

LAS RELACIONES COMERCIALES ENTRE COSTA RICA Y LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS A TRAVES DE LOS INFORMES CONSULARES, 1880-1901

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## LAS RELACIONES COMERCIALES ENTRE COSTA RICA Y LOS ESTADOS UNIDOS A TRAVES DE LOS INFORMES CONSULARES, 1880-1901.

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Durante la mayor parte del siglo XIX, especialmente en el período posterior a la independencia, Inglaterra fue la potencia económicamente dominante en América Latina. Esa hegemonía se mantuvo hasta las últimas décadas de ese siglo en las que los Estados Unidos desarrollaron un complejo industrial y agrícola de gran envergadura, cuyos sobrantes necesitaban mercados nuevos. Fue entonces que ese país luchó tenazmente contra las economías europeas para disputarles sus mercados en Asia, África y Latinoamérica. Los intereses británicos en esta última región se habían iniciado aún antes de que esos países se independizaran de España y se incrementaron enormemente después de la emancipación. El desarrollo de los intereses comerciales vino acompañado de fuertes inversiones que para 1830 se calculaban en \$ 200 millones. En lo referente a las relaciones económicas y culturales, ninguna otra potencia ocupaba una posición más privilegiada en América Latina, que la ostentada por Inglaterra durante el siglo XIX. El capital y el comercio ingleses contribuyeron de una manera u otra al desarrollo económico de casi todos los nuevos estados latinoamericanos. Inglaterra fue la pionera en la construcción de ferrocarriles; la mayoría de los préstamos para estos países venían de Londres y los comerciantes ingleses desarrollaban sus actividades en casi cada una de las ciudades latinoamericanas. Paralelamente se desarrollaron los intereses franceses y alemanes en esta región, hasta el punto de llegar a adquirir considerable importancia (1).

Mientras las potencias europeas dominaron el comercio de América Latina, la influencia de los Estados Unidos fue mínima. La Doctrina Monroe, enunciada en 1823, no produjo un rápido crecimiento del comercio entre los Estados Unidos y la América Latina, como lo había previsto John Quincy Adams, su principal arquitecto. Comparati-

vamente, el comercio entre los Estados Unidos y esta región creció más lentamente que el comercio de ese país con otras regiones del mundo, especialmente Europa. El hecho de que el comercio exterior de los Estados Unidos creció rápidamente en la década posterior a la Guerra de Secesión y lo atractivo del mercado latinoamericano, contribuyeron al nacimiento de un deseo de intercambio entre ambas regiones. Las décadas de los años ochenta y noventa del siglo pasado marcaron el final del período de inacción y tenue relación y pusieron las bases para una era de imperialismo (2).

Según Walter LaFeber, el interés de los Estados Unidos en los mercados de América Latina, Asia y África, se intensificó después de 1850 al completar su expansión continental y aún más cuando su economía industrial llegó a la plena madurez. Entre los años 1850 y 1900, ese complejo industrial se constituyó en una de las mayores fuerzas económicas del mundo. Durante ese mismo período, los Estados Unidos lucharon contra las naciones industrializadas de Europa por el control de los mercados de América Latina, Asia y África (3). Desde entonces, durante cada pánico o depresión económica, los hombres de negocios de ese país desplegaron un renovado interés en los mercados exteriores, como un medio de aliviar las crisis internas. La depresión económica de 1884-1886 despertó en ellos un difundido y enérgico interés en los mercados exteriores que continuó durante el siglo XX. Esa crisis también dio origen a la creencia de que su gobierno tenía la obligación de buscar nuevos mercados, especialmente en Latinoamérica, para sus excedentes industriales y agrícolas (4).

Todavía en 1885 el comercio de Estados Unidos con América Latina constituía apenas el 3.74 por ciento de sus exportaciones. Sin embargo,

esa cifra era engañosa en por lo menos, dos aspectos. Primeramente, el comercio con los Estados Unidos era predominante en ciertos países de la región. Así, los norteamericanos controlaban el 64 por ciento del comercio de Guatemala; el 41.6 por ciento del de Venezuela; el 39.4 por ciento del de México; el 36.6 por ciento del de Colombia y el 26.8 por ciento del brasileño. En segundo lugar, los importadores y exportadores norteamericanos valoraban esas áreas principalmente por su potencial económico. A medida que los Estados Unidos aumentaban su producción industrial sus hombres de negocios miraban a América Latina como el futuro mercado para los sobrantes de sus productos manufacturados y por ello en la década de 1890 se prestaría una gran atención a la captura de esos mercados (5).

Los esfuerzos de los Estados Unidos por implantar su hegemonía económica y política en el continente americano dieron sus frutos hacia finales de la última década del siglo XIX. Quizás el mejor ejemplo del retiro de Inglaterra de esa zona de influencia lo constituyó la firma del Tratado Hay-Pauncefote de 1901. Inglaterra se vio impelida a firmar ese tratado por la situación global de su política exterior. El creciente poder y agresividad de Alemania en todo el mundo, sumados a la impopularidad en Europa de la guerra contra los Boers en Sudáfrica, la estimularon a cultivar la amistad de los Estados Unidos, nación que ya era una potencia por derecho propio (6). Así, el Tratado Hay-Pauncefote no solo concedió a los Estados Unidos el derecho exclusivo de construir un canal interoceánico a través del istmo centroamericano, sino que también fue un tácito reconocimiento de la hegemonía comercial y política de ese país en el área del Caribe y Centroamérica.

Las relaciones comerciales entre los Estados Unidos y Costa Rica, interpretadas a través de los Informes de los Consules de Estados Unidos en este último país, para el período 1880-1900, reflejan el gradual desplazamiento de las potencias europeas en favor de los Estados Unidos en América Central. Al principio de la década de 1880 el comercio costarricense se caracterizaba por el dominio ejercido sobre él por las potencias europeas, principalmente Inglaterra. Ese dominio habría de ir disminuyendo lentamente a favor de los Estados Unidos, hasta llegar a invertir la situación, por lo menos en lo que a importaciones se refiere. Durante este período los Estados Unidos hicieron grandes esfuerzos para incrementar sus exportaciones a Costa Rica, obteniendo resultados muy halaga-

dores. En lo que respecta a las exportaciones costarricenses, durante todo ese tiempo el café siguió constituyendo su principal producto de exportación y era absorbido principalmente por los países europeos. Otra característica importante de ese período fue la aparición de un nuevo producto de exportación en Costa Rica, el banano, que pronto se constituyó en el segundo producto de exportación costarricense y que era absorbido en su totalidad por el mercado norteamericano. Se puede decir con certeza que ese período marca el inicio de lo que llegaría a ser el comercio entre ambos países en el siglo XX, esto es, el dominio marcado del comercio de Costa Rica por los Estados Unidos en una relación de país industrializado a país eminentemente agrícola, en la que el primero exportaba productos industriales y sobrantes agrícolas, y el segundo productos tropicales, principalmente café y banano.

Al principio de la década de 1880, Costa Rica inició un gran esfuerzo hacia su desarrollo. En ese año, la población del país no pasaba de los 160.000 habitantes, concentrados en el centro de su territorio de no más de 50.000 kilómetros cuadrados. El pequeño país luchaba desesperadamente por salir de su atraso y aislamiento. Según un autor costarricense, fue durante ese período que Costa Rica logró las aspiraciones de su período colonial y de los primeros años de la república, en el sentido de abrirse camino hacia ambos mares. Al finalizar el siglo XX, Costa Rica prácticamente había completado su ferrocarril interoceánico y había abierto al comercio internacional los puertos de Limón en el Atlántico y Puntarenas en el Pacífico, dotándolos de muelles, aduanas y demás anexos. Todas las poblaciones de Costa Rica, aun las más modestas, estaban unidas por carreteras más o menos buenas (7).

Los informes de los cónsules norteamericanos en Costa Rica, sobre las condiciones del país en esos años, son sumamente interesantes. En su informe de 1886, J. Richard Wingfield, cónsul en San José, decía que aunque Costa Rica era un país sumamente fértil, no más de un veintio de su territorio se dedicaba a la producción agrícola. El país contaba con dos puertos, uno en el Pacífico, Puntarenas, "tan bueno como cualquier otro en el Pacífico", y otro en el Atlántico, Limón, "tan bueno como puede hallarse en cualquier otra parte". Según Wingfield, las líneas de vapores viajaban desde Limón a Nueva Orleans y Nueva York y desde Puntarenas a San Francisco. Wingfield expresaba opiniones muy favorables sobre los costarricenses.

Según él, la gente de Costa Rica “es inteligente y valerosa, cortés y dinámica. Son especialmente bien dispuestos hacia los Estados Unidos y sus ciudadanos”. Las oportunidades para la inversión eran abundantes, según decía, y hacía notar que “tal vez con una excepción, todos los ciudadanos norteamericanos establecidos aquí, han prosperado” y agregaba que “aquellos dedicados al cultivo del café y del banano ganan anualmente por lo menos un doce por ciento” (8).

Otro cónsul norteamericano expresó conceptos semejantes sobre Costa Rica. En 1890 Beckford Mackey escribía que el área de Costa Rica se estimaba en unas 37,000 millas cuadradas y su población en cerca de 250,000 habitantes. Según él, “la superficie del país es montañosa y volcánica, pero quizás ningún otro país en el mundo es más ricamente fértil. El clima de la costa es caliente y malsano, pero el del interior es de primavera eterna”. Mackey también se expresaba en términos muy elogiosos sobre la población costarricense. Suya es la siguiente bucólica descripción de sus campesinos:

“... la gente es pacífica y próspera, dedicada casi totalmente a las labores agrícolas. Casi cada hombre, por pobre que sea, tiene su pequeña casa y lote de terreno. Sus hábitos son simples y sus deseos pocos. No es raro encontrar un campesino descalzo e iletrado que posea tierras y dinero por un valor de \$ 10,000, \$ 20,000 o \$ 30,000. Estos rústicos magnates caminan dificultosamente y sin ninguna pretensión, guiando sus carretas de bueyes hechas de madera, como cualquier trabajador a sueldo. Pueden ser reconocidos por sus bueyes gordos y bien cuidados. Así como un árabe ama y se desvive por su caballo, los campesinos costarricenses aman y se desviven por sus bueyes”. (9)

El mismo Mackey, en otro de sus reportes, decía que “ningún país disfruta de una prosperidad más general y mejor distribuida que esta diminuta república”. Según el cónsul, el país contaba con “gente satisfecha y apegada a la ley, exceptuada del frecuente azote de guerras sanguinarias que han castigado y retardado a tantas repúblicas hispanoamericanas... el país ha avanzado consistentemente en riqueza y civilización” (10).

Ciertamente, este pequeño país había logrado desarrollar para entonces varios productos de exportación que le aseguraban su subsistencia. Durante este período Costa Rica exportaba a los mercados internacionales café, bananos, cueros, caucho natural, maderas, oro y otros productos de menor importancia. De entre ellos, el café era preeminente. Generalmente se acepta el año 1804

como la fecha de introducción del cultivo del café al país. En el año de 1834 la cosecha ya alcanzaba la cifra de 500 quintales y se realizaban las primeras exportaciones a Chile. En 1844, cuando se hicieron las primeras exportaciones directas a Europa, la cosecha alcanzaba los 3,252,614 kilos (11). Durante el período 1880-1900, no obstante la aparición de otros productos de exportación como el banano, el café conservó su supremacía como el principal producto de exportación de Costa Rica. En 1878 ese producto constituyó el 95 por ciento de todas las exportaciones (12), el 77 por ciento en 1885, explicándose esta disminución por la pequeñez de la cosecha de ese año (13), el 88 por ciento en 1888 (14), y el 56 por ciento en el año 1901 (15).

La introducción del banano como un nuevo producto de exportación costarricense en ese período, fue de gran importancia para el futuro económico y político del país. Para Watt Stewart, la introducción del banano en Costa Rica como producto comercial se debió principalmente a las actividades del norteamericano Minor C. Keith. Fue este personaje quien trajo al país el tipo de banano llamado *Gros Michel*, muy superior en su valor comercial; fue también él quien inició el cultivo en gran escala y quien hizo las primeras exportaciones desde Costa Rica (16). La iniciativa del empresario norteamericano se vio grandemente estimulada por las considerables concesiones de tierras públicas, hechas a Keith por el gobierno de Costa Rica como parte del contrato para la construcción del ferrocarril entre San José y la costa atlántica en 1883. En esa oportunidad el gobierno de Costa Rica le cedió 800.000 acres pertenecientes al dominio público (17).

Como quiera que sea, el banano logró un rápido desarrollo durante esos años. Así, en 1883, fecha en que se reportaron las primeras exportaciones, éstas fueron de aproximadamente 110.000 racimos. En 1890 la exportación fue de 1,134,756 racimos y de más de 3,000,000 en 1899, año en que se fundó la United Fruit Company (18). En 1901 las exportaciones de banano constituían aproximadamente el 30 por ciento de las exportaciones costarricenses (19).

Como se indicó anteriormente, el comercio costarricense experimentó marcadas transformaciones durante este período. Hacia 1880 era muy claro el dominio inglés tanto sobre las importaciones como sobre las exportaciones. No hay datos aceptables de los primeros años de la década de 1880 en estos

Informes Consulares, pues debido quizás a la poca importancia del comercio costarricense los consules norteamericanos informaban al Departamento del Tesoro de los Estados Unidos en forma global para toda Centroamérica. No fue sino hasta el año 1885 cuando esos funcionarios enviaron los primeros informes específicos sobre el estado del comercio costarricense. Antes se vio cómo el café constituía el principal producto de exportación de ese país durante los primeros años de la década de 1880. La siguiente tabla, elaborada con los datos del Consul Wingfield, corresponde al valor de las exportaciones del café en el año de 1885, y es muy indicativa del estado del comercio exterior de Costa Rica en ese año:

País	Valor de las Exportaciones	Porcentajes
Inglaterra	\$ 1,134,300	52,13%
Estados Unidos	447,600	20,57%
Alemania	302,580	13,91%
Francia	275,153	12,65%
Otros países	16,080	0,74%

Era evidente el dominio inglés sobre las exportaciones de Costa Rica en 1885. Así, Inglaterra importó más del 50 por ciento del café costarricense y en conjunto los países europeos importaron el 78 por ciento. Los Estados Unidos únicamente el 20 por ciento.

En el mismo año de 1885 las importaciones costarricenses eran también dominadas por Inglaterra:

País	Valor importaciones	Porcentaje
Inglaterra	\$ 1,476,958	46%
Estados Unidos	749,565	23%
Alemania	529,328	16%
Francia	387,890	12%
Otros países	59,528	2%

La tabla de importaciones de 1885 nos señala también el marcado dominio de los países europeos, principalmente de Inglaterra sobre el comercio costarricense. En conjunto los países europeos surtieron a Costa Rica con el 73 por ciento de sus importaciones, mientras que los Estados Unidos

debían contentarse con el 23 por ciento de aquellas (20).

Comentando sobre el dominio europeo del comercio costarricense, el cónsul norteamericano en San José, J. Richard Wingfield decía que el hecho de que un alto porcentaje de las importaciones no venía de los Estados Unidos, se debía únicamente a que no se había hecho ningún esfuerzo por controlarlas. Según Wingfield, los Estados Unidos tenían una ventaja decisiva sobre los otros países pues el banano debía exportarse necesariamente a los Estados Unidos y el trigo, harina, maíz, tocino y queroseno, sólo podían ser importados de allá. Decía Wingfield,

"Alemania e Inglaterra envían cientos de miles de dólares para ser invertidos en maquinaria y "patios" para la limpieza del café y asegurarse ese cultivo; los Estados Unidos no invierten un solo dólar de manera que el café costarricense de primera clase, igual al *Java* y segundo sólo al *Mocha* es desconocido en los Estados Unidos y la mayor parte de ese producto se va a Europa. Las casas exportadoras de esos países se toman la molestia de establecer conexiones comerciales aquí, envían los productos adaptados al gusto y deseos de esas gentes, empacados cuidadosamente para que resistan el transporte a través del océano y sobre los caminos montañosos y además dan crédito a largo plazo, lo cual es sumamente necesario en un país en donde el principal cultivo productor de dinero, el café, tiene que ser esperado por todo un año y algunas veces un fracaso parcial debe ser compensado por una cosecha extraordinaria el año siguiente".

Wingfield agregaba que "...hay una queja general de que no se puede conseguir crédito en los Estados Unidos y no se pone ninguna atención al empaque" de los productos. Los norteamericanos no habían establecido conexiones comerciales con las casas costarricenses ni realizado esfuerzos por asegurarse la cosecha del café, el equivalente del oro y la plata para el intercambio.

Otro problema serio era el control inglés sobre el transporte marítimo y según Wingfield,

"...nosotros debemos estar agradecidos con Inglaterra por el uso de sus vapores por medio de los cuales se establecen las comunicaciones entre Nueva Orleans y Nueva York y San Francisco con Costa Rica. Parece bastante claro que en lo que se refiere al comercio de Costa Rica, el comerciante norteamericano está fuera de competencia. Es de esperarse que pronto "entre" pues si lo hace puede estar seguro de que ganará". (21)

En 1886, el cónsul norteamericano en Sajonia, Alemania, George B. Goodwin, comentando sobre el comercio alemán en América Central, expresaba opiniones similares a las de Wingfield:

"...parece ser que si en alguna parte hay una oportunidad de aumentar nuestro comercio es en Centroamérica. Es una vergüenza que esos vecinos nuestros año a año deban comprar y vender a Inglaterra más del doble de lo que nos compran o venden a nosotros y es aún más vergonzoso que Alemania que no tiene la ventaja que Inglaterra tiene sobre nosotros, controle la gran parte de comercio [centroamericano] que controla". (22)

Las disputas entre los países europeos y los Estados Unidos por el control del comercio costarricense y centroamericano se debía al hecho de que todos ellos exportaban productos similares, con la excepción de los Estados Unidos que exportaban además, sobrantes agrícolas, trigo principalmente. Según el cónsul Wingfield, en su informe de 1887, Costa Rica importaba de Inglaterra toda clase de telas (alpacas, casimires y franelas), planchas de acero, utensilios de metal, productos de algodón, cueros, licores y bienes de toda clase. De Alemania importaba casimires, puros, utensilios de metal, arados, joyas y vinos. Francia enviaba a Costa Rica casimires, sedas, cognac y vinos. Los Estados Unidos carbón, bacalao, harina de trigo, trigo en grano, queroseno y jabón (23).

