of trees, and they cover thousands of acres. Today I shall deal only with the coffee as it reaches the ports. The coffee from most of the estates come here in beans of different sizes and shapes. Some are good and some bad, but they are all mixed together. Before they can be exported they have to go through separators and graders. There are a number of such institutions in Santos, and two of the largest are owned by an American, Mr. Lawrence. It was with the owner that I went through them. The mills are much like a great flouring mill. The coffee is carried to the top of the building, and it falls by gravity through the various machines. The mill is run by electricity, and the machinery is such that the dirt is taken out and the beans graded according to their size and character. The grading is exact, and out of the same sack will come Mocha and Java and almost every variety of coffee under the sun. Indeed, the most of the Mocha coffee we use has never seen Arabia, and almost every bit of our Java coffee is grown in Brazil.

Every shipment of coffee has its own treatment, and the value of the shipments depends largely on where the coffee is raised. Some of the regions are as different from the others as the Vuelto Abajo, which produces the finest Havana tobacco, is different from the land that produces the stogy. Not only the soil, but the climate and elevation have to do with the product each district producing beans of a flavor which is of its own kind and quality.

The difference in coffee makes its preparation for the markets an important element of the industry. Every exporter has his own methods of sampling the coffee and grading and preparing it for shipment abroad. During my stay here I have visited some of the great houses that send coffee to the United States. The care taken is wonderful. Every shipment, whether it be of a thousand bags or fifty thousand, is sampled and tested. The coffee is graded according to quality and this is tested by sight, feel and taste. Coffee-tasting is a profession and there are men here in Santos who do nothing else. Every shipment is carefully sampled and the sample is roasted and tasted. The result gives the grade and this is sent with the shipment to the United States, forming the basis of the price of the coffee and as to how it shall be sold.

It was with the manager of the Ar buckle Company that I went through their sampling rooms. These were walled with shelves containing the coffee recently tested. Some of the samples were brought down and their quality pointed out. Some of the best coffee was labeled Mocha. This consisted of beans as big as a pea, and of much the same shape. The beans were of a light color and the manager told me that the coffee was three years old. He says that the coffee beans grow better with age and that the coffee has a finer flavor after it is several years old.

Passing on we came into the testing room. One side of this was lined with an electric stove which had many small ovens heated by gas jets. Each of these ovens was just large enough to contain one or two samples of coffee. Then the green beans were put in to be roasted. The electricity was turned on and the oven lighted. From time to time a spoonful of them was taken out to be examined. When they were of just the right color showing that they had been properly roasted, a tablespoonful from each sample was taken out and weighed, or being used to make a test.

I think the weight was about 100 grains. It is only as much as you could put in an ordinary teaspoon. This was carefully done in order that the measure of coffee should in all cases be just the same in proportion to the amount of water. Fifteen samples were tested while I was present. Each of these was weighed out and ground separately.

The powder was then put into a cup

about half the size of an ordinary breakfast coffee cup, and boiling water poured on it. The same process was carried on as to each of the other fourteen samples. After the coffee had steeped a few moments the tasting began. The taster took a teaspoonful of coffee out of the first cup, and put it into his mouth. He held it there a few seconds, and then spat it out into a great brass spittoon as big as my waist. As he did so he looked at the ticket marked on the same, and decided whether the coffee was according to grade.

Before tasting another sample he washed the spoon carefully, telling me that this was necessary in order that it might not carry the aroma of the first sample, and affect his judgment. The second sample was not so good as it should be, and the man turned down the corner of the ticket to show that it was not right. He then spat out the coffee and rewashed the spoon. And so he went on with sample after sample, deciding as to the value and quality of each. As I looked on the manager told me that there is a very great difference in Brazilian coffee. The country has some varieties which pass as Java, others as Mocha, and others as from Porto Rico, Costa Rica, Ecuador and Guatemala. They are sold as such, but all are raised in Sao Paulo. Their grade, however, is said to be quite as high, if not higher, than the coffees they represent.

Speaking of coffee tasters, I hear many stories of their ability to detect any difference in flavor. They are particular as to their surroundings. One of them, for instance, will not allow tobacco of any kind to be smoked in his tasting rooms, for he says the smell affects his judgment of the coffees. The other day (this man had something like 100 varieties to pass upon). He had tasted three or four cups when he said that some one had been smoking a cigarette in the room. The clerks were called up and examined, but every one of them denied that he had been using tobacco. The man again began tasting, but stopped insisting that there was cigarette smoke somewhere about. The clerks insisted in their denials, and finally one of them said he would go outside and see if there was not some clear smoke near by. He then went to the coffee room underneath and found that the engineer had been smoking a cigarette that morning and that some of the smoke might have passed up through the floor in which was a knot-hole, the size of my thumb.

Just here let me give you a Brazilian suggestion. It states that a good cup of the Brazil when ready for drinking should be:

"As black as ink, as hot as hell, as bitter as death and as sweet as love."

There are variations in tastes, and few Americans will agree with this prescription. Nevertheless, the coffee of Brazil, as served in the restaurants, is excellent. It is sold in small cups about the size of an after-dinner coffee cup and is commonly drunk without cream or milk. One of the authorities gives the following requirements for making good coffee. The beans must be well roasted, not underdone and not burnt. After that they must be ground fine and the powder placed in a clean cotton bag over the coffee pot. Fresh boiling water must then be poured in, and the vessel containing the mixture must be kept in a hot place during the pouring. This should last from three to five minutes. Coffee is not good if it is made in overboiled water, and it will not be good if the water is not at the boiling point when used.