Dos de los productos exportados por los Estados Unidos, el trigo y el queroseno, merecen especial mención porque constituían los dos mayores renglones de las importaciones de Costa Rica desde ese país. En su informe de 1886, John Schroeder, cónsul norteamericano en San José, decía que los mencionados productos eran importados por Costa Rica únicamente de los Estados Unidos, pero las exorbitantes tarifas impuestas por Costa Rica sobre esos artículos evitaban un mayor consumo y por ende una mayor importación. El cónsul norteamericano había llamado la atención del gobierno de Costa Rica sobre "la necesidad de establecer justicia en las tarifas" sobre los productos importados de los Estados Unidos. Schroeder había solicitado al gobierno una rebaja en la tarifa sobre la importación del queroseno, pero su solicitud había sido rechazada "bajo el pretexto de que el gobierno no podía soportar ninguna reducción en el ingreso producido por esa tarifa". El paso siguiente fue la formación de una compañía compuesta de ciudadanos norteamericanos, los cuales ofrecían pagar al Gobierno de Costa Rica la suma anual de \$ 10,000 pesos en compensación por la tarifa de importación de queroseno, con la condición de que ésta fuera abolida en su totalidad. La oferta fue rechazada porque en opinión del gobierno costarricense eso constituía un paso hacia el monopolio. No obstante, los esfuerzos del cónsul condujeron a

una pequeña rebaja del impuesto. Las importaciones de 1884 habían sido de 40,000 galones, según el funcionario norteamericano, pero 200,000 galones podían ser consumidos fácilmente "si la importación no fuera bloqueada por las exorbitantes tarifas".

La harina de trigo y el trigo en grano eran otros productos importados exclusivamente de los Estados Unidos. Según Schroeder, en el informe referido, el consumo anual de Costa Rica no excedía los 20,000 barriles, lo que equivalía a un consumo de 28 libras por habitante. Las altas tarifas también impedían un mayor consumo de esos productos por lo que según él, "el pan de trigo es consecuentemente un lujo en Costa Rica. El pan no se hace en la casa sino que está exclusivamente en manos de panaderos ciudadanos. La mayoría de la población se contenta con arepas y tortillas".

De acuerdo con el cónsul norteamericano, el Gobierno de Costa Rica tenía el propósito de incrementar la fabricación de harina en el país, y con ese fin el año anterior había decretado una rebaja en el impuesto sobre la importación de trigo en grano, lo que trajo como consecuencia la instalación de un molino de trigo en San José. Schroeder no veía muy buenas perspectivas para el desarrollo de esa industria en Costa Rica. La producción local de trigo no había excedido las 500 fanegas en 1885, por lo cual el molino en referencia sólo podía operar con trigo importado. El final de su informe el cónsul minimizaba las posibilidades de éxito del cultivo del trigo en Costa Rica:

"...debo señalar que no hay ningún peligro de desarrollo del cultivo del trigo en Costa Rica, pues el país se contenta con el consumo del maíz y la intención de fomentar ese cultivo se limitará a salidas entusiastas en la prensa, debido a que el gobierno no se da cuenta de la necesidad de fomentar las escuelas de agricultura práctica o de ofrecer incentivos a la inmigración anglosajona, dos factores indispensables para lograr resultados tangibles como en los Estados Unidos en donde la mayor parte del trigo es producido por los granjeros y sus hijos venidos de la parte norte de Europa". (24)

No obstante las observaciones de los cónsules norteamericanos, las cifras disponibles nos permiten concluir que la posición de los Estados Unidos en el comercio costarricense mejoraba año a año. El informe del cónsul de los Estados Unidos en San José, Beckford Mackey (25), indica que las importaciones de Costa Rica en 1889 fueron las siguientes:

País	Valor Importaciones	Porcentaje	País	Valor Importaciones	Porcentaje
Inglaterra	Q 1,862 280	28%	Estados Unidos	\$ 1,803,834,91	46,77%
Estados Unidos	1,760,156	28%	Inglaterra	841 943,90	21,83
Alemania	1,229,340	19%	Alemania	520,670,76	13,50
Francia	569,697	9%	Francia	208,425 35	5,43
Otros países	864,935	16%	Otros países	481,945,50	12,47

Como se puede deducir de los mismos informes consulares, en ese año los Estados Unidos igualaron a Inglaterra en lo que se refiere a sus exportaciones a Costa Rica. El comercio inglés empezaba a ceder su dominio en favor de los Estados Unidos.

Durante la década de 1890 la posición norteamericana en el comercio costarricense fue aún más ventajosa. Un informe del cónsul inglés en San José, del 31 de marzo de 1896 (26), decía que las importaciones de Costa Rica en 1894 habían sido de \$ 4,960,618 y en 1895 de \$ 5,799,398, moneda norteamericana. Sobre el origen de las importaciones costarricenses, decía que en 1894 Inglaterra había suplido a Costa Rica con 32,03 por ciento de sus importaciones, pero sólo el 25,80 en 1895. En esos mismos años los Estados Unidos había mejorado su posición de un 34,59 por ciento en 1894 a un 35,13 por ciento en 1895. Alemania también había ganado de un 19,21 por ciento en 1894 a un 21,45 por ciento en 1895. El cónsul inglés comentaba que las cifras demostraban cómo año a año tanto los Estados Unidos como Alemania ganaban terreno sobre Inglaterra en el intercambio comercial costarricense, pero, agregaba, "...la mejora en la posición de los Estados Unidos no se debe a la exitosa competencia en los artículos suplidos por Inglaterra, sino a un gran incremento en la cantidad de provisiones importadas, particularmente harina, que es suplida en su totalidad por los Estados Unidos".

Los Informes Consulares indican que al finalizar el siglo XIX, los Estados Unidos habían mejorado su posición comercial con Costa Rica a tal punto que se había convertido en el principal suplidor para Costa Rica y estaban en camino de convertirse en el principal mercado para sus productos de exportación. El informe del cónsul Caldwell, destacado en San José, del año 1901 (27), ilustra muy bien la nueva situación. Según el cónsul, las importaciones de Costa Rica en ese año se desglosaban de la siguiente manera:

De acuerdo con Caldwell, en el porcentaje de las importaciones, comparado con el de 1900, "la situación de las principales naciones permanece igual". El cónsul norteamericano hacía notar que había ocurrido un descenso en las importaciones de Costa Rica debido a la implantación de una tarifa más alta, a la baja en los precios del café y la implantación del patrón oro en julio de 1900. Los productos importados de los Estados Unidos eran más o menos los mismos que en los últimos años y Caldwell mencionaba productos enlatados, tocino, harina, maquinaria y herramientas, productos de algodón, queroseno, zapatos y dinamita. Según él, "...no se notan defectos en el empaque de los productos norteamericanos, aunque el empaque interior algunas veces no se hace con el cuidado que es de desear".

Con respecto a las exportaciones costarricenses, el cónsul informaba que no más del 20 por ciento del café se vendía a los Estados Unidos, el resto se enviaba a Europa, la mayor parte a Londres. Del caucho natural o hule, por lo menos dos tercios de la producción se enviaba a los Estados Unidos, lo mismo que una gran parte de los cueros. Todo el banano exportado por Costa Rica era enviado desde Limón a Nueva Orleans y Nueva York. Sobre este último producto Caldwell decía lo siguiente:

"...la industria del banano es floreciente. El número de racimos exportados en 1901 fue de 3,870,156, valorados en \$ 1,532,581,78 oro americano. Esta es la más grande exportación en la historia de esa industria en Costa Rica. El negocio está completamente en manos de la United Fruit Company. Esa compañía no solo es la dueña de las grandes plantaciones, sino que a la vez contrata con los otros productores a un precio fijo por racimo y por un número determinado de años". (28)

El ascenso económico de los Estados Unidos en las últimas décadas del siglo XIX estuvo acompañado de una agresiva política

comercial en América Latina para disputarle estos mercados a las potencias industriales europeas. El análisis de los Informes de los Cónsules norteamericanos en Costa Rica entre 1880 y 1901 nos llevan a la conclusión de que el comercio exterior costarricense experimentó marcados cambios en ese período. Hacia 1880 era muy claro el predominio europeo, especialmente inglés, en las importaciones y exportaciones de Costa Rica. En conjunto Inglaterra, Alemania y Francia absorbían el más alto porcentaje de las exportaciones de café costarricense y suplían la mayor cantidad de importaciones de este país. Sin embargo, el inicio de la industria bananera en gran escala a principios de la década de 1880 resultó ser un hecho que transformaría el comercio exterior de Costa Rica, puesto que ese producto sería absorbido casi en su totalidad por el mercado norteamericano. El rápido crecimiento de las exportaciones de banano a los Estados Unidos en los últimos quince años del siglo XIX estableció la infraestructura de transporte necesaria y dio a Costa Rica las divisas que necesitaba para una intensificación de sus relaciones comerciales con los Estados Unidos hasta convertir a este último país en su principal socio comercial. Hacia 1901, aún cuando Europa todavía compraba cerca del 80 por ciento del café costarricense, sólo suplía algo más del 50 por ciento de sus importaciones. Estados Unidos, por su parte, aunque compraba sólo el 20 por ciento del café de Costa Rica, absorbía la totalidad de su producción bananera. El control del transporte marítimo por la United Fruit Company indudablemente terminaría por inclinar la situación a favor de los Estados Unidos. Es claro que fue durante los años 1880 a 1901 cuando se establecieron las bases de lo que serían las relaciones comerciales entre los Estados Unidos y Costa Rica en el siglo XX.

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## COSTA RICA: REPORT OF CONSUL SCHRDOEDER.\*

Coffee produced for export reached in—

	Pounds.
1883-'84 (from 23,446,278 trees) . . . . .	40,505,300
1884-'85 (from same number of trees) . . . . .	19,634,073
1885-'86 (from same number of trees) . . . . .	20,000,000

The exporters expect to export this year (1885-'86) about 250,000 quintals or 25,000,000 pounds of coffee—that is to say, a little over one pound per tree. This calculation is, in my estimation, 5,000,000 pounds too large, as the number of bearing trees has not increased, and the crop, even if it reaches 1 pound per tree, by sorting, will give a smaller weight fit for export

Coffee is at present quoted at from 12 to 14 cents per pound, Costa Rican currency, or \$ 12 to \$ 14 per quintal, on account of the high premium—from 35 to 40 per cent— on United States gold.

### Crop of 1884-'85.

The following table gives the distribution of the coffee crop, 1884-'85:

[1 sack = 127 pounds net.]

Markets.	Via Limon.	Via Puntarenas.	Total.
	Sacks.	Sacks.	Sacks.
London . . . . .	29,255	51,067	80,322
Hamburg . . . . .	8,279	13,452	21,731
Havre . . . . .	1,367	5,501	6,868
Copenhagen . . . . .	23	...	23
Bordeaux . . . . .	9,808	2,480	12,288
Bremen . . . . .	8	70	78
Antwerp . . . . .	117	...	117
Paris . . . . .	139	20	159
New York . . . . .	7,955	5,090	13,045
New Orleans . . . . .	4,953	...	4,953
Panama . . . . .	61	835	896
St. Thomas . . . . .	...	2	2
San Francisco . . . . .	...	13,689	13,689
Corinth . . . . .	...	10	10
Marseilles . . . . .	...	398	398
Barcelona . . . . .	...	20	20
Total . . . . .	61,965	92,634	154,599

\*Tomado de:

*Commercial Relations of the United States with other Countries, 1885-1886.* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891) pp. 925-930.

### Coffee-Farming.

Coffee-farming in Costa Rica in its present stage is considered risky, the soil on the old plantations being partly exhausted for lack of manure.

The cultivator has therefore to rely principally on accidental favors --rain when needed under the growth, and dry weather before ripening and during the harvest season.

The trees are planted in straight rows and form rectangles. One manzana of land (about  $1\frac{1}{8}$  acres) will average 1,000 trees. Each hacienda (coffee plantation) has its own nursery, thereby avoiding the expense of buying plants.

From three to five times a year, but generally four times, the soil is skimmed with wide and sharp spades from the middle of the row up to the trees and again back from the trees, whereby the weeds are kept down and converted into a weak manure. The most of the plantations have for twenty years had no other manure than this feeble refreshment.

One manzana will yield all the way from 4 to 20 fanegas of coffee. One fanega of coffee, in its fruit, will yield from 110 to 120 pounds clean coffee, but of this hardly 100 pounds are fit for export. Fifteen fanegas is considered a very good crop, but I have this year seen hundreds of haciendas where the crop will hardly reach 4 fanegas per manzana.

For a series of years 10 fanegas per manzana is considered a very good yearly crop; but from what I have seen, even this is exceptional, and I could not admit over 9 fanegas per manzana as an average good crop. This last-named quantity will therefore in the following statements serve as a regulator for the average value of coffee plantations. As every little property has its patch of coffee trees, the size of a plantation varies from 5 to 40 manzanas, making about 20 manzanas for an average coffee plantation.

### Yearly Expenses and Income on a Coffee Hacienda.

Cultivation, shoveling earth four times to and from the trees, at \$3 each time per manzana, \$12; on twenty manzanas . . . . .	\$240
Coffee-picking, \$2 per fanega; coffee fruit, 9 by 20 fanegas = 180 fanegas . . . . .	360
Hauling of fruit to market ( <i>beneficio</i> ) at 50 cents per fanega, 180 fanegas . . . . .	90
Manure every fourth year, per manzana . . . . .	10
Labor to put it in, \$10 per manzana = \$20; divided as yearly expenses over four years, \$5 per manzana . . . . .	100
Fencing and repairs round twenty manzanas, at 50 cents per manzana; miscellaneous expenses on implements and houses for the labores ( <i>peones</i> ) . . . . .	50
Total labor expenses . . . . .	850
The reasonable compensation for attending to the daily work by a foreman ( <i>mandador</i> ), or by the renter or owner himself, ought not to be less than \$20 per manzana . . . . .	400
Total expense . . . . .	1,250

This makes upon the whole fruit crop, 180,000 pounds, an expense of nearly 7 cents per pound mercantile coffee.

Average price on coffee in fruit, \$10 per fanega, 9 by 20 = 180 fanegas . . . . .	\$1,800
Total expenses . . . . .	1,250
Net profit of twenty manzanas in coffee, or \$27.50 per manzana . . . . .	550

The conversion of the fruit into mercantile coffee is an operation for itself, that has nothing to do with the cultivation. Formerly most of the haciendas used their *patio* (the cemented ground) for this purpose, but as the operation cannot be carried on profitably for the sake of only a few thousand pounds, and it requires extra capital to buy outside fruit, most of the hacienda owners and renters prefer to sell their fruit to the larger establishments.

The interest on money in Costa Rica averages 10 per cent. per year. Consequently the actual value of a coffee estate in middling condition, with houses only for laborers, based upon the profit of \$ 27.50 per manzana, will not exceed \$ 275 per manzana.

A house fit for a residence will create an extra value. Haciendas with good residences and garden can be bought for from \$ 400 to \$ 500 per manzana.

Haciendas in good order are seldom rented out, as \$ 50 per manzana is asked in yearly rent. Under the present condition of the haciendas, the unsteadiness in market prices, and high premium on gold, the yearly rent ought not to exceed \$ 20 per manzana.

Parties intending to invest time and money in this kind of property will do well to remember that the trees as a rule give a full crop only every third or fourth year. The average crop for four years can be estimated at 9 fanegas yearly per manzana. Meanwhile the cultivator has to stand the expenses for three consecutive years without remuneration in full by the yearly crop.

If the renter is obliged to borrow money for the sake of carrying on the cultivation and pay the land-owner his rent, then he will very often fail and lose his work.

Notwithstanding the brilliant statistics and assertions, the number of unlucky operators in coffee cultivation confirm the here expressed opinion.

*JOHN SCHROEDER,  
Consul*

UNITES STATES CONSULATE,  
*San José, Costa Rica, December 26, 1885.*

## REPORT OF CONSUL SCHROEDER ON TRADE WITH THE UNITED STATES.

As kerosene and flour are articles imported to Costa Rica only from the United States, and as the unreasonable high duty on both articles to a great degree prevented the consumption and thereby the importation of said articles, I called already at an early date the attention of the Costa Rican Government to the necessity of establishing justice in their tariff so far as the United States were concerned.

### Petroleum

Petroleum, kerosene, and all other illuminating oils paid, up to December 30, 1885, packing included, 6 cents per pound. My request for an abatement met with a refusal under the plea that the Government could not stand any reduction in their income from the tariff.

My next step was to work for the formation of a company consisting of American citizens. This company offered the Government \$ 10,000 per year as equivalent to the gross custom income of kerosene on condition that the duty on kerosene was entirely abolished, and the company acknowledged sole importers and dealers in illuminating oils. This offer, presented in contract-form, was taken under consideration by the Government, but officially rejected as leading to a monopoly. Still these reiterated attempts led finally to a small reduction. The duty, formerly 6 cents per pound, is from January 1, 1886, 5 cents per pound, and I have no doubt but a further reduction will take place if the case is pressed.

Last year's importation amounted to about 40,000 gallons; but 200,000 gallons yearly would easily be consumed if the importation was not hampered by an unreasonable import duty.

### Flour

Imported flour exclusively from wheat paid to December 31, 1885, 2 cents per pound, packing included, or \$ 2.25 per hundredweight.

The whole yearly importation does not reach more than 25,000 barrels, equal to a consumption of hardly 28 pounds yearly per individual.

The high duty, transport from the seaport, and sundry commissions attached to the freighting brings the flour shipped from New York and New

Orleans up to \$ 16 to \$ 17, Costa Rican currency, per barrel, and from California up to \$ 18 to \$ 19 per barrel.

Wheat bread is consequently a luxury in Costa Rica. No house-baking takes place, but the bread is exclusively in the hands of the city bakers. The population at large lives mostly on soft baked cakes of hand-ground corn.

In order to help along manufacturing flour in the country the Government made last year an abatement in the duty on imported grain. This led to the building of a flour-mill at San José.

Upon personal inspection I found this mill to have cost about \$ 40,000. with only the capacity of fifty barrels per day (24 hours). Its machinery is brought from Hungary, Europe, instead of from the United States.

### Milling Wheat

As the whole produce of wheat in 1885 num-

bered 500 bushels, and it will amount to about the same quantity this year, the mill can only be kept going by help of imported wheat. For the American miller it is of interest to know if the mill business in Costa Rica actually will interfere with American flour and diminish its importation, and I give, therefore, an account of the several expenses the mill has to stand, before imported grain reaches its final destination,

Before this, I shall remark that there is no danger of wheat-growing in the country itself, as the population find themselves well served by eating corn, and the intention of encouraging wheat-growing will confine itself to enthusiastic outbursts of the press, as the Government will hardly realize the necessity of supporting practical agricultural schools or offer inducements to Anglo-Saxon immigration, two indispensable factors in order to reach a tellin result like in the United States, where the bulk of wheat is produced by farmers and their sons sprung from Northern Europe.

### *Expenses on wheat (grain) from the United States to San José, Costa Rica.*

[As it takes 300 pounds, or 5 bushels, to make 200 pounds, or 1 barrel, of flour, the calculation below is made upon 5 bushels of grain.]

300 pounds (= 5 bushels), at \$1,10 per bushel, United States gold . . . . .	\$5 50
3 sacks, at 25 cents . . . . .	75
Commission and drayage . . . . .	20
Marine insurance and consular invoice in United States . . . . .	15
Ocean freight to Limon, 50 per 100 . . . . .	1 50
<b>Total to Limon . . . . .</b>	<b>8 10</b>
Premium on gold, at 30 per cent . . . . .	2 43
<b>In Costa Rican currency . . . . .</b>	<b>10 53</b>
Freight per railroad, 70 miles, from Limon to Carillo, at 75 cents per 100 . . . . .	2 25
Freight per ox-cart, 25 miles, from Carillo to San José, at 75 cents per 100 . . . . .	2 25
Discharging from custom-house and hauling to mill . . . . .	30
Aduanas (duty), at 30 cents per 100 (in favor of the mill the duty is abated from 90 cents to 30 cents per hundredweight) . . . . .	90
Loss by damage and leakage, say 2 per cent . . . . .	32
<b>Total expense on 300 pounds, or 5 bushels, wheat, in Costa Rican currency . . . . .</b>	<b>16 55</b>

The additional expenses of wages to four men in the mill, repairs of machinery, and interest upon the \$ 40,000 investment will have to be covered by the lower grades of produce. As 300-pound grain gives 200-pound merchantable flour, the

mill, by selling its flour at \$ 16.55 per barrel, does not make a cent, and as American flour here sells at the same price, then the American millers will satisfy themselves that the intended competition is a failure, and that American flour now, as before,

has no competitor.

For the sake of inducing the Costa Rican Government to abate the duty upon imported flour, so as to correspond to the abatement on grain, I laid in 1885, the present calculations before them, in order to convince them that they might just as well do justice to the imported flour as to grain, as the mill produce of their country, even with the abatement in the duty on grain, could not advantageously compete with American flour.

Kerosene, 40,000 gallons; abatement, 8 cents per gallon . . . . .	\$3,200
Flour, 25,000 barrels; abatement, 84 cents per barrel . . . . .	21,000

Total gain for American importation, Costa Rican currency . . . . .	24,200
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As Costa Rica this year is overstocked with dry goods, Yankee notions, and hardware, and its purchasing power is diminished by the unexpected small coffee crop. I would respectfully suggest that, rather than force upon this country goods the population at present can contrive to live without, the American importers would do better in working for further tariff abatements in goods that have no competition, as for instance, kerosene and flour, and whose daily consumption insures an increased importation and sale in the same degree as the tariff on said articles is abated.

#### Lumber.

My attention was at an early date drawn to the hard-wood regions of Costa Rica as a field proportionate to American skill and capital.

For the purpose of initiating a reciprocal trade in favor of the United States. I went one step further by presenting before the minister of finances a contract with certain concessions for the term of thirty years, giving an American company the sole right to cut, manufacture, and export lumber and logs from the San Carlos Valley; but as part of this region lies inside the land grant asked by Mr. Keith, the Government did not feel disposed to enter upon this or any other proposal before the Nicaragua-Atlantic Railroad question through Costa Rica is finally settled

As an American lumber company, organized in Michigan, at present is carrying on lumber business in Honduras I cannot see but a similar enterprise would pay in Costa Rica.

**JOHN SCHROEDER,**  
*Consul.*

This memorial resulted in an abatement on imported flour from formerly \$ 2.25 to \$ 1.83 per 100 pounds, or an abatement of 84 cents per barrel from January 1, 1886.

The obtained gain over last year for the American importers will consequently for the year 1886 stand as follows:

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
*San José, Costa Rica, February 17, 1886.*

#### GERMAN TRADE IN MEXICO AND CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.

##### REPORT OF CONSUL GOODWIN.\*

##### Colonial Schemes.

The German press during the last few days has devoted considerable space to comments upon the doings of the colonial congress which has just closed an interesting session in Berlin. There is a difference of opinion among well-informed men as to the wisdom and practical value of Germany's colonial policy, but the preponderance of sentiment is to the effect that the efforts thus far made to acquire new territory and extend the influence of Germany therein have been successful to a considerable degree, and give assurances of great advantages in the future.

It appears from papers read at the congress by German explorers and others directly interested in these colonization schemes that Germany is now "cock of the walk" over some 375,000 square miles of territory in East and West Africa and the South Sea. These lands have not been purchased or secured by treaty, but have been "appropriated", a very simple process of securing additional territory, long in vogue among the civilized nations of Europe, but only until quite recently adopted by

\*Tomado de:  
*Reports from the Consuls of the United States.* Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891). pp. 370-375.

Germany. It is admitted that the new possessions in West and South-west Africa are of little present practical value and offer no inducements to immigrants, but it is claimed that in East Africa and New Guinea Germany has secured valuable acquisitions—sections of country whose climate is unsurpassed for healthfulness, and whose natural resources are rich, varied, and abundant.

But while the praises of African colonization are being sung in some quarters, discordant notes are heard from others, and I wish particularly to call attention to a very earnest communication which appeared in a late number of the "*Kaufmännische Blätter*", an organ of trade and commerce published in Leipsic. The writer, Herr Evald Paul, complains of the alleged short sightedness of the German policy, which he says, is abnormally raising the power of production without a corresponding effort to increase the power of consumption. In other words, he argues that a great ado has been made over acquisitions of African territory, much of it worthless to Germany; that the attention of manufacturers and exporters has been drawn thither, and every householder in the Empire made to feel that his furnishings are incomplete without a plaster of paris or bronze figure of a Hottentot, while other territory, more important to commercial Germany, casier reached, and casier to make money in, has been neglected. He refers to Central America in general and Mexico in particular.

I shall quote at some length from his article, which I have translated, because it must be interesting to American manufacturers and to all persons interested in the extension of American trade, in more ways than one. It will serve to enlighten many of our people who have been led to suppose, from much that has been said and written, that Germany had a hold upon the trade of those countries that could scarcely be broken, and it will also be useful because of the hints contained in it, which should lead Americans to redouble their efforts to secure what ought to be theirs, viz, two-thirds, or at the least one-half, of all the trade with Mexico and Central America. Herr Paul writes as follows:

What have we done in Mexico, one of the most blessed and beautiful countries on the face of the earth—a country which since the sixteenth century has produced more than 300,000 kilos of gold and nearly 100,000,000 kilos of silver, some 15,000,000,000 marks worth of which has been brought to Europe—a country offering the products of the tropics as well as those of northern climes, contain-

ing lands of surpassing richness, scarcely one-eighth of which has been put to tilth? Such a territory seems about to fall into the hands of the "Yankees", which is almost equal to an exclusion of our interests. The people of the United States are a speculative people, and as they push over the Pacific to the east so they tend toward the south, and have the best opportunity on their own continent.

The Mexicans do not like the "Yankees", as they know the dangers which threaten them from "Yankee" invasion; but they endure them, knowing that they bring business and money. Mexico, after having for many years been prevented from developing her resources in peace, at length enjoys the needed repose. The "Yankees" take advantage of this and already have succeeded in doing what the Mexicans were not able to do for themselves. Mexico is fast being covered with a network of railroads, and telegraph and telephone lines are being stretched over city and town. In large cities gas and even the most brilliant of electric lights have been introduced. Tramways are everywhere found, new inventions and improvements are being made on every hand, and if you ask to whom is Mexico indebted for all this the answer is, to the "Yankees".

The French capital that before and during the days of Maximilian figured in Mexico is driven away and much English and German capital likewise. The "Yankees", with their money and enterprise, have pushed themselves into the places once filled by Englishmen and Frenchmen and Germans, and we, while making a feeble effort to hold our own, have not the nerve to launch into greater and harder enterprises, which in the end would prove remunerative enough to more than pay for all the money and energy invested. And it may be even worse for us, and for Mexico as well, when additional railroads are completed across New México and Arizona into México. Then the "Yankees" in unlimited numbers will rush upon the young Republic, which already they have begun to unnaturalize, and will very likely completely subject it to their dominion. Its riches are well known to them, and so are all of its advantages, scarcely any of which the Mexicans have turned to a proper use. The latter wait for foreigners. Why cannot it be the German? Why do we not bestir ourselves, and offer to the Mexicans German science, German culture, and German industry? Give German strength to it and Mexico will richly reward us, but if free hand is much longer given to the "Yankees" they will complete the ruin of the Mexican Republic. If railroads are established, the tide of emigration from the United States will begin to set in strongly; the "Yankee" speculator will be followed by the "Yankee" farmer, the "Yankee" merchant, and the "Yankee" machinist; the settlers will push farther and farther into the heart of the country; the English language will corrupt and gradually supplant the Spanish, and almost before we are aware of it the peaceable conquest will have taken place. Mexico will then belong to the "Yankees", and Europe will be the poorer for the loss of an extensive market.

I consider it my duty to call attention to the danger threatening our commerce and industry in foreign countries through "Yankee" competition. Mexico is not the only territory that will be torn from us in this way, unless we are careful and energetic. Just now, with Mexico fairly entered upon an era of tranquillity and development, is the time to make German influence felt over there. I earnestly recommend the founding of German museums of

commerce in all of the important commercial towns of the Republic and the speedy establishment of a German chamber of commerce in the city of Mexico. I also urge the sending of a clever man—one who knows geography, commerce, and politics well—whose duty it shall be to make a thorough economical exploration of the country. Our Government would surely not be indifferent to such endeavors, but rather would strive to promote them in every possible way. At this moment I have before me a report of the Austria-Hungarian Export Society, in which the fact is mentioned that a Vienna merchant is traveling in Mexico in order to form new business connections, and that he has met with good success, having already sent orders from Mexican firms to fifty Vienna houses. Perhaps this brief item will serve to induce German manufactures and exporters to turn their eyes for a moment from our African conquests, and to exert themselves to increase our trade with Mexico and its neighbors. At all events it is to be hoped that I have not written entirely in vain.

### Exports of Germany to Mexico

Exact figures showing the exports of Germany to Mexico cannot be had, the authorities refusing to supply them to representatives of foreign countries.

In his special report to Congress in 1883, Secretary Frelinghuysen stated that the principal countries holding commercial intercourse with Mexico were the United States, Great Britain, France, and Germany, "the trade statistics of each with Mexico being available, with the exception of Germany". In that report the exports of all countries to Mexico for the year 1880 were placed at the value of \$ 30,000,000, of which \$ 2,000,000, considered a very liberal allowance, was placed to the credit of Germany. For the same year the exports from the United States amounted to \$11,191,000; from Great Britain, \$6,235,000; from France, \$5,195,500.

It was also shown that between 1877 and 1880 the exports from the United States to Mexico increased more than 100 per cent.; of British goods about 23 per cent; while the exports of French goods showed a slight falling off. For the years 1882, 1883, and 1884, according to the American Almanac, whose tables were "compiled from the annual statements of commerce and navigation of the United States", our exports to Mexico in those years amounted to \$15,482,582, \$16,684,584, and \$12,704,292 respectively. The figures for 1885 I have not at hand, but judging from the above showing and from the cries of distress going up in Germany, our manufacturers and exporters are continuing their onward march. But I would

urge them to greater activity and more careful endeavors to conform to the tastes of those to whom they export. They can profit no doubt by watching the tactics of their European rivals, who are now struggling desperately for commercial supremacy on the western continent.

There are two excellent newspapers published in the city of Mexico which are devoted to American interests, and our exporters will find much valuable information in them. These are the "Two Republics" and the "Mexican Financier", the latter conducted by Mr. Frederick R. Guernsey.

### Central America

The condition of trade with Central America is also attracting fresh attention in Germany just now. One of the leading trade journals of the Empire in its current issue devotes a column of its space to a synopsis of the report of a commission sent by the United States Government to Central and South America to ascertain means for enlarging our trade in those sections. This journal comments freely upon the proposals and suggestions of the commission and concludes in these words:

Taking into consideration the remarkable agility of our American competitors and the growing increase of their trade, it is scarcely to be doubted that they will within a short time secure a much larger portion of the trade of the Central and South American countries than they now have. Whether that portion will soon amount to two-thirds, as the committee hope, in case the measures suggested by them are put into execution, remains to be seen. But the German manufacturers who now command so large a share of the trade must, even if they would hold their own, keep their eyes wide open, and use every endeavor to prevent American progress. Especially should they take to heart what this American committee has to say about conforming to the tastes of the buyers in the different countries to whom goods are exported.

It would seem that if there is anywhere a chance for a great increase of our trade that is to be found in Central America. It is a shame that these neighbors of ours should year after year buy from and sell to Great Britain more than twice as much as they buy from and sell to us; and it is a greater shame that Germany, which lacks the strong advantage that Great Britain has over us, should control as large a trade with those countries as she does. The figures, which I take from the same source as those relating to our trade with Mexico, make this rather discreditable showing for the United States.

*Trade of the United States with Central America.*

Description	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.
Exports from United States . . . . .	\$1,626,000	\$1,644,013	\$2,027,735	\$3,177,883
Imports to United States . . . . .	3,160,000	4,735,331	5,121,315	6,161,227

**South America**

Germany is pushing her trade with South America with great vigor. A South American exhibition is now being held in Berlin under the auspices of the Central Association for Commercial Geography, which is but one of several private societies, so called, but which the Government stands behind and supports in all their endeavors to "appropriate" territory or increase German trade and influence abroad. At the opening of this exhibition an address was delivered by Dr. Jaunasch before a large audience, one of the number being the minister of state, von Boetticher. The exhibition is extensive, consisting of a great variety of the manufactured and natural products of South America, especial attention being paid to Brazil and Argentine. The exports of Germany to Brazil are chiefly machinery, paper, hard ware, cotton and woolen goods, steel goods, musical instruments, and weapons. Her imports are coffee, hides, horn spirits, gold, and silver.

Just now the Germans are bending their energies particularly toward the development of trade with South Brazil, but they are not neglectful of their interests in other parts of South America. One of their latest proposals is to establish a bank in the Argentine Republic, to be a branch of the Deutsches Bank, and this will probably be done in spite of the opposition of the French, who seem to look upon the La Plata region as theirs by some sort of right, and who are shocked beyond expression at the presumption of their hated rival.

In the stupendous project for a canal through Solado, Vecino, and other now useless swampy portions of Argentine, which it is believed would result in the reclamation of vast tracts of land that would become richly productive, the cunning hand of Germany is seen. The cost of this undertaking is

estimated at \$40,000,000, all of which it is proposed to raise in Europe.

Germany is no longer under the necessity of playing second fiddle to any foreign country in the matter of reaching South or Central America with her goods. Her own fast and staunch steamships now run to all the leading ports on the eastern coast of America.

Three lines run to the United States, the North German Lloyds dispatching regularly to New York and Baltimore, and the Hamburg American Packet Company to New York.

Six lines touch at Central American ports, viz, Hamburg-Vera Cruz-Tampico, in 30 days; Hamburg-St. Thomas-Colon, in 29 days; St. Thomas-Haitien ports, in 12 days; St. Thomas-St. Domingo, in 11 days; Hamburg-Carthagena, in 34 days; Hamburg-Haitien ports and Colon, in 29 days.

To South America five lines are now running regularly, viz, Hamburg-Buenos Ayres, in 30 days; Hamburg-Callao, in 65 days; Bremerhaven-Buenos Ayres, in 33 days; Bremerhaven-Santos (Brasil), in 39 days.

In conclusion, I would impress upon our people that while we are making rapid strides in Mexico, we are capable of doing far greater things, and such signs of distress as the letter of Herr Paul to the "Kaufmännische Blätter" should not throw us off our guard in the least, but incite us to greater activity and watchfulness. The Germans were pleased at the rejection of the proposed treaty of the United States with Mexico, not because they were, generally speaking, acquainted with its details, but because they took it for granted that it was intended to make freer intercourse between the two Republics, and would help on what Herr Paul calls "the ruin" of Mexico. They are pleased at every little outbreak on our Mexican border, simply because they expect such occurrences to create

unfriendly feelings and distrust between Mexico and the United States and inure to their advantage. As to our tariff, there can be no doubt that they are satisfied to have it remain as it is.

GEORGE B. GOODWIN,  
*Consul*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE.

Annaberg, Saxony, September 25, 1886.

**COSTA RICA: REPORT OF CONSUL  
WINGFIELD\***

**Exports**

The principal articles exported from Costa Rica are bananas, coffee, hides, and rubber. In round numbers the exports and imports were as follows:

Years.	Value of exports.	Value of imports.
1884 .....	\$3,700,000	\$3,100,000
1885 .....	2,900,000	3,173,000
1886 .....	2,695,000	3,222,000

The diminished exportation of 1885 and 1886 is explained by the small crops of coffee for those years.

The growing of bananas is a new industry, developed within the last five years along the line of railroad from the interior to the Atlantic coast (Port Limon). Up to this time all the bananas shipped have been to New York and New Orleans.

*Bananas exported*

Years.	Bunches.	Value.
1885 .....	401,183	\$225,000
1886 .....	599,743	407,362

\*Tomado de:

*Commercial Relations of The United States with other countries, 1885-1886* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), pp. 908-911.

The coffee crop exported in 1884 was an unusually large one, more than 30,000,000 pounds.

The crops exported in 1885 and 1886 small, about 20,000,000 pounds each.

*Amounts and distribution of the coffee exported in 1885 and 1886*

Whence exported.	Weight.		Value.	
	1885.	1886.	1885.	1886.
	<i>Pounds.</i>	<i>Pounds.</i>		
England . . . . .	11,116,864	10,370,573	\$1,134,300	\$1,134,251
Germany . . . . .	3,098,368	3,171,539	302,580	346,790
France . . . . .	2,817,696	1,922,825	275,153	210,256
United States . . . . .	4,584,832	2,139,474	447,600	234,004
Other countries . . . . .	516,400	468,370	16,080	51,328
Total . . . . .	22,134,160	18,072,781	2,175,713	1,976,629

It is to be noted that the United States took less than one-half as much in 1886 as in 1885. The explanation of this fact seems to be that the second-class coffee only is sent to the United States, and while the crop shipped in 1886 was small, it was very good in quality. It is the universal testimony of coffee exporters here that first-class Costa Rican coffee does not command anything like so good a price in the United States as in

Europe, in fact, that the first-class is hardly known in the United States.

The coffee crop now being gathered is a very large one—said to be equal to that of 1883—and will probably reach 30,000,000 pounds. The average price paid here is about 14 cents Costa Rican currency, about 10 cents United States gold, per pound.