The only way to be sure of getting good coffee is to buy it by the bean and brew and grind it yourself. A great deal of ground coffee is adulterated. You can sometimes tell whether this is so by throwing some of the powder into a glass of water. Pure coffee will float and the adulterated material will sink. Coffee is sometimes colored with things or dyes. You may learn if this is so by putting the coffee into tepid water. If the water is discolored the coffee is not right.

There are factories all over the world that make coffee that are more or less adulterated. There were 1,500 such factories in Europe before the war began, and with the higher prices since then the number has probably increased. In fact, there had twenty-seven factories that make coffee adulterated and the adulteration had no less than 100 varieties of coffee. Some of these are sold as Java and some as Mocha. In Germany before the war there were 100 factories which made adulterated coffee. In Belgium, the adulterated coffee was produced in 100,000 pounds of such coffee per annum.

There are adulterations in Brazil that make a business of collecting coffee and sending it on for the market. I have visited some of these in Rio de Janeiro. Different countries like different coffees and some have peculiar fancies as to taste and color. Much of the coffee used in South Africa is of the Java type. The Java beans of Brazil are found around in a great mill so that they come in contact with a cologne powder that gives them the hue of the coffee desired by Africa. Other countries like their coffee yellow and others think that the green should be brighter than that which nature has given it. All of this is easily recognized by the addition of coloring mat-

ter, which may or may not be to the advantage of the product. As for me I prefer my coffee as the Lord paints it.

And what is the natural color of coffee?

The most of that which comes here to Santos is a rich olive green, having more or less of a yellow tinge as the coffee grows older.

As the coffee comes into Santos it is rough rather than smooth. It is in this shape that it is sent to the United States. Some other countries want their coffee polished, and Brazil has factories which shine the beans as you shine your silver. The polishing is done by delicate brushes worked by machinery. When finished the beans are perfectly smooth, having a polish like jade.

I am surprised at the changes that have taken place in Santos since my last visit. I visited this port in 1895. It was then known as the "White Man's Grave." It reeked with yellow fever and death stalked the streets. It is now one of the most beautiful cities of the tropics. Following the wonderful revolution in sanitary matters, brought about by our work at Panama, which has gone on over Brazil, Santos fled in the swamps about the water front, and destroyed the mosquito-breeding area. It put in a new drainage system, inaugurated a government water supply and as a result made the town almost as healthy as a mountain village. The city has built about three miles of first-class docks and has practically reconstructed the business section. It has paved the streets with asphalt and laid down sidewalks of concrete.

The town is now wonderfully clean and well kept. The buildings are of two, three and more stories. They are painted all the colors of the rainbow. The city has a good system of electric cars. There is one line that takes you out to the beach at Guarujá. This is one of the finest in Brazil, and upon it are hotels and cottages. The place is, in fact, a summer resort for all parts of the republic.

In the meantime Santos has trebled in population since my last visit. It has now in the neighborhood of 100,000 inhabitants, and it will continue to grow. It lies on a little island, close to the mainland at the foot of the Brazilian highlands, and just where the great down-slope from the coffee plantations ends. It will always be a great coffee port, and in addition, a banana industry and a sugar industry is growing up on the lowlands nearby.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

COMMUNITY SERVICE OBSERVED BY NEGROES

Greensboro, Oct. 29.—Community Service Day was observed all day Friday at the local A. & T. College for Negroes by a morning session devoted to a discussion of "How to Promote Moonlight Schools for Negroes," an afternoon session devoted to the interests of the country school and an evening session at which an illustrated lecture concerning tuberculosis, its prevention and cure, was delivered by Dr. S. B. Jones. The morning speakers were: Profs. F. D. Bluford, D. J. Jordan, and D. K. Cherry of the college faculty; Rev. J. E. Jackson, presiding elder of the Greensboro district of the Western North Carolina Conference of the A. M. E. Church, and President James E. Wallace of Bennett College. The speakers for the afternoon session were Prof. A. L. Mebane who led a discussion concerning beautifying the country school grounds; Prof. W. N. Nelson led the discussion concerning "A Model Country School Building." Prof. J. D. Wray, U. S. Farm Demonstrator for Guilford county, delivered an address on "The Boys Corn Club Work."

BILL'S 160TH ARREST

Rattlesnake Harvester, Preaching Temperance, Ramps Against Police. [Franklin (N. C.) Branch to New York Times]

William Van Horn, known as "Rattlesnake Bill" who has been wandering through Northern New Jersey and Pennsylvania for 23 years, most of the time making his money by selling or carrying rattlesnakes, began circulating Billy Sunday and started preaching from the steps of the Neighborhood House.

Temperance proved to be the subject of his address, but Mounted Policeman Herbert C. Jones thought Bill was in no condition to talk on this topic and arrested him. When taken to jail Bill was asked if he ever had been locked up before. Pulling a small book from his pocket he consulted his records and found that his latest arrest made the one hundred and sixtieth time he had been in the cells of the law. After being detained for a short time he was released upon his promise to "beat it out of town."

Almost a world's classic in the art of adding insult to injury is the case of a Denver young man who was forced to witness the codicil dishonoring him in his uncle's will. He now looks forward to the pleasure of appearing in court and testifying to his signature.

Costa Rica yearly imports \$10,000 worth of toilet soaps.