**Imports**

*Comparative statement of values of imports from different countries for the years 1885 and 1886*

Countries.	1885.	1886.
England . . . . .	\$1,476,958	\$1,423,659
Germany . . . . .	529,389	477,265
France . . . . .	387,890	340,396
United States . . . . .	749,565	749,815
Other countries . . . . .	59,528	230,527
Total . . . . .	3,173,330	3,221,662

England sends alpacas, cassimeres, flannels, iron and ironware, cotton goods of all kinds, leather, malt liquors, & c. Germany sends cassimeres, cigars, fine hardware, drillings, jewelry, wines, &c. France, cassimeres, silks, cognac, wines, &c. The United States sends coal, codfish, flour, hardware, kerosene, machinery, soap grease, wheat, &c.

### **Condition of the country and its trade with the United States**

Costa Rica is a fertile country and not more than one-twentieth of her territory has been brought into cultivation. The climate in the interior is as fine as can be found anywhere in the world, the thermometer averaging for each month during the year about 70° Fahrenheit. There are two ports, one on the Pacific, Punta Arenas, as good as any on the Pacific; one on the Atlantic, Limon, as good as can be found anywhere. Lines of steamers run from Limon to New Orleans and New York, and from Punta Arenas to San Francisco. The railroad from Limon comes to within 28 miles of San José, the capital, and will be completed in about twelve months.

The people of Costa Rica are intelligent, polite, brave, and energetic. They are especially well disposed towards the United States and her citizens. With scarcely an exception citizens of the United States who have settled here are prosperous. Those engaged in growing coffee and bananas clear an average year by year at least 12 per cent. on the capital invested. There is an opportunity for handsome profits in market gardening, growing horses and cattle, and the dairy business. And as to merchandizing, that much the larger proportion of imports do not come from the United States is due solely to the fact that no effort has been made to secure this trade. The United States has the decided advantage all other nations. Bananas must of

necessity be sent to the United States, and wheat, flour, corn, bacon, and kerosene must come thence. England and Germany send hundreds of thousands of dollars to invest in machinery and *patios* for cleaning coffee, in order to secure that crop; the United States not a dollar; hence first-class Costa Rican coffee, equal to Java and second only to Mocha, is unknown in the United States, and the bulk of this valuable product goes to Europe. The wholesale houses of those countries take the trouble to establish business connections here, send articles adapted to the wants and tastes of these people, pack carefully to stand transportation across the ocean and over a mountain road, and give long credits, which is necessary in a country where the main money crop, coffee, has to be waited for all of a year, and sometimes a partial failure, to be compensated for by an extra good crop the next year.

It is the general complaint that no credit can be obtained in the United States; that no attention is paid to careful packing. And it seems to be the fact that no business connections have been formed and no systematic effort has been made to secure the coffee crop, which is the equivalent of gold and silver and exchange. And it may be added that we have to thank England for the use of steamers by which communication is had between New York, New Orleans, and San Francisco and Costa Rica. It seems to be strictly true that as to the trade of Costa Rica the merchant of the United States is not in the race. It is to be hoped he will soon "*enter*", and if he does he will be sure to win.

J. RICH WINGFIELD,  
*Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
*San José, Costa Rica, January 15, 1887.*

*Imports to the consular district of San José, Costa Rica, from  
January 1, 1886, to December 31, 1886.*

Articles.	Limon.		Punta Arenas.		Whence Im- ported.
	Weight.	Value.	Weight.	Value.	
	<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>		
Alpacas, cassimeres, cotton goods, and flannels . . . . .	8,898,742	\$1,114,922	1,435,692	\$308,737	England.
Flour . . . . .	3,737,705	431,478	162,410	45,787	Germany.
Hardware and jewelry . . . . .	2,939,710	284,925	277,240	55,471	France.
Kerosene and shoes . . . . .	4,420,140	598,525	964,210	151,290	United States.
Wines, wheat, &c . . . . .	1,425,382	160,665	342,325	69,862	Other countries.
Total . . . . .	21,421,679	2,590,515	3,281,877	631,147	

*Exports from the consular district of San José, Costa Rica, from  
January 1, 1886, to December 31, 1886.*

Articles.	Limon.		Punta Arenas.	
	Weight.	Value.	Weight.	Value.
	<i>Bunches.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>	
Bananas . . . . .	599,742	\$407,363	.....	.....
	<i>Pounds.</i>			
Bullion . . . . .	.....	24,900	.....	.....
Coffee . . . . .	9,395,973	1,028,934	8,676,808	951,025
Hides . . . . .	50,162	21,540	62,508	20,400
Money . . . . .	.....	33,800	.....	157,250
Provisions . . . . .	74,280	6,500	.....	.....
Plants . . . . .	8,417	5,620	.....	.....
Rubber . . . . .	48,151	21,050	29,902	12,951
Miscellaneous . . . . .	4,757	3,335	642	313
Total . . . . .	10,403,890	1,554,042	8,912,711	1,141,939

**GUATEMALA: REPORT OF CONSUL GENERAL PRINGLE\***

In spite of the very gloomy outlook at the beginning of the year, caused by the determination of General Barrios to declare war, the official statistics show an increase in the trade of this Republic. The increase in the value of the exports is due to the good prices for which coffee sold the latter part of the year.

Coffee is the principal article of export, and about one-third of the crop is sold in The United States. That the bulk of the coffee should be sold in the United States is a recognized fact, but the prices paid for the better grades in London and Hamburg are so much better that it naturally seeks the best market.

Sugar is exported almost exclusively to San Francisco, where it comes into competition with the sugar from the Sandwich Islands and has to be sold at figures that barely leave a profit for the producer.

The imports fall below those of 1884, and the United States share in the loss of trade, only, however, to a very small extent.

As long as the bulk of the coffee is sold in Europe, just so long will Guatemala purchase in those markets. This is not the only reason, however, why the European markets are sought. The charges for packing and handling are much less in Europe, and the work done in accordance with the orders given as to weight and size of packages. This may appear to be a very trivial reason for the loss of trade, but it has done much to divert trade which should come naturally to the United States.

The very high rate of duties tends much to depress trade in this country.

The total revenues of the Republic were \$8,534,400.85, as against \$8,397,488 for expenditures, leaving a balance on January 1, 1886, of \$136,912.85.

The number of American vessels touching in the ports of the Republic was about the same as in 1884.

D. LYNCH PRINGLE,  
*Consul-General.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE-GENERAL,  
Guatemala, July 19, 1886.

\*Tomado de:

*Commercial Relations of the United States with other countries, 1885-1886* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1887), p. 911.

## COFFE.\*

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 1887, the United States imported 526,109,170 pounds of coffee, or more than 9 pounds for every man, woman, and child of the population. A small portion, leaving for domestic consumption was re-exported, leaving for domestic consumption more than 500,000,000 pounds. Such a high rate of consumption per capita of population is exceeded by only two nations in Europe, and in each is the higher rate due more to the quantity of imports in transit for other parts than to an absolute local consumption. According to a table prepared by that painstaking statistician, O. J. Broch, the Netherlands consumed nearly 20 pounds for each inhabitant and Belgium nearly 10 pounds per capita, results that can only be explained by the fact that these countries are the large coffee marts of Europe.

The United States is thus the largest consumer of coffee in the world, requiring for its wants more than is consumed by Germany, the United Kingdom, Austria Hungary, and France combined. It will be of interest, therefore, to examine into the sources of the coffee supply and in what proportion the various countries of production to the necessities of the United States.

The imports of 1887 were drawn from the following sources:

	Per cent. of total.	Pounds.	Value.	Per pound. <i>Cents.</i>
Brazil . . . . .	69	362,928,304	\$36,401,864	10.0
Venezuela . . . . .	11.3	59,463,487	6,770,168	11.4
Dutch East Indies . . . . .	3.4	18,099,536	2,344,602	12.9
Guatemala . . . . .	3	15,645,848	2,035,013	13
Mexico . . . . .	2.7	14,567,005	1,837,450	12.5
Republic of Colombia . . . . .	2.5	13,595,678	1,437,177	10.6
Costa Rica . . . . .	1.3	7,211,833	1,061,601	14.7
San Salvador . . . . .	1.3	6,813,774	809,096	11.8
Hayti . . . . .	1	5,745,198	709,976	12.3
Netherlands . . . . .	.9	5,187,837	715,698	13.8
British West Indies . . . . .	.8	4,551,959	492,586	10.8
Total imports . . . . .		526,109,170	56,347,000	10.7

\*Tomado de:

"Production of and Trade in Coffee", *Commercial Relations of the United States with other countries, 1888-1889* (*idem*), pp. 3-4.

The bulk of the coffee is thus obtained from American sources. It is to determine, as far as possible, the extent and conditions of these sources that the following reports of the consular officers were called for. That they are imperfect must be understood, for there is an almost total lack not only of official statistics but of private investigation in the commercial and productive interests of the countries of Central and South America. The returns are thus in a measure guess-work, and due allowances should be made for error. To correct the returns as far as is possible the figures of import of European countries and the United States are given, and the countries of origin whence they are obtained. This is at best a partial check, and, when values are considered, almost valueless, so widely do the valuations at the ports of export and of import differ.

If we examine the returns of imports into the United States for the past ten years it will be seen that the coffee trade remains almost in the same position, relatively, as it held in 1878. In 1878 and 1887, 93 per cent. of our imports were derived from American sources, while in 1883 the proportion had fallen to 88 per cent. More than this, the relative importance of each country has altered but little, only Hayti and Venezuela showing any noticeable change, as the following table shows:

*Proportion of American supply of coffee furnished by each country*

Countries.	1878.	1883.	1887.
	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per cent.</i>
Brazil . . . . .	73	82.2	73.4
Central America . . . . .	4.8	5.4	6.6
British West Indies . . . . .	0.8	1.3	0.9
Hayti . . . . .	4.4	3.9	1.1
Mexico . . . . .	2.1	1.8	2.9
United States of Colombia . . . . .	2	2.8	2.7
Venezuela . . . . .	12.6	10.5	10.2

**CENTRAL AMERICAN STATES.\*\****Imports of coffee into the United States from Central American States, 1873-'87.*

[From Treasury tables.]

Year.	Pounds.	Year.	Pounds.	Year.	Pounds.
1873	11,225,484	1878	13,868,955	1883	24,715,028
1874	12,512,041	1879	11,463,136	1884	31,827,573
1875	11,932,157	1880	19,254,218	1885	36,811,072
1876	6,884,264	1881	15,858,627	1886*	29,867,736
1877	13,446,587	1882	22,449,112	1887	32,734,302

\* Prior to 1886 the Treasury tables make no attempt to give the imports from each of the Central American States.

In 1886 and 1887 the following are the details:

	1886.	1887.
Costa Rica	4,750,594	7,211,833
Guatemala	13,341,119	15,645,848
Honduras	16,319	66,087
Nicaragua	1,398,331	2,996,760
San Salvador	10,361,373	6,313,774
Total	29,867,736	32,734,302

**GUATEMALA.**

Guatemala, Mexico, and the Republic of Colombia are almost of equal importance as coffee producers in the market of the United States, but it is evident from the import value there is a wide difference in the qualities of the coffee produced and in the estimation such difference shows. The average import value of all coffees imported in 1887 was 10.7 cents a pound; but that of Guatemalan coffee was as high as 13 cents, being ex-

\*\* Tomado de: *Ibid*, pp. 25-27, 30-34, 37.

ceeded only by the product of Mexico and the small quantity brought from the Netherlands, presumably some choice lots of special kinds, constituting less than 1 per cent . of the total supply.

Consul-General Hosmer reports that the exports of Guatemalan coffee in the six months ending June 30, 1887, were 41,661,789 pounds, the leading consumers being Germany and the United States, as follows:

	<i>Pounds.</i>
Germany . . . . .	17,452,804
United States . . . . .	13,014,941
England . . . . .	7,125,001
France . . . . .	4,069,043

He also believes there is much land that could be brought under coffee, but it will probably be controlled by the course of the market. The British consul wrote in 1884:

The bad coffee season of 1882 was followed in 1883 by an abundant crop. Allowing 50,000 quintals for home consumption, the harvest seems to have been about 450,000 quintals, or about 20,089 tons.

The greater part of the lands in the Republic suitable for coffee growing are now in full yield, and the supply of Guatemalan coffee has consequently almost reached its maximum. Many agriculturists, disheartened by the bad prices realized in 1882, and the failure of whole districts to bear good coffee, have turned their attention to other crops, chiefly sugar, indigo, and cinchona.—(March 25, 1884).

On this point the Central and South American Commission said:

The chief product and greatest source of wealth in Guatemala is coffee. The greater part of the crop goes to Europe, where the shippers say there is a more active demand for the best quality than in the United States. Guatemalan coffee is usually sold in the market under the name of Mocha, as it resembles closely the genuine Arabian berry which is no longer produced in any quantity. The number of coffee plantations in Guatemala in 1884 was 5,431, with 60,301,213 trees. The annual export from 1871 to 1884 was as follows:

Year.	Pounds.	Year.	Pounds.
1871 . . . . .	11,322,900	1880 . . . . .	28,976,200
1872 . . . . .	13,913,700	1881 . . . . .	26,037,200
1873 . . . . .	15,050,600	1882 . . . . .	31,327,100
1874 . . . . .	16,158,300	1883 . . . . .	40,406,900
1879 . . . . .	25,201,600	1884 . . . . .	37,130,600

One of the principal coffee districts has suffered largely with the period under review (1877-78) from exhaustion of the soil, and probable inadaptability of climate; but for every tree abandoned in this section 100 have taken its place in new and better lands. I have no doubt there have been 2,000,000 trees planted in the latter, and consequently the crop of 1880 and 1881 will exhibit a marked increase over any previous season. The Vera Paz, or Coban district, which has its outlet on the Atlantic, via Yzabal and Belize, has been specially sought after by a fairly large party of Germans and Americans, and is being industriously developed in its coffee-bearing qualities. The land and labor are cheaper than on the Pacific slope, but the yield per tree is very much less, being an average of 1 pound a tree, while the Pacific slope reaches 3 pounds and even 5 pounds in some specially favored localities.— (H. B. M. Acting Consul McNider, May, 1879).

*Exports of coffee.*

Year.	Quantity.	Value.	Year.	Quantity.	Value.
	<i>Pounds.</i>			<i>Pounds.</i>	
1875 . . . . .	16,357,989	\$2,617,278.24	1879 . . . . .	25,201,685	\$4,032,269.00
1876 . . . . .	20,740,017	3,318,402.72	1881 . . . . .	26,037,289	3,124,474.00
1877 . . . . .		3,358,956.16	1882 . . . . .	31,327,100	
1878 . . . . .	20,935,877	3,349,740.32	1883 . . . . .	40,406,900	4,848,832.68

Countries.	1879.	Countries.	1879.
	<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>
England . . . . .	8,006,459	Belgium . . . . .	639,610
France . . . . .	3,260,314	Italy . . . . .	12,408
Germany . . . . .	4,241,700	South America . . . . .	300,110
United States . . . . .	7,064,450	Spain . . . . .	7,415
Honduras . . . . .	1,669,219		

Year.	From—	Pounds.
1881 . . . . .	San José . . . . .	10,599,009
1881 . . . . .	Champerico . . . . .	13,736,130
1881 . . . . .	Livingstone . . . . .	1,702,750
1882 . . . . .	Izabal . . . . .	1,209,122

**COSTA RICA.**

1878.— Coffee crop of 1878 was small, amounting to only 18,065,206 pounds, as compared with 25,987,101 pounds of the previous year; but the high prices paid here have, to a certain extent, recompensed growers for the smallness of the crop. The average price for coffee in the port of Punta Arenas was \$18 per quintal of 100 pounds, thus leaving little or no margin for profit to exporters. The total value of exports for the year amount to \$3,409,454.53. The following table shows the various destinations and quantities of the coffee crop for the year 1877-78, made up to the month of August last [1878]:

*Table of coffee exported in the year 1878.*

Destinations.	By steamer.	By sailing vessel.	Total.*
Great Britain . . . . .	33,932	49,717	83,649
France . . . . .	12,949	.....	12,949
Germany . . . . .	4,028	.....	4,028
Spain . . . . .	220	.....	220
California . . . . .	32,751	.....	32,751
New York . . . . .	2,741	.....	2,741
Colombia . . . . .	629	104	733
Chili . . . . .	834	.....	834
Peru . . . . .	87	.....	87
Total . . . . .	88,171	49,821	† 137,992

\*Sacks of 130 pounds.

† Or 5,519,680 pounds.

The exports of coffee from Punta Arenas, with valuation, were as follows:

Year.	Pounds.	Price.	Value on board.
1875 . . . . .	23,434,851	17	3,983,924.67
1876 . . . . .	10,513,218	20	2,102,643.60
1877 . . . . .	24,295,772	20	4,859,154.40
1878 . . . . .	18,065,206	18	3,251,737.08

Coffee-growing continues chiefly to occupy the attention of agriculturists, but latterly with less success than heretofore, owing principally to a considerable change of the seasons. The present crop was expected to have been exceptionally large, but owing to a prolonged and very wet season it has suffered considerably. It will, nevertheless, be a very large crop, though of an inferior quality. Several experiments have been made with Liberian coffee, but with indifferent success, the climate in the interior being too cold for the plant. I am informed that it grows to greater perfection on the coast, but it has not yet been sown long enough for decided results to be ascertained. — (H. B. M. Consul, Meugens, 1879).

1879.— The coffee crop of the last year was comparatively a large one, the amount exported being 25,189,483 pounds; but owing to the exceptional wet season and bad state of the roads to the port at least one-third of the crop remained in the interior for shipment this year. The coffee thus kept over has no doubt suffered much depreciation in quality and value. The average price for coffee in Punta Arenas was \$16, or £3 4s. per quintal of 100 pounds, which, in most cases, owing to the low prices obtained in Europe, left a loss to the shipper. The value of coffee exported is estimated at \$4,030,317, the export duties on which (of 50 cents per 100 pounds) produced \$125,947.\*\*\*The remarks made in my last report that coffee-growing still continues to occupy the chief attention of agriculturists, but with less success than before, still hold good; the change of the seasons, bad roads, high wages (on account of the scarcity of laborers), and lower prices in the European markets all combine to make coffee-growing less remunerative than

before; but it is hoped that as soon as the railway on the Atlantic side reaches within 25 miles of the capital it will facilitate exportation on the Atlantic side, and induce agriculturists to cultivate other produce as well, such as cocoa and rice, with a view to export, which would in time greatly increase the revenue, as also supply the country with necessary articles of food. The present coffee crop is smaller than was at first anticipated, and will perhaps not exceed 100,000 sacks, or, say, 12,500,000 pounds, but the quality generally is good. There, however, remains to be exported the third of last year's crop, or, say, about 8,500,000 pounds, making in all 21,000,000 pounds as against 25,189,483 pounds last year.— (H. B. M., Consul Meugens, 1880).

1880.—Coffee continues to be the chief product and export of the Republic. During the past year the amount exported was 10,386 tons, valued at £687,217, as against 11,245 tons, valued at £806,063 in 1878-'79. By the foregoing it will be observed that the export of 1879-'80 was somewhat lower than the previous one, which is explained by the general consequence of a small crop succeeding a large one, as was that of 1878-'79, one-third of which was lost for want of hands to pick it, and the constant rains which did serious damage to the fruit coupled with the bad roads, preventing the conveyance to the port. The estimated value is also proportionately smaller on account of the low prices ruling in the chief markets of Europe.—(H. B. M. Consul, Meugens, 1881).

1881.— The coffee crop was smaller in quantity and lower in value than the two previous years, as will be seen by the following comparison:

Years.	Quantity.	Estimated Value.
	<i>Tons.</i>	
1880-'81 . . . . .	7,700	£ 448,446
1879-'80 . . . . .	10,386	687,217
1878-'79 . . . . .	11,245	806,063

The exports of coffee from Punta Arenas was as follows (year ending April 30, 1881):

	<i>Pounds.</i>
Via Panama . . . . .	7,606,578
England . . . . .	6,413,920
France . . . . .	510
Germany . . . . .	1,761
San Francisco . . . . .	3,218,380
Central America . . . . .	523
United States of Colombia . . . . .	6,220
	<hr/> 17,247,892

Average price, 13 cents; value, \$ 2,242,225.96.

Much attention is being now given by agriculturists to the cultivation of other articles of produce besides coffee, which has been so unremunerative in the past few years, notwithstanding that the expenses attending its export are not so great as previously, both land and sea freights being cheaper, and the export duty of 2s. per 100 pounds now taken off (March 5, 1882).

*Exports of coffee, 1882 (export duty of 2s. removed).*

	Punta Arenas.	Limon.
	<i>Tons.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
England . . . . .	8,267	.....
France . . . . .	904	.....
Germany . . . . .	1,370	170
Spain . . . . .	32	.....
New York . . . . .	418	.....
California . . . . .	2,200	173
Colombia . . . . .	68	.....
Chili . . . . .	33	.....
Total . . . . .	13,292	343
Value . . . . .	£ 703,862	£ 17,664

And I give a comparison of the quantity and value of coffee, the chief product of the country, exported during the past six years, which may be of some interest:

Year.	Tons.	Value per ton.	Value on board.
		£. s. d.	
1882 . . . . .	13,635	51 10 5	£ 702,489
1881 . . . . .	7,700	58 4 0	448,446
1880 . . . . .	10,386	66 3 4	687,217
1879 . . . . .	11,245	71 13 8	806,063
1878 . . . . .	8,065	80 10 3	650,347
1877 . . . . .	10,846	80 12 0	971,831

By which it will be seen that, although the crop of 1882 was the largest exported, yet, owing to the yearly fall in prices of that article in the European markets, its proportionate value on board was about 43 per cent. less than that of 1877 (H. B. M. Consul Sharpe, 1883). In 1883 exports of coffee were 20,005,927 pounds, valued at \$2,000,592.

*Production of coffee in the Republic for the season commencing November, 1883, and ending April, 1884*

Province.	Number of estates.	Number of coffee trees.	Crop. Quintals (100 pounds.)	Value.
San José . . . . .	2,460	9,783,867	200,338	\$1,999,160
Alajuela . . . . .	1,343	3,543,773	44,696	345,960
Cartago . . . . .	930	2,823,706	43,293	412,930
Heredia . . . . .	2,757	7,294,932	116,728	1,167,280
Total . . . . .	7,490	23,446,278	405,053	3,925,330

Owing to competition, freights on coffee to Europe have been considerably reduced and are now quoted for crop being exported: Pacific mail and Royal mail, Hamburg American, from Punta Arenas, £ 4 per ton, without primage; Royal mail, Atlas line, from Limon, £ 2 per ton, without primage, as against £ 4 10s. from Punta Arenas, without primage, and £ 2 10s., with primage, from Limon last year. It is to be noted that the rate of freight on coffee from Punta Arenas via Panama and the Royal Mail steamships, in 1869, was £ 7 15s., per ton, and 5 per cent-primage. It is difficult to say whether the cultivation of coffee, hitherto the staple product of the country, is on the increase or not, but I am inclined to think not, as having been so unremunerative to shippers during the past few years. \* \* \* The present coffee crop, 1884-'85, will be very small. At present about one-half of the coffee crop is still exported by Punta Arenas, but as soon as the additional facilities required on the railroad are made there is little doubt that three-fourths of the whole shipping of the Republic will be done at Port Limon. (H. B. M. Consul Sharpe, 1885).

In 1885 exports were 154,599 sacks, valued at £ 480,000. The coffee crop was short, as the following comparison shows:

	Sacks.	Weight.		Sacks.	Weight.
		<i>Tons.</i>			<i>Tons.</i>
1885 . . . . .	154,599	8,627	1883 . . . . .	160,050	8,931
1884 . . . . .	266,654	15,050	1882 . . . . .	244,340	13,635

Until the lands in the Reventazon Valley are opened up and other produce cultivated, the amount of exports will always depend more or less on the extent of the coffee crop, which hitherto has formed more than three-fourths of the country, and of which there is only a good crop every two or three years. (H. B. M. Consul Sharpe, 1886).

[From Report South American Commission]

The growth of coffee in the populous center of Costa Rica, being carried on by small holders, is as perfect and thorough as it is possible to be, the production per acre probably exceeding that of most any other region; and the advantage of small farms is enlarged in this instance by the patient industry and the economical habits of the people. As already mentioned, this agricultural resource has been greatly crippled this year by a short crop, it being not over one-half the usual yield. Last year (1883) the crop was very heavy, but it brought a low price. The export for 1885 can not be given, as it is now being marketed for the season, but it will fall short of that of 1884. For that year it was in amount and destination as follows:

To England . . . . .	\$1,650,020
To the United States . . . . .	820,030
To France . . . . .	520,670
To Germany . . . . .	380,222

A small amount was also sent to Spain, Colombia, Chili, and British Guiana.

These exports from January 1, 1884, to July 31, 1884, went from the port of Punta Arenas and Port Limon, as follows:

	Packages.	Weight.	Value.
		<i>Pounds.</i>	
Punta Arenas . . . . .	170,115	21,434,490	\$2,357,793.90
Port Limon . . . . .	96,539	12,278,600	1,350,646.00

[From British consular reports.]

The amount of coffee exported in 1886 was 141,419 bags, weighing 8,070 tons, valued at £ 451,820 against 154,599 bags, weighing 8,627 tons, in 1885, valued at £ 440,000. The present crop, however, is calculated at about 200,000 bags, and, with the high prices now (February, 1887) ruling both here and in Europe, it is to be hoped that both estate holders and shippers will do well.

*Coffee crop (exports.)*

Year.	Quantity.	Weight.	Year.	Quantity.	Weight.
	<i>Sacks.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>		<i>Sacks.</i>	<i>Tons..</i>
1885 .....	154,599	8,627	1883 .....	160,050	8,931
1884 .....	266,654	15,050	1882 .....	244,340	13,635

Coffee does not offer much inducement to agriculturists, in view of the low prices ranging for some time past in Europe and the constantly increasing supplies received from Brazil and other large coffee-producing countries. (March, 1886).

**NICARAGUA.***Exports.*

	Quantity.	Value		Quantity.	Value.
	<i>Pounds.</i>			<i>Pounds.</i>	
1884 .....	7,238,425	\$692,649.02	1882 .....	7,328,376	\$659,553.84
1883 .....	5,457,930	516,846.62	1881 .....	4,698,288	422,845.92

*Distribution.*

	1884.	1883.	1882.		1881.	
			Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.
			<i>Pounds.</i>		<i>Pounds.</i>	
United States . . . . .	\$226,705	\$93,578	2,068,528	\$186,167	725,947	\$65,335
England . . . . .	181,428	181,562	3,070,443	276,339	2,425,417	218,287
France . . . . .	73,700	93,840	910,497	81,944	633,701	57,033
Germany . . . . .	209,662	103,544	1,135,835	102,225	623,957	56,156
Italy . . . . .			106,110	9,549	289,266	26,033
Colombia . . . . .			17,405	1,566		
Chili . . . . .			19,558	1,760		

*Exports (biennial periods).*

	<i>Pounds.</i>
1877 and 1878 . . . . .	3,611,990
1879 and 1880 . . . . .	8,057,469
1881 and 1882 . . . . .	12,026,664

Coffee has now become the most important export, and as the numerous plantations founded during the last seven years come into bearing, its production is likely to increase. \*\*\* Greater care is now being bestowed on the preparation of the coffee for the market, and the advantages of color, regularity of size, and cleanliness are more generally appreciated. One drawback is, however, the scarcity of water in the coffee district. In the hills of the department of Granada and Managua, where the plantations are principally situated, water can not be reached at a depth of less than 500 feet, and in the absence of rivers the only means left to the planter is that of collecting water in artificial reservoirs during the rains. On some plantations such reservoirs have recently been constructed at no small expense, and with the water thus obtained the coffee is pulped and washed on the most approved Ceylon systems.

The inconvenience arising from the scarcity of labor is aggravated by the number of holidays sanctioned by the law, I am informed that there are at least thirty days (in addition to Sundays) in the year on which the laborers are allowed to absent themselves in defiance of their contracts. The sale of Government rum on these days must add considerably to this very important item in the national revenue, but the planters complain that the treasury gains at their expense. The prices realized in 1882 for Nicaragua coffee in the London market were: "Ordinary sun-dried", 34s to 45s per cwt.; washed "plantation", 48s. to 78s. per cwt. (May 20, 1883).

**HAYTI**

The coffee tree was introduced into Hayti and at once proved adapted to produce well, the conditions of soil and climate being favorable to the culture. The season begins in November and continues until March, and constitutes the period of greatest activity on the island. The port of Petit Goave, with a population of 4,000 inhabitants only, is one of the best shipping places of the Republic of Hayti. The principal produce cultivated on the mountainous ground surrounding the harbor and extending inland is coffee, of which a quantity estimated at 10,000,000 pounds is the yearly crop.

**COSTA RICA: REPORT OF CONSUL WINGFIELD\***

*Introductory.*— Coffee was first planted in Costa Rica in the year 1796, from seed brought from Havana. The first grains were planted at Cartago, where, it is said, the trees from which all the seed of Costa Rica, and even of Central America, have been propagated still exist in a flourishing condition. The development of the incipient industry was largely due to the efforts of a Catholic priest, Father Velarde, under the administration of Don Thomas Acosta (1797-1810). Since the separation from Spain in 1821 it has been the unbroken policy of the Government to favor coffee production. Don Juan Mora, the first President of Costa Rica (1824 to 1833), relieved coffee from export duties and granted special privileges to its cultivators. President Carrillo, in 1840, authorized the sale of the fertile municipal lands of Las Pavas, on the express condition that they should be made model coffee plantations. Under the administration of Don Raphael Mora (1849 to 1859) the construction of many important roads, especially of the wagon road to the port of Puntas Arenas, on the Pacific, notably contributed to the development of agriculture and commerce. Notwithstanding the war against Walker, and the cholera which followed that war and decimated the population, and the consequent scarcity of labor and capital, the exportation of coffee reached in 1861 100,000 quintals. The prices paid from this time for Costa Rican coffee, especially in England, caused the abandonment of almost all other agriculture, and in 1884 360,000 quintals of coffee were exported, which is the largest crop ever grown in the country.

**Cultivation and Production.**

In making a coffee plantation, where the farmer makes his own nursery, as is generally the case, the seeds are planted in May, and are ready for

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 54-58.

setting out the following May. Two years after setting out there is a sprinkling of coffee, and at three years of age there is quite a fair crop. The yield continues to increase each year until the grove is seven years of age, when a full crop is produced. In setting out the groves the trees are spaced from 10 to 15 feet each way, making as an average 500 trees to the acre. The coffee is a delicate plant and needs protection from wind and sun. To this end bananas and a quick-growing, wide-branching tree called the white porro are planted. The latter is also planted in close hedges around the field. The first year, small crops, such as potatoes and beans, between the rows, are not considered injurious. Where the land is very fertile the young tree is topped when one year old, and two branches allowed to put out, which are topped at the end of the second year, and each allowed to throw out two branches. This topping is to prevent the tree from growing so tall as to make it inconvenient to gather the fruit; but topping and trimming are not practiced so much now as formerly. After the plantation begins to bear, from five to six cleanings are needed each year. This is done altogether by hand labor, and the culture must be very shallow. Immediately before the coffee picking season, with a sharp wide spade, and going not more than 1 inch deep, a laborer turns over the land, throwing from the middle of the row to the trees. This process, called "aporca", gives a smooth, clean surface around the trees, so that all coffee dropped in picking may be saved. Near the close of the dry season, which lasts from December to April, the second working is given, which consists in scraping the soil lightly back to the middle of the row with long knives.

This process, called "raspa", is repeated at intervals of six weeks to two months, until the soil is scraped back from the trees to the middle of the rows and the ground brought to a level. An incidental benefit of this process is that the grass and leaves are collected in a heap in the middle of the row, where they rot and make a good manure, which goes back around the trees by the "aporca" at the beginning of the dry season. The annual cost per acre of working a coffee plantation varies in different localities, according as the soil is stiff or light, with or without surface rock, but may be stated to be an average of \$6 (Costa Rica currency, equivalent to \$4.25 United States gold). When an extra large crop is given, the next crop falls below the average. This is partly due to the exhaustion of the trees and, in part, to the fact that at the time

of gathering one crop the buds for the next crop are already beginning to form, and labor being scarce, the pickers are paid according to quantity gathered, so that in the haste of stripping the branches the incipient buds for the new crop are injured or destroyed to a considerable extent. Stable manure, rotted leaves and weeds, deposits of rich earth from town drains and from the overflow of creeks and rivers are used to fertilize coffee plantations; but up to the present time very little Peruvian guano, bone, or manipulated manures have been used.

Taking a series of years, the average annual yield of the coffee plantations of Costa Rica may be placed at 5 quintals per acre (each quintal being equal to 100 pounds). Statistics collected at the taking of the census in 1883 show that at that time there were about 46,000 acres in coffee cultivation, included in 7,500 estates, and numbering 23,000,000 trees. Prices for coffee were low in 1884, 1885, and 1886, and the average in cultivation was not increased during those years. A much better price has been paid this year and the disposition now is to set out new plantations. Coffee is grown successfully in this country between the limits of 2,500 feet and 5,000 feet elevation above the sea-level. At about 4,000 feet elevation it is thought the best results are obtained. The statistics of the crop of 1883-'84 sustain this view.

Provinces.	Elevation.	Acreage.	Number of trees.	Crop yield.
	<i>Feet.</i>			<i>Quintals.</i>
San José . . . . .	3,800	19,500	9,750,000	200,000
Heredia . . . . .	3,000 to 4,000	14,250	7,125,000	115,000
Cartago . . . . .	5,000	5,250	2,625,000	40,000
Alajuela . . . . .	2,500	7,000	3,500,000	45,000
Total . . . . .	. . . . .	46,000	23,000,000	400,000

In the province of Heredia there are two sections—Lower Heredia about 3,000 feet elevation, which does not yield much better than Alajuela, and Upper Heredia, about 4,000 feet elevation, which gives better results than San José. It is claimed that while Cartago does not yield so much per acre as Heredia and San José that the flavor and quality of the coffee produced are better, and

that a uniform crop is gotten each year. In the provinces of Heredia, Alajuela, and San José about all the land well suited for coffee growing has already been brought into cultivation; but descending from Cartago down the valley of the river Reventazon, toward the Atlantic there is a fine belt of land, said to be better adapted for the growth of coffee than even Heredia and San José. A plantation in this section last season yielded 15 quintals per acre. The railroad from Port Limon is in course of construction up the Reventazon Valley to Cartago. When this is completed it is probable that, at no distant period, this belt of country, from an elevation of 2,500 feet, up to Cartago will be put in coffee, thus increasing the present acreage 50 per cent.

### Exports and Home Consumption

The following table shows the production and distribution of the crops of coffee of Costa Rica for the years 1884, 1885, 1886, and, approximately, in 1887:

[Each quintal is equivalent to 100 pounds.]

Whither exported.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.
	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>
England . . . . .	165,002	103,722	116,406	100,000
Germany . . . . .	40,600	27,664	28,872	30,000
France . . . . .	52,067	25,158	18,538	25,000
Spain . . . . .	18,568	25		
Belgium . . . . .		139		
Holland . . . . .			125	2,000
Demmarck . . . . .			3,722	3,000
<hr/>				
New York . . . . .	28,460	17,036	12,653	
New Orleans . . . . .	16,330	6,296	196	
San Francisco . . . . .	38,013	17,604	13,778	
<hr/>				
Total United States . . . . .	82,803	40,936	26,627	60,000
<hr/>				
Mexico . . . . .			95	
Colombia . . . . .	1,968	1,288	1,388	
Chili . . . . .	450		632	
Central America . . . . .	53		53	
<hr/>				
Total exported . . . . .	361,511	198,932	190,458	220,000
Home consumption . . . . .	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
<hr/>				
Total crop . . . . .	401,511	238,932	236,458	260,000

Estimated crop for 1888, for export, 190,000 quintals. The estimated home consumption is probably excessive, as this includes worthless and defective coffees thrown in hand picking.

### Prices

The following table shows the premium on exchange on New York, the prices actually paid for coffee in Costa Rican currency to producers, and the corresponding equivalent in United States currency during the time of harvesting and preparing the crop of coffee for market, namely, the months of January, February, and March of each year, from 1879 to 1887, inclusive.

	Premium on exchange on New York.	Average price paid in Costa Rican currency.	Equivalent of price paid in United States currency.
	<i>Per cent.</i>	<i>Per quintal.</i>	<i>Per quintal.</i>
1879 .....	10	\$11.00	\$10.00
1880 .....	20	12.00	10.00
1881 .....	23	12.50	10.00
1882 .....	17	9.00	7.70
1883 .....	27	8.50	6.70
1884 .....	12	10.00	8.33
1885 .....	29	11.00	8.52
1886 .....	42	14.00	9.85
1887 .....	42	15.00	10.50
Average of nine years .....		11.44	9.07

### Preparation for market.

The preparation of coffee for market (here called "beneficing" and the establishment where prepared "beneficio") consists: (1) In breaking the pulp, washing and drying. (2) In polishing, fanning, and classifying. The coffee is received at the "beneficio" in fruit (red, and much like a large cherry), measured and run into a large tank (of cement). A strong head of water runs into this tank, washing the berry of sand and dirt, and through a draw-gate carries the coffee down a canal to the mill. In the course of the canal there are several sockets, covered with grating, into

which the sand and dirt settle and also, at suitable places in the canal, there are low places where some water overflows, carrying the light floating coffee which is spoilt or injured. Arrived at the mill the coffee berry is run through the crusher, which breaks the outer skin and pulp, then through a horizontal cylinder working in water, so arranged that the pulp and outer skin are separated from the grains. The grains are run into tanks and washed, and then run off into large open yards, smooth and cemented, called "patios", from which the water is drained off by gratings. Thus the coffee is received above and the work is done by water turning the machinery and carrying and

spreading the coffee in the patios, and only about three attendants are needed. The coffee after being spread in the patios must be turned and stirred every day to prevent souring and must be covered with canvas sheets whenever a rain threatens, and also on damp nights. As soon as the coffee is dry it is put in sacks, and transferred to the warehouse.

In the second process, it must be remembered that the coffee comes from the patio with the grains, each covered with two thin skins, called parchment. It is therefore first passed through the husking machine, then through a fan, then through the polisher, and again through the fan, and then through the machine for classifying. The principle of both husking machine and polisher is rubbing. The classitier is a long cylinder placed horizontal with walls of wire netting, the netting being fine at the end at which the coffee enters and becomes more and more open toward the further end. The cylinder revolves and within the cylinder is a revolving spiral which forces the coffee along the cylinder. The small and cracked grains fall through the close netting of the cylinder in the first section; then the round grains in the second section, known as Peaberry or "Carracole" coffee; then the smaller flat grains, giving third-class coffee; then in the next section comes the second-class coffee, and the last section of the cylinder gives the large perfect flat grains which can only pass through coarse open netting—the first-class coffee. In order to give uniform color a little charcoal, made from cedar or porro, is sifted into the polisher and rubbed in with the coffee. About one teaspoonful is allowed for each quintal of coffee. Of course much of the charcoal goes off with the dust and chaff in passing through the fan. In addition to giving a better color, it is thought that coffee polished with charcoal is less liable to be affected by dampness and must in transportation.

The Peaberry or Corracole coffee is a fancy article, and always commands a higher price. This is the coffee from those berries which have only one round grain to the berry, whereas most berries have two grains, flat on one side. The first and second grades of coffee are always picked over by hand, taking out black and otherwise defective grains. The third grade is often passed again through the classifier and converted into first and second grades. Until recent years the Peaberry and first and second grades, and the firsts from re-classifying the third grade, have been sent to England. The seconds and thirds of the third grade have been sent to the United States, where, it is be-

lieved, people do not know how to appreciate first-class coffee.

The quality of coffee is much improved with age, and the best coffee that can be gotten here is where it has been dried in the berry and not benefited until it is one or two years old.

### Conclusión

Up to the present time the crops of coffee have been almost exclusively cured by drying in the open patio. When the rainy season laps over into the dry season there is much trouble and extra expense incurred. An effort is now being made to introduce the process of curing by dry air—known as the "Guardiola" process. Upon the success of this the development of the Reventazon Valley will largely depend, since that valley is much more subject to rain during the coffee harvest than the San José Valley. In conclusion I desire to acknowledge my indebtedness for much valuable material in preparing this report to the recent publication "Costa Rica in 1886", by J. Bernardo Calvo, and to the courteous chief of the Bureau of Statistics, and to several gentlemen who have been engaged many years in the growth and benefiting of coffee.

J. RICH'D WINGFIELD,  
*Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
San José, October 18, 1887.

### GUATEMALA: REPORT OF CONSUL GENERAL HOSMER.\*

#### Coffee in Guatemala.

*Cultivation.*— Coffee is the principal staple commodity of the Republic of Guatemala, and its chief article of export. The topographical features of the country are such that climatic influences are favorable to the growth of the berry, varying only according to altitude and care in cultivation, or as the degree of tropical heat may be tempered by copious rain-fall and precautions as to shade during the early age of the tree.

It may be interesting, and perhaps instructive, to note some points in relation to the cultivation

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 59-63

of coffee. Like fruits which enjoy their perfection by planting the seed and carefully nursing the growing tree, so it is important that the proper selection of soil shall be made in which to cultivate coffee. A nursery is formed by the choice of a level piece of virgin ground, in proximity to water, where the earth is rich and crumbly. The land must be thoroughly cleared and the soil dug to the depth of at least nine inches and made as friable as possible. It is then divided into beds with narrow paths between. The seed, carefully selected from the soundest grains, either in parchment or with their outer husk, should be sown, row by row, about 10 to 12 inches apart. A rope, the length of the beds, stretched from one end of the same to the other, is used for this purpose. The seed, if sown in suitable weather (April being the best month), makes its appearance in the tender blade, above the surface, after thirty-five to forty days; so that a nursery formed during the month of April of one year has plants sufficiently matured to be set out during May or June of the following year.

At this stage of culture the infant trees will have grown 18 inches in height, with three "stories" of branches. The fourth cross should then be pruned, an operation which is very essential in order to give robustness to the stem and shape to the growing tree.

A piece of land slightly sloping is regarded the more desirable for a nursery, because natural drainage is advisable, and care should be also taken to prevent washing by heavy rains.

Preliminary to the all-important progressive step in coffee culture, that of transplanting, is *holing*. The field is prepared in advance for the reception of the nursery trees by digging holes (5 yards apart when above 3,000 feet of altitude, and 3 yards when at the lower levels of from 2,000 to 1,500 feet above the sea) to depths of about 12 inches by 12 inches in width. It has been faithfully demonstrated, by frequent experiment, that leaving the holes open three to four months' time is chemically beneficial to the soil.

In the matter of transplanting, the actual placing of the infant trees into the holes prepared for their reception is one that requires the most care and attention of all the operations in the formation of a coffee plantation. Early planting, say during the month of May, June, and July, is desirable, because the trees have the benefit of the entire rainy season, and are sure to give a larger maiden crop.

The usual course pursued in transplanting is as follows: When dug out of the nursery, with a 12-inch-square lump of soil attached, the trees with crooked roots should be thrown aside, and none but those having a straight tap root should be planted. The infant tree should not be put deeper into the ground than the depth it occupied when it stood in the nursery. It should be then carefully pressed in from the sides, but not trodden down. The trees should be freed from suckers and pruned after the second year, clipping off the upper shoots.

Coffee trees usually bear abundantly one year and lightly the next. Judicious pruning helps to increase the crops, although no definite rule can be given for pruning old trees further than that no branch should be allowed to yield more than three crops, because after that they degenerate into mere whips, bearing only a few berries at the extremities of their attenuated limbs.

*Production.*— The average product per acre in Guatemala of coffee cultivation is 1,800 pounds; an estimate which does not claim to be other than approximate, on account of the varied influences of soil and temperature, as well as the great number of inconsiderable patches which are distributed throughout the Republic, and which, if included in the statistics of production would naturally vary the above stated average.

*Preparation for market.*— The berries are always picked by hand and carried to the curing house, where the pulp is removed by machinery, as a general rule, and dumped into a soaking-cistern, where the bean should never be allowed to remain beyond a period of twenty-four hours. After the saccharine scum which covers the bean is washed off, the contents of the cistern are cast upon large drying grounds of cement called "patios", upon which the coffee beans are thinly spread. Here it is important that the coffee should be kept constantly turned until all the surface is dry and the beans cease to adhere to each other, continuing the operation until the berry will crack under the pressure of one's teeth, while care should be taken not to break the parchment whilst exposed to wind or sun, as every hour's exposure to the atmosphere, after removal of the parchment-husk, takes away both the color and the aroma of the bean. As a matter of course the coffee must be picked when fully ripe, since no care in curing or packing will improve the color or flavor of a half-ripe bean.

On the large "fincas", or coffee estates, the Guardiola drier is used to great advantage in

competition with common barbecues. It is a machine patented in the United States, and of growing popularity in all the producing countries, but unavailable for the means of a planter who can not produce more than 3,000 quintals (300,000 pounds) per year.

When thoroughly dry the preparing for market is done either by running the bean through the old-fashioned "Retrilla de Gordon", a two-wheeler breaker and polisher, or by the more modern Surout machine, of Guatemalan invention, or by the "Buffalo Coffee Huller", a machine reported to be of great efficiency, and which would become of universal use, according to expert testimony, if better material was used in the construction of its machinery.

After the hulling process is completed, the *sorting* is the next operation. Ordinarily, firsts, seconds, and thirds are prepared for packing into Dundee or Calcutta sacks of 130 to 135 pounds, net, each; and upon its completion the coffee is ready for transportation on the backs of Indians or mules, or in carts drawn by oxen, to the nearest railway station for the most convenient port of shipment. The largest bulk of the "firsts" finds its way to London; the "seconds" to Germany and France; and the "thirds" to the United States.

*Labor.*— In reporting upon the cultivation of coffee it may be well to state that the labor is performed by the Indians of the country, whose remuneration varies from 19 to 25 cents per diem in Guatemalan currency, the value of which in United States money is 72 cents on the dollar. Occasionally 37 1/2 cents per diem is paid to the laborer on the Pacific coast, and in both cases without rations of food. The Indians subsist on *tortillas*, a corn cake, and *frijoles*, the bean of the country, both corn and beans being raised by their own labor on patches of ground, on the squatter system, which belong to either the owners of the states where they are employed, or are unsold Government lands, which are thus gratuitously appropriated. He makes his own simple wearing apparel from the cotton grown in the country and woven by the women, but heavy drilling, imported from the United States, is beginning to be extensively used, especially among the Indians of the uplands, thus relieving both sexes of a share of domestic labor, and enabling them to occupy more of their time in work upon the fincas.

*Exports.*— The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from the port of San José de Guatemala, to various points of destination, for the six months ended June 30, 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
Antwerp . . . . .	157	22,572
Bordeaux . . . . .	73	11,096
Bremen . . . . .	3,059	414,003
Hamburg . . . . .	33,953	4,658,219
Havre . . . . .	6,177	828,855
London . . . . .	15,812	2,125,164
New York . . . . .	1,838	267,517
San Francisco . . . . .	18,758	2,579,969
Spain . . . . .	2	264
South America . . . . .	334	65,870
Central America . . . . .	123	18,182
Total . . . . .	80,286	10,991,711

The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from the port of San José de Guatemala, to various points of destination, for the three months ended September 30, 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
Bremen . . . . .	3	396
Hamburg . . . . .	56	8,512
London . . . . .	22	3,334
New York . . . . .	1	106
San Francisco . . . . .	257	30,130
South America . . . . .	15	2,290
Total . . . . .	354	44,678

The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from the port of Champenco, to various points of destination, for the six months ended June 30, 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
Central America . . . . .	150	18,937
Chili . . . . .	517	68,234
England . . . . .	32,321	4,392,894
France . . . . .	23,166	3,229,092
Germany . . . . .	92,916	12,364,024
Italy . . . . .	1,062	144,968
United States . . . . .	71,186	9,857,529
Total . . . . .	221,318	30,075,678

The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from the port of Livingston, to various points of destination, for the six months ended June 30, 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
Belize . . . . .	223	26,158
Boston . . . . .	1,016	165,428
Hamburg . . . . .	130	16,558
London . . . . .	4,607	606,943
Montreal . . . . .	151	23,103
New Orleans . . . . .	473	59,528
New York . . . . .	677	84,821
Total . . . . .	7,277	982,539

The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from the port of Livingston, to various points of destination, for the three months ended September 30 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
Belize . . . . .	31	4,063
Boston . . . . .	187	28,611
Hamburg . . . . .	100	14,901
London . . . . .	960	125,788
New Orleans . . . . .	130	15,392
New York . . . . .	606	78,420
Truxilla Honduras . . . . .	158	18,170
Total . . . . .	2,172	285,345

The following table shows the amount of coffee shipped from all the ports of the Republic of Guatemala, to various points of destination, during the six months ending June 30, 1887:

Destination.	Sacks.	Pounds.
England . . . . .	52,740	7,125,001
France . . . . .	29,416	4,069,043
Germany . . . . .	130,057	17,452,804
United States . . . . .	93,948	13,014,941
Total . . . . .	306,161	41,661,789

*Prices.*— The following comprise the average selling prices of coffee in the Guatemalan market during ten years:

1877	.....	\$0.09
1878	.....	.10
1879	.....	.08
1880	.....	.09
1881	.....	.11
1882	.....	.12
1883	.....	.11
1884	.....	.09
1885	.....	.08
1886	.....	.15
1887	.....	.18

*Quality.*— In relation to the characteristics of the various grades or qualities of the coffees called for in the Department circular, I am fortified by the valuable opinion of Mr. A. Zollikofer, a practical expert in coffee-growing on a very extensive scale in the Republic of Guatemala, and to whom I am greatly indebted for much important information in connection with this report, in the belief that there is no substantial difference in the grade of coffee grown in different countries. Where it does exist it will generally prove to be the result of different modes of cultivation and preparation for the market, or in the method of curing. There is a marked difference in the size of the berry produced in the highlands, compared with that grown of the plantations below, and caprice more than reality gives preference to the former, which commands a market price from 10 to 15 per cent. higher than that of the coffee of the lower level of land.

*Area, etc.*— As to the area under coffee cultivation in Guatemala it is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain accurate statistical information; and still more so to estimate the area capable of being brought under cultivation. There is but comparatively little "vacant soil" appropriate for coffee culture, and it is problematical if the country ever again produced an amount greater than the half million of quintals (50,000,000 pounds), which were the figures of last year, and which has now shrunk to about 400,000 quintals, or less, for the whole Republic.

I subjoin, however, an approximate estimate furnished to me, which is, I should judge from inquiry, as accurate as can be obtained, but which does not include a number of insignificant coffee patches devoted to home consumption and which do not enter into the array of figures representing actual export.

Area under cultivation.	Acres.	Vacant land, mostly broken, but one-quarter of which is arable.
		Acres.
Pamaxán district . . . . .	600	6,000
Costa Grande district . . . . .	8,000	4,000
Sans Felipe and dependencies . . . . .	3,200	.....
Xoluitz . . . . .	2,500	3,000
Costa Cuca . . . . .	5,500	1,500
Saquichillá . . . . .	600	3,000
Cuch . . . . .	1,000	4,000
Tumbador . . . . .	2,000	5,000
Rodeó . . . . .	500	1,000
Total . . . . .	35,900	31,000

JAMES R'HOSMER,  
*Consul-General.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE GENERAL,  
Guatemala, December 24, 1887.

#### HONDURAS: REPORT BY VICE AND ACTING CONSUL BERNHARD.\*

Owing to the utter lack of official statistics, I have been obliged to rely upon information derived from merchants and producers in the preparation of this report. I may say here that Honduras is more of a pastoral and mineral than an agricultural country, and that the cultivation of coffee is very limited.

*Production.*— The production of coffee is estimated at about 20,000 quintals, of which not more than 10 per cent. is exported, exclusively to England, the remainder being consumed in the country.

*Prices.*— The ruling prices throughout the year 1887 ran from \$14 to \$18, Honduras money (\$1= 75 cents American) per quintal.

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 63-64.

*Exports.*— Growers export partly through the port of Amapole, and partly through Puerto Cortez, on the north coast. Small lots of Honduras coffee are exported through the neighboring republic of Salvador. These latter are the products of the departments of Gracias and Santa Rosa.

Coffee exported this year from the department of Paraíso sold in England at \$17 gold per quintal. Only first-class small grain coffee is exported, and the lowest prices realized in England therefor were as follows: 1885, \$12 to \$13 per quintal; 1886, \$14.50 per quintal. Before the lowering of prices the same grades of coffee sold as high as \$23 per quintal.

*Quality.*— Nearly all coffee produced is a small, round, bluish-green bean; all other is consumed in the country, the best being always exported.

*Preparation for market.*— Machinery for drying coffee is only found on one large plantation of 120,000 trees in the department of Paraíso. Coffee for home consumption is prepared in the most primitive manner.

*Conclusions.*— The large tracts of land suitable for coffee growing are situated on the slopes of high mountains and in the valleys between the high ridges. The difficulties of transportation would therefore be very great. Consequently I am under the impression that coffee cultivation on a

large scale in Honduras will never be developed, especially as cattle raising and mining offer more profitable fields to capitalists.

GEORGE BERNHARD,  
*Vice and Acting Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
Tegucigalpa, September 30, 1887.

## REPORT OF CONSUL BURCHARD.

### RUATAN AND TRUXILLO.

The production of coffee in this consular district is quite limited, not being sufficient to supply the demand for home consumption.

The soil and climate of the high lands near the coasts, as well as those of the interior, are well adapted to the development of this industry, but as yet it has not received any practical attention worthy of notice.

WILLIAM C. BURCHARD,  
*Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
Rutatan, September 30, 1886.

### NICARAGUA: REPORT OF CONSUL WILLS, OF MANAGUA.\*

*Planting.*— The selection of a plantation for the production of coffee is in the sierras (hills), 1,000 feet or more above the level of the sea, of a deep, loamy soil. The first work after the selection of the plantation is to prepare a nursery and seed the coffee beans, then clean off all the undergrowth of the forest thin out the larger trees, leaving sufficient for shade, that being necessary for the coffee plant. Burn the rubbish when sufficiently dry, weed the land perfectly clean, for which purpose the machete is used as hoe, axe, and plow, being the only instrument used in the cultivation of coffee. The coffee, upon the best cultivated and most productive estates, is planted in rows running up and down the declivities, 3 yards apart in the rows,

and 4 yards between the rows, which gives four hundred plants to the acre. For the first two years the plants must be kept perfectly clean, which will require four to six workings a year; after that two nice cleanings and weedings a year will suffice for the thrift of the grown plants. Where there is not sufficient shade, plantains are cultivated to furnish it, being of a quick and rank growth, as well as food plants.

*Acreage.*— In this district there are perhaps 2,500 acres under cultivation, and about as much more capable of being brought under cultivation; but this latter is so situated where there are no means of transporting a crop to the coast; no roads, and a scarcity of labor.

*Production.*— Coffee has been cultivated in Nicaragua for twenty-five to thirty years.

The coffee trees begin to bear the third year, but not a full crop. The average crop from four to six years old trees is from 400 to 600 pounds per acre.

It is estimated that there are in Nicaragua six hundred coffee estates averaging 16,000 trees to the plantation; at a pound to the tree, which is an average yield, there will be 10,000,000 pounds or 100,000 quintals, of 100 pounds each, produced in the country.

*Preparation, etc.*— At the commencement of the dry season, the last of November, the picking of the berries begins; they are picked from the bushes by hand and placed in a wallet slung over the picker's shoulders. The coffee is then taken to the nearest roadway and emptied into sacks holding 2 bushels. When these are filled they are taken on muleback to the yards for drying, there spread to the depth of 3 to 4 inches, occasionally stirring, until thoroughly dry. The coffee is then taken to the hulling machine to be hulled and cleaned, which is done at one operation by machinery imported and conveniently located for that purpose. It is then hand-picked to rid it of all defective grains; by some it is then graded by passing through a sheet-iron cylinder in sections punched with different sized holes for three gradings. It is then bagged and ready for shipment.

A few planters, with capital, provide water-tanks, and peel and wash their coffee, which is done without drying, and as soon as it comes from the pickers. For this process only the ripe berries are picked, which necessitates three pickings. After washing it is dried in the parchment (which is a strong white skin or husk covering the berry), peeled, hand-picked, bagged, and either sold here

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 64-66.

or shipped to foreign markets. By this process coffee is worth from \$5 to \$10 per quintal more.

*Quality.*— There is no particular character to the coffee here; it is known in the market as Nicaraguan.

*Consumption.*— Only a limited amount of the coffee is used in the country, and that of the poorest quality.

*Exports and prices.*— The following table will show the exports to the more important purchasing nations for the years from 1881 to 1886, and prices during the selling season. I could not obtain the statistics for the year 1887, the price only is given. The coffee exported in any one year is the crop of the preceding year.

*Coffee exportation and prices during the selling season in Nicaragua.*

Whither exported.	1881.	1882.	1883.	1884.	1885.	1886.	1887.
	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>	<i>Quintals.</i>
England . . . . .	24,254	30,704	19,550	19,074	21,187	18,072	.....
France . . . . .	6,337	9,105	9,714	7,392	9,747	10,971	.....
Germany . . . . .	6,239	11,358	10,572	21,982	18,793	17,776	.....
Italy . . . . .	2,893	1,061	1,112	111	52	382	.....
United States:							
Atlantic ports . . . .	7,259	20,685	10,237	23,820	20,336	21,605	.....
Pacific ports . . . . .			3,327			1,709	.....
Colombia . . . . .		174	42		6	250	.....
Chili . . . . .		196				1,496	.....
Central America . . . .			27	5		44	.....
Spain . . . . .						48	.....
Total . . . . .	46,982	73,283	54,581	72,384	70,121	72,361	*50,000
Government valuation (Soles)	\$9.00	\$9.00	\$9.50	\$9.50	\$10.00	\$10.00	\$17.00
One hundred and one pounds English equal to 100 pounds Spanish (United States gold at 73).	6.57	6.57	6.93 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	6.93 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>	7.30	7.30	12.41

\*NOTE.— Estimated exports. On account of draught the crop was small. The Spanish quintal is equal to 101 pounds American.

#### Supplementary

Since sending my report of coffee I have received statistics from the three ports of Nicaragua for the year 1887.

#### SAN JUAN DEL NORTE.

	<i>Quintals.</i>
United States . . . . .	7,000
Europe . . . . .	5,000

**CORINTO.**

Germany . . . . .	18,000
United States . . . . .	12,000
England . . . . .	8,000
France . . . . .	5,000

**SAN JUAN DEL SUR.**

United States . . . . .	31
England . . . . .	288
Germany . . . . .	102
	<hr/>
	55,421

The above are received from agents-the official returns not as yet made the government — and I am satisfied they are very nearly correct.

CHAS H. WILLS,  
*Consul,*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE  
Managua, December 24, 1887.

**SALVADOR: REPORT OF CONSUL DUPRE.\***

The interior of the two coverings of each grain of coffee is full of saccharine matter. This sack grows red as the berry ripens, and is fitted closely about the double grains, lying, with their flat surfaces against each other, within this red or purple sack. The berry, on the tree, is thus round and red, and emits a delicious fragrance. Chemists extract from this covering of the coffee berry much sugar and not a little rum, both having the flavor of aromatic coffee. As coffee is now prepared for shipment, this coating is carefully removed when the berry falls into halves, and this is the coffee of commerce.

The opinion prevails among intelligent coffee growers that the removal of this red, juicy covering from the berry at the place of production is injurious, the discovery having been made that during long voyages coffee thus denuded of its native integument loses part of its choicest virtues, absorbing moisture, afterwards dissipated in drier atmospheres. Each sack of coffee gains from 1 1/2 to 3 pounds during the sea voyage. When exposed for sale or use, the natural covering of the berry having been removed on the coffee farms, not only

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

the moisture absorbed at sea, but the native aroma and much of the exhilarating properties (the essential oil) of the coffee are lost.

Coffee is not perfectly ready for use until it has remained dry in its husks at least two years. From these husks, originally red, juicy coverings, the berry is alleged to absorb their choicest properties. It therefore follows that the removal of this covering at an early day in the country of produc-

tion will cease, and less costly and less complex machinery will be used in Salvador.

Coffee should be stored not only in its husks, but it should be kept in apartments, as on ship-board, where it may not be contaminated by absorption of odors from other substances. If coffee be deposited near codfish or strong cheese it will speedily absorb their odors. Coffee is esteemed in tropical countries to be the choicest disinfectant.

*Exports of coffee from San Salvador.*

Year.	Quantity.	Value.
	<i>Pounds.</i>	
1884 .....	22,427,971	£672,702
1883 .....	22,744,029	683,221
1882 .....		\$2,700,804
1881 .....		2,909,195

L. J. DU PRE,  
*Consul*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE  
San Salvador, October 28, 1887.

London above go. Comparing the increase of the floating debt with the decrease of the same, the net increase for the past fiscal year is, in United States gold, \$89,395.

**COSTA RICAN STATISTICS\***

**REPORT BY CONSUL WINGFIELD, OF SAN JOSE.**

**Public Debt.**

*Exterior debt.*—Five per cent. coupon bonds, held in England, interest payable semi-annually on January 1 and July 1. Principal, \$10,000,000.

*Interior debt.*—Paper issued by the Government, \$870,245; floating debt, \$1,085,119; total, in Costa Rican currency, \$1,955,364; in United States gold, \$1,396,831. Total debt, in United States gold, \$11,396,831.

The interest has been paid up promptly on the foreign debt, and Costa Rican bonds are quoted in

**Receipts and Expenditures.**

Treasury receipts and disbursements for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1889, were as follows: Disbursements, \$3,939,997 (\$2,814,283 American); receipts, \$3,687,594 (\$2,633,995 American); deficit, \$252,403 (\$180,288 American). This deficit includes treasury warrants in circulation at the end of the fiscal year.

**Exports and imports.**

The exports and imports of Costa Rica during the year 1888 were as follows: Exports —Coffee, \$4,742,253; bananas, \$530,765; hides, \$64,268; rubber, \$11,388; shells and mother-of-pearl, \$18,390; coin, \$259,004; sundries, \$87,724; total, \$5,713,792 (\$4,081,280 American); imports, \$5,201,922 (\$3,715,658 American); excess of exports, \$511,870 (\$365,622 American).

The above statement shows a balance of trade in favor of Costa Rica, but when it is considered

\*Tomado de:

*Reports from the Consuls of the United States* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1891), July 1889, pp. 455-456.

that in 1888 more than \$200,000 of coin was sent abroad; that, practically, there is no coin left in the country outside of the bank reserve, and that the Government sent, in 1888, the equivalent of \$500,000 in United States gold to pay interest on its English debt, it follows that the balance of trade is really against the country. This is shown by the continuous upward tendency of exchange for the past six months. In 1888 exchange on New York could be bought up to December 15 for \$1.35; now it is worth \$1.55. Should the prices of coffee, the staple export crop of the country, go down the balance of trade would be still greater against Costa Rica, even though the growing coffee crop should prove a good one, as is now expected.

#### **Banks and currency.**

There are two banks regularly organized —the Anglo-Costa Receuse Bank, an old established bank of deposit and discount, having a paid-up capital of about \$1,500,000, and the Union Bank, which has the right under its charter to issue paper money to the extent of four times its paid-up stock, the limit of its stock being \$1,000,000. It has a paid-up capital of about \$800,000 and a paper circulation of about \$3,000,000. The Government formerly issued treasury notes, but since the charter was granted to the Union Bank, about four years ago, no paper money can be issued except by it, and the Government is retiring its paper notes at the rate of about \$100,000 each year.

J. RICHARD WINGFIELD,  
*Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
San José, July 18, 1889.

## **COSTA RICA AND HER COMMERCE**

### **REPORT BY CONSUL MACKEY. OF SAN JOSE.**

#### **Geographical.**

Costa Rica, the most southern of the republics of Central America, the least populous, and, with the exception of Salvador, the smallest in territorial extent, is situated between 8° and 11° 16' north latitude and 81° 40' and 85° 40' west longitude.

The area of Costa Rica is estimated to be about 37,000 square miles, and its population about 250,000 souls. The surface of the country is mountainous and volcanic, but perhaps no country in the world is more generally and richly fertile. The climate of the coast is hot and unhealthy; that of the interior is perpetual spring.

#### **People**

The people are peaceful and prosperous, and are dedicated almost entirely to agricultural pursuits. Almost every man, however poor, has his little house and plat of land. Their habits are simple and their wants few. It is not uncommon to encounter a barefooted and illiterate countryman possessed of lands and money to the value of \$10,000, \$20,000, or \$30,000. These rustic magnates trudge unpretentiously in front of their lumbering ox-carts, like any hired laborer. They may be known by their sleek, well-kept oxen. As the Arab loves and cares for his steed, so does the rural Costa Rican love and care for his oxen.

#### **Railways**

All the towns of Costa Rica are connected by fairly good wagon roads. The railways from Limon to San José is completed as far as Carrillo, that is to say, within 20 miles of the capital. It is expected that this line will be open to traffic for the whole distance in August next.

The lines now completed and in use in Costa Rica are:

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 120-124

	<b>Miles.</b>
From San José to Cartago . . . . .	13
From San José to Alajuela . . . . .	13
From Punta Arenas to Esparta . . . . .	14
From Carrillo to Limon . . . . .	90
<b>Total . . . . .</b>	<b>130</b>

A concession has been granted to a London capitalist for construction of a railway from San José to Punta Arenas. The completion of this route will give Costa Rica railway communication from one ocean to the other, and will greatly increase commerce with California and the other States of the Pacific coast.

### **Mines**

Mines of gold, copper, and some little silver and lead are found in the country, and several of the gold mines are being developed, principally with English capital. As yet more money has entered these mines than has been extracted, but I believe that now several of them promise profitable returns. Mining is as yet an infant industry in Costa Rica, and the value of its mineral wealth is still problematic. The principal mines now in process of development are: La Trinidad, gold and silver; La Union, gold and silver; Santa Rita, gold; and Los tus Humans, gold. Most of the mines mentioned by Bernardo Calvo in his work on Costa Rica are not mentioned in the later mining statistics published by this Government, and have, no doubt, been abandoned.

### **Agriculture.**

*Coffee.*—The chief product and source of wealth of Costa Rica is coffee, and by far the larger part of the population of the country derives its support from the cultivation of this fragrant berry. The number of coffee trees in the Republic was calculated in 1888 to be 25,248,686, and the number of coffee estates, 7,607. Coffee lands near San José are held at \$1,000 an acre; but, at some distance from the principal towns, land for coffee planting may be purchased for \$500 an acre.

*Cacao.*—In 1888 the number of cacao trees was estimated at 56,426, and the number of cacao estates, 198, all of these of small extent.

*Bananas.*—The enterprise of Mr. Minor C. Keith has created the banana trade of Costa Rica. Mr.

Keith has established banana plantations along the line of the railway to Carrillo and exports nearly a million bunches of bananas annually from Limon to New Orleans. Mr. Keith is an intelligent, energetic and indefatigable American, the contractor for the construction of the railway from Limon to San José, and the promoter of various enterprises in Costa Rica which have resulted, not only in benefits to himself, but also to the country in which his enlightened industry has for years been expended.

*Various fruits and vegetables.*—A small quantity of potatoes, rice, and beans for home consumption is produced, and all the fruits and vegetables of the temperate and torrid zones may be grown successfully—those of the torrid regions on the coast and the products of the temperate zones in the higher

altitudes of the interior:

*Sugar.*—The cultivation of sugar and “dulce” (crude loaf-sugar) is profitable and has a growing future. The amount of sugar produced in 1889 was 1,368,000 pounds; of dulce, 18,454,000 pounds. The production of dulce in the year just ended was 5,049,200 pounds more than in the year preceding.

#### Imports and Exports.

The following statistics are taken from official sources. The values therein expressed are Costa Rican currency. The value of the dollar of Costa Rica as about 63 cents in United States gold. Costa Rica imported, in 1889, merchandise valued at \$6,306,408, as follows:

Whence imported.	Value.	Whence imported.	Value.
England . . . . .	\$1,862,280	Colombia . . . . .	\$335,934
Germany . . . . .	1229,340	Ecuador . . . . .	104,871
France . . . . .	569,697	Cuba . . . . .	40,411
Spain . . . . .	148,582	Central American states . . . . .	208,998
Italy . . . . .	24,015	United States . . . . .	1,780,156
Belgium . . . . .	2,124		

Here, as all over Mexico, Central America, and South America, complaint is made of the carelessness of our exporters in the packing of their merchandise and in filling orders in a manner at vari-

ance with the special directions of their customers.

Costa Rica exported, in 1889, various products valued at \$6,965,371, as follows:

Articles.	Value.	Articles.	Value.
Coffee . . . . .	\$6,186,656	Cedar . . . . .	\$10,046
Bananas . . . . .	569,020	Cocoa-nuts . . . . .	13,434
Hides . . . . .	56,823	Skins . . . . .	16,217
Rubber . . . . .	6,317	Fustic . . . . .	11,152
Mother-of-pearl . . . . .	10,002	Coin . . . . .	55,167
Cacao . . . . .	12,386	Sundries . . . . .	18,151

A comparison of the value of exports and imports during the year 1889 with that of 1888 shows an increase in the exports of \$1,251,579 and in the imports of \$1,104,486.

#### Chief Towns of Costa Rica.

*San José.*—San José, the capital and chief city of the Republic, is situated in the fertile valley of

the same name, about 65 miles from the Pacific coast and 100 miles from the Atlantic. The city is surrounded by lofty and picturesque mountains, whose sides are embroidered with coffee estates and green pastures. The streets are sufficiently broad, but the sidewalks are everywhere narrow and sometimes dwindle to nothing at all. The houses are after the style in vogue in all the countries south of the United States. They are usually built of stone or adobe, plastered without, and generally, except on the streets dedicated to commerce, are one story high. No buildings of more than two stories are ever erected.

No pretensions to architecture are made, and the buildings, public and private, churches excepted, may be described as four walls, a jutting roof of tiles, and a "patio" or interior court, around which the various apartments are grouped. The public buildings of San José are decent and commodious.

In the center of the city is a small but beautiful and luxuriant park, which is carefully kept in order, and is adorned with a sparkling fountain, the most brilliant tropical verdure, and birds of the gayest plumage.

The more important public edifices are the Presidential palace, the palace of the Government, the insane asylum, the museum, the "Fabrica de Licores", the cathedral, and the hospital of San Juan de Dios. The museum is a spacious edifice, containing an interesting collection of birds, animals, and Indian relics. The market is well constructed and occupies the whole of a large square, yet complain is made that it is too small to accommodate the crowds which throng there on market-day. Saturday is market-day, and is a day of noise and bustle in San José. From early morn is heard the heavy rumble of the ox-carts bringing the produce to town, and all day long the streets of the city are crowded with the country people and resound with the uproar of commerce.

Under the administration of Don Mauro Fernandez, late minister of foreign affairs and public instruction, a new impulse was given to the cause of education in Costa Rica. Under this enlightened scholar and publicist new colleges were founded, additional schools opened, those already in existence fostered and maintained, and large sums of public money expended in the laudable purpose of affording facilities for education to his youthful country-men. During his recent visit to the United States he occupied himself in the laborious, yet to him grateful, task of a minute and careful study of

our educational systems and institutions, that he might convert to the benefit of his birthplace these highest boons offered by modern progress.

There are at present in San José the Lyceum of Costa Rica, the Superior College for Girls, four public schools of primary instruction, a school of law, and a convent under the superintendence of nuns.

The population of San José is about 22,000.

*Other towns.*—The more important towns after the capital are Cartago, Heredia, Alajuela, Punta Arenas, and Limon. Punta Arenas, a town of 3,000 inhabitants, is the port on the Pacific coast of Costa Rica; Limon is the port of the Atlantic.

#### From the United States to Costa Rica.

Costa Rica may be reached either by the Atlas line of steamers from New York to Limon, or by an English line of steamers from New Orleans to Limon, or by the Pacific Mail steamers from Seattle, Portland, and San Francisco to Punta Arenas. These are the direct routes. One can also reach Costa Rica from New York by the Pacific Mail steamers to Colon. At Colon the passenger can decide whether he will transfer to a Royal Mail steamer and enter the country at Limon or cross to Panama, two hours and a half by rail, and there again embark in a vessel of the Pacific Mail and disembark at Punta Arenas, after two days on the Pacific. Should the traveler come by Punta Arenas, he will take the train to Esparta, 13 miles distant. At Esparta he mounts a mule and rides to San Mateo, where, if he has telegraphed beforehand, he will find a good supper and a clean bed; leaving San Mateo at day-break and riding leisurely through the mountains, he reaches Atenas at 10 a. m.; having breakfasted and rested until midday, he mounts his jaded mule and reaches Alajuela at 3 p.m., twenty-four hours after leaving Punta Arenas; at Alajuela he takes the train and in an hour is in San José.

Should the traveler disembark in Limon, then he enters the train and makes the journey to Carrillo by rail; from Carrillo to San José he must trust himself and baggage to the stubborn but steadfast and sure-footed mule. By both routes the scenery well repays the hardships of the way.

BECKFORD MACKEY,  
*Consul.*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
San José, April 30, 1890.

## CURRENCY AND FINANCES OF COSTA RICA.\*

Report by Consul Mackey, of San José.

### Gold as known to the aborigines.

The aborigines of Costa Rica never approximated the civilization attained by the Aztecs of Mexico, but were not without some degree of advancement, as is evidenced by their knowledge and use of gold. This was the region of Central America where the hardy and valiant, but grasping and cruel, discoverers first encountered the prime object of their explorations.

It is extremely improbable that the use of gold as a medium of exchange or measure of value was known to the simple tribes who peopled these countries; the precious metal was pleasing to the eye of the savage on account of its color and luster, and was modeled by them into rude images of bird, man, and beast, which were worn as ornaments. Many of these images, exhumed from ancient Indian graves, are still extant, and betray no small degree of skill.

### Gold, silver, and copper currency.

Costa Rica inherited her first currency from her Spanish invaders. This was the *macuquina* (called here more generally *cortadillo*), or cut coinage; which consisted of small pieces of copper, silver, and gold of irregular form stamped on one side with the arms of Spain and on the other with a cross. The *cortadillo* now exists only in the collections of the curious.

The first law establishing a national currency for Costa Rica after the expulsion of the Spaniards was that of 1823, which decreed the coinage of gold of the following denominations and values: The onza, \$16; the half-onza, \$8; the quarter-onza, \$4. The silver coinage was decreed to consist of the dollar, or peso, of the value of 8 reales.

The style prescribed by the above act was, on one side, a star surrounded with the inscription "Costa Rica Libre, 1821"; on the other, a palm crossed by a sword, a gun with bayonet fixed, and

a cannon below. Underneath, on the rim of the coin, was its value, legal standard, and name of the assayer.

No issue was made under this act, but later the currency of the denominations referred to was adopted, bearing on one side the arms of the Central American Federation, on the other a coffee-tree. The inscription on these coins was "Estado Libre de Costa Rica, America Central".

By the decree of December 1, 1841, the value of the onza was raised to \$18; in 1842 it was reduced to \$16, and in 1843 raised to \$17, which legal value it retains.

The onza was divided into half-onzas, quarter-onzas, escudos (one-eighth of an onza), and half-escudos (one-sixteenth of an onza).

The silver coinage was the dollar, or peso, 4 reales, a real, medios, and cuartillos.

By the decree of 1848 the currency of Costa Rica was established in the following form: The obverse of the gold coins displayed the arms of the country, the date of coinage, and the words "Republica de Costa Rica"; the reverse was stamped with the figure of an Indian girl armed with bow and arrows, the left arm resting on a pedestal; on the rim of the coin is inscribed the date of the independence (15th of September, 1821) and the words "America Central". The silver coins differed from the gold only in that on the reverse was stamped a coffee-tree.

The coins issued since 1864 do not contain the Indian figure, and their value is that of the decimal system, viz, \$10, \$5, \$2, and \$1 gold, and in silver pieces of 50 cents, 25 cents, 10 cents and 5 cents. Copper coins of the value of 1 cent and one-fourth of a cent were coined.

In 1848 the first constitutional President, Dr. José María Castro, distributed (by causing them to be thrown broadcast among the populace assembled on the plaza) an issue of reales (12 1/2 cents), coined for that purpose, in celebration of the adoption of the constitution.

The table here given sets forth the amount of coined money issued in Costa Rica from 1829 to 1886:

\*Tomado de: *Ibid.*, pp. 665-670

Denomination.	Date.	Amount.
<i>Gold.</i>		
Onzas . . . . .	1829 to 1844 . . . . .	\$188,634.00
Medias (one-half) onzas . . . . .	1829 to 1858 . . . . .	283,976.00
Cuartas (one-fourth) onzas . . . . .	1829 to 1863 . . . . .	514,829.25
Escudos (one-eighth) onzas . . . . .	1829 to 1857 . . . . .	146,862.00
Medias escudos (one-sixteenth) onzas . . . . .	1832 to 1864 . . . . .	94,452.12 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
\$10 pieces . . . . .	1870 to 1876 . . . . .	580,790.00
\$5 pieces . . . . .	1867 to 1876 . . . . .	385,490.00
\$5 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub> pieces . . . . .	1874 . . . . .	37,427.50
\$2 pieces . . . . .	1866 to 1876 . . . . .	30,432.00
Dollars . . . . .	1864 to 1872 . . . . .	88,915.00
Total . . . . .		2,351,807.87 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
<i>Silver.</i>		
Dollars . . . . .	1832 to 1844 . . . . .	2,176.00
50-cent pieces . . . . .	1865 to 1886 . . . . .	383,713.00
2-real pieces . . . . .	1849 to 1856 . . . . .	15,636.75
25-cent pieces . . . . .	1864 to 1886 . . . . .	121,401.75
Reals . . . . .	1832 to 1856 . . . . .	48,906.25
Half-reals . . . . .	1841 to 1862 . . . . .	15,184.93 <sup>3</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
Cuartillos . . . . .	1845 . . . . .	443.18 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>4</sub>
10-cent pieces . . . . .	1865 to 1886 . . . . .	64,752.40
5-cent pieces . . . . .	do . . . . .	38,369.70
Total . . . . .		690,583.97
<i>Copper.</i>		
Cents . . . . .	1866 to 1874 . . . . .	1,681.91 <sup>1</sup> / <sub>2</sub>
Quarter-cents . . . . .		
Grand Total . . . . .		3,044,073.76

Since the year 1876 no gold has been coined, and from 1886 to 1890 there has been no coinage of silver. During the present year Costa Rica contracted to have coined in England the following sums of silver:

50-cent pieces . . . . .	\$103,824
25-cent pieces . . . . .	101,130
10-cent pieces . . . . .	26,000
5-cent pieces . . . . .	27,056

On account of an error in the weight of these coins the Government has ordered their recoinage in the national mint.

There is no gold now in circulation in Costa Rica. By far the greater part of all coined has been exported, and the remainder is either in the coffers of the banks, from whence it does not emerge, or in the possession of the rural population, who zealously hide it from the light of day. The amount held by the banks is estimated at

\$400,000. No silver dollars are now in circulation or, perhaps, in existence. The amount of silver coin in circulation is said to be \$2,142,326. The silver fractional currency now in use is of a standard so base as to be useless as a medium of international commerce. The copper coins have almost entirely disappeared from circulation. I have never encountered those of quarter-cent, and the 1-cent pieces I have seen in use only at the post-office for making change in the purchase of stamps.

Costa Rican gold is at a premium of 25 per cent. over the silver and paper currency of the country. The value of foreign currency with relation to the currency of the country is established by law at the following rates: English pounds, 9 per cent. premium; Spanish gold, 9 per cent. premium; French gold, 8 3/4 per cent. premium; Colombian, Peruvian, Mexican, and Guatemalan gold, 8 1/2 per cent. premium; United States gold, 12 1/2 per cent. premium.

In practice the above law is a dead letter, for English gold commands a premium of from 35 to 50 per cent., and American gold from 45 to 60 per cent., on the national currency. Mexican and Peruvian silver dollars are always at a premium of from 15 to 30 per cent. Foreign exchange fluctuates within the limits above mentioned, being usually at the highest point in August and September, and the lowest in December and January, of each year.

#### Paper currency.

Official statistics show the amount of paper currency in circulation to be \$2,809,491, of which sum \$857,483 are treasury notes and \$1,952,008 are notes of the Banco de la Unión. No emission of paper money was made by the Government of Costa Rica until the administration of Don Jesus

Jimenez, who was elected President of the Republic in 1863. The amount of treasury notes emitted under the administration of President Jimenez did not exceed \$200,000. Later, various administrations have issued about \$1,900,000 in paper currency.

In 1884 the Government deprived itself of the right to issue paper currency for the period of ten years, granting that privilege solely and exclusively to the Banco de la Unión, and authorizing the said bank to issue notes to the value of four times its capital. The bank is organized with a capital of \$1,000,000 and is therefore permitted to emit \$4,000,000 in notes.

The profits of this institution, in consequence of this extraordinary privilege, have been enormous, its stock paying a dividend of more than 20 per cent. per annum. The notes in circulation are of the denomination of \$100, \$50, \$25, \$10, \$5, \$2, and \$1, respectively, and circulate at par with the national silver currency in every part of the Republic.

#### Foreign and interior debt.

No country enjoys more wide-spread and general prosperity than this diminutive Republic. Possessing a fertile soil adapted to the production of the most valuable articles of commerce, an ideal climate in many parts of its territory, a law-abiding and contented people, and exempted from the frequent ravages of internecine wars, which have cursed and retarded so many of the Spanish American republics, Costa Rica has steadily advanced in wealth and civilization.

The foregoing statement is mathematically demonstrated by the following table of receipts and outlays from 1824 to 1889:

Years.	Receipts.	Expenditures.
1824 .....	\$14,751.00	\$14,243.00
1840 .....	117,164.00	67,992.00
1879-'80 .....	2,525,726.12	3,158,823.72
1886-'87 .....	2,883,752.03	2,772,315.07
1887-'88 .....	3,582,815.87	3,305,547.57
1888-'89 .....	4,151,584.64	3,939,997.75

The foreign debt of Costa Rica was contracted in 1871 and 1872 by loans effected in England to construct railways from the Atlantic to the Pacific. In 1885 this debt attained the sum of \$26,218,425.40, of which amount Costa Rica actually received the magnificent proportion of \$4,877,865.56, and, in consequence, instituted suit in London against the bankers who negotiated the loan. The Government expended half a million of money in this suit without beneficial results.

In 1885 Mr. Minor C. Keith, an intelligent and energetic American, effected an arrangement by which this debt was reduced to £ 2,000,000, on which the Government pays an interest of 5 per cent. since the year 1888. Payment of the foreign debt is to begin in 1897, and both interest and principal are guarantied by the customs revenues. Costa Rican bonds are quoted in London at 90 and 92 per cent.

The interior debt, according to the report of the ministro de hacienda for 1890, is \$2,712,397.82, which sum includes the treasury notes (\$857,483) still in circulation.

The public debt has been diminished by nearly \$6,000,000 during the last four years, and there is no doubt that under the present honest and economical administration of the government it will be greatly reduced.

#### Sources of revenue.

Costa Rica derives her revenue from duties on importations, from the tobacco and liquor monopolies, the sale of public lands, a tax on animals slaughtered for the market, licenses for the sale of foreign liquors, the registration of properties and mortgages, stamps, and the products of a few miles of railway and quite an extensive telegraph system. The owners of real estate in the towns are taxed for maintaining the municipal police, for the water supply, and for street lighting. All persons in the Republic over twenty years of age are obliged to pay \$1 per annum for maintenance and improvement of the public roads. The customs duties on importations produce the largest revenue to the State, and the income from this source is characterized by a steady and continued increase every succeeding year.

The late secretary of the treasury, Don Ricardo Jimenez, in his report to Congress for the year 1890, remarks, with pardonable pride, that one of the chief obstacles encountered by Mr. Keith in his mission to England for the purpose of adjusting

the foreign debt was the difficulty of convincing the creditors that the revenue derived from import duties in Costa Rica would attain the annual sum of £ 100,000; yet the duties collected at the custom-houses during the fiscal year 1889 were \$1,807,100.98, and in one month of the same year were sufficient to pay 44 per cent. of the annual interest on this debt.

The following statement shows the annual increase of revenue from duties on imports:

1886 .....	\$807,801.44
1887 .....	1,302,741.24
1888 .....	1,707,584.92
1889 .....	1,807,100.98

The Government reserves to itself the monopoly of the distilling and manufacturing of liquors and alcohol, and from this source derives a considerable revenue.

The returns from the liquor monopoly during the fiscal year 1889-90 were \$1,402,160.33, an increase of \$265,306.89 over the preceding year. From the monopoly of tobacco the Government received in the same year \$597,844.94, an increase of nearly \$40,000 over the preceding year.

Revenues obtained from minor sources heretofore stated also exceeded the income for 1888-'89 by \$444,713.88. The revenue derived from the sale of public lands is inconsiderable. The Government counts among its assets a third part of the stock of the Costa Rica Railway, which road, from Limon to the capital, will be completed in two or three months. The value of this stock is considered sufficiently great to discharge the interior debt of the country at a day's notice.

In conclusion, I may say the financial policy of Costa Rica is honest, economical, and benevolently paternal, for the State is ever ready to contribute to the support of charitable and educational institutions and many objects of public utility and advantage, which by other governments are relegated to the municipalities or to private individuals.

BECKFORD MACKEY,  
*Consul*

UNITED STATES CONSULATE,  
San José, October 24, 1890.

**COSTA RICA: TRADE IN 1901.\***

I transmit the following report on the commerce and industries of Costa Rica for the year 1901:

*Imports by countries and percentage of each.*

[Value in American gold.]

Countries.	Value.	Percentage.
United States . . . . .	\$1,803,834.91	46.77
Great Britain . . . . .	841,943.90	21.83
Germany . . . . .	520,670.76	13.50
France . . . . .	208,425.35	5.43
Spain . . . . .	122,104.16	3.14
Italy . . . . .	118,404.38	3.07
Other countries . . . . .	241,436.96	6.26
Total . . . . .	3,856,820.42	100.00

## Imports not included in above:

Live stock (from Nicaragua and Colombia) . . . . .	165,583.25
Coined Costa Rica "colones" equivalent to . . . . .	74,581.35
American gold imported by United Fruit Company . . . . .	313,000.00
Bullion for use in industries . . . . .	437.43

**EXPORTS.**

[Value in American gold.]

Coffee . . . . .	\$2,823,291.32
Bananas . . . . .	1,532,581.78
Cedar, mahogany, and dyewoods . . . . .	245,534.64
Hides and skins . . . . .	109,846.00
Rubber . . . . .	76,293.10
Cacao . . . . .	9,052.00
Live stock . . . . .	14,000.00
Gold bullion (returns probably incomplete) . . . . .	132,707.75
Other articles . . . . .	22,385.44
By parcels post and baggage . . . . .	11,096.67
Total . . . . .	4,976,788.70

Exports not included above:

Returned goods . . . . .	17,558.69
Coined gold . . . . .	549,701.48
Silver coined and in bars . . . . .	39,149.04

\*Tomado de:

*Commercial Relations of the United States with other countries, 1901*, pp. 1137-1142.

In the percentage of imports, as compared with 1900, the relative positions of the leading nations remain the same. The United States, England, and Spain have slightly decreased, while Germany and Italy have made a small advance. France remains practically stationary. Italy's total is small, but its relative increase is very great, being over 80 per cent.

### Imports.

The value of imports is over \$1,000,000 less than in 1900. In April last, a new tariff schedule was adopted, or rather all existing duties were increased 50 per cent. In anticipation of this increase, the importations in the first months of the year were heavy. But during the last half of the year, the imports greatly decreased. Another reason, and the principal one, is the prevailing low price of coffee, the principal crop of the country. The value of the coffee for the four years, 1898-1901, compared with the preceding four years, 1894-1897, shows a falling off of some \$24,000,000. Also, since the establishment of the gold standard in July, 1900, exchange has fallen many points. Compared with 1899, the coffee growers, when drawing against their shipments, must face a fall of some 80 per cent in exchange, while the price of labor has not decreased more than 25 per cent. During the present season, I am told, some are paying the same wages as in 1899. Other expenses of cultivation and the general cost of living are practically the same. Thus an increase in duties on imported goods has occurred at a time when there is less money than usual with which to buy. The increase in duties and the depressed condition of the coffee industry no doubt account for the decline in importations.

The classes of goods imported from the United States are in the main the same as in recent years—canned goods, mess pork and bacon, flour, machinery and hardware, cotton prints, denims, etc. dynamite, caps and fuse, kerosene, drugs, paints and oils, and boots and shoes. No special fault is found with the packing of American goods, though the interior packing is sometimes not as carefully done as is desirable. I again call attention to the fact that all duties in Costa Rica are levied by gross weight, and therefore care should be taken to make the packing box or case as light as is consistent with strength. Cotton prints and similar grades of goods should be shipped in bales rather than in boxes. Goods shipped from San Francisco

to San José must be brought from Puntarenas, the Pacific port, the greater part of the way in ox carts. The size and weight of the box is an important factor in the overland freight.

A feature of the import trade of 1901 is the increased importation from Italy of cheap cotton goods, and some small articles, such as hats, umbrellas, and parasols, which formerly came from Germany and England.

### Exports.

Of the exports, not over 20 per cent of the coffee is sent to the United States, the rest going to Europe; by far the greater part to London. Of the rubber exported, perhaps two-thirds goes to the United States, and a still larger proportion of the hides. All the bananas exported are shipped from Limon to New Orleans and New York.

The banana industry is in a flourishing condition. The number of bunches shipped in 1901 was 3,870,156, valued at \$1,532,581.58. This is the largest exportation in the history of the industry in Costa Rica. The business is wholly in the hands of the United Fruit Company. This company not only owns extensive plantations, but it also makes contracts with other growers at a fixed price per bunch for a term of years.

### Railways.

The Pacific Railroad, in process of construction from San José to a point on the Pacific, is completed and in operation as far as Rio Grande, a distance of 25 miles, and is doing considerable business. A second engine and several new cars have recently been ordered from the United States. The bridge over the Rio Grande, to which reference was made in my last annual report,<sup>a</sup> is now almost completed and in a few weeks trains will be able to cross. This bridge is the longest in Central America and is by far the most difficult engineering work on the line. The roadbed is graded for about 15 miles beyond the Rio Grande, and the laying of the rails will be a matter of only a short time. This road is being constructed by two American contractors and is owned by the Costa Rica Government.

The San José Electric Light and Traction Company has extended its street railway line about 2 miles to a suburb east of the city. The road is well kept up and the service is first-class.

About 15 miles of banana railway has been laid by the United Fruit Company in the banana region on the Atlantic coast.

All material for these lines comes from the United States.

• Commercial Relations, 1900, Vol. I; Appendix.

### Mining.

The mining industry is progressing steadily. The Abangares gold fields and the Thayer Mining and Milling Company, both American companies, are making plans for increased plant and are steadily pushing development work. A number of properties in the Aguacate district, probably the richest mineral region in the Republic, have recently been consolidated, and a new company is in process of formation to work them. The company is to be chartered in the United States and will have a large capital. A number of prominent men, both native and foreign, are connected with this enterprise. Several other new companies are in process of formation, and the present year bids fair to show greatly increased activity in mining operations.

### Steamship lines.

The Hamburg-American Steamship Company maintains a line of steamers between New York and Limon. Steamers leave New York every Saturday, touching at Kingston, Jamaica, Savanilla, and Cartagena, in Colombia, and each alternate steamer at Greytown, Nicaragua. They leave Limon every Monday for New York direct, one steamer calling at Kingston each month. Time on outward passage, fourteen days; on homeward passage, eight days.

The United Fruit Company runs steamers between Limon and New Orleans and Mobile. They leave New Orleans Fridays and Limon Thursdays. Two or three other steamers of this company run each week, at irregular dates. The average is three or four steamers a week to New Orleans and one a week to Mobile. Time, five days.

On the Pacific side, the Pacific Mail Company has three steamers a month from Puntarenas to San Francisco. There is also a Chilean line of steamers to San Francisco, running two or three steamers a month, and a German line runs steamers at irregular dates. These lines touch at Mexican and Central American ports. Time, about twenty days.

### *Maritime movement for 1901.*

#### ENTRANCES AT LIMON.

Nationality.	Number.	Registered tonnage.
STEAMER.		
British . . . . .	{ 127	185,789
	a1	2,500
American . . . . .	62	20,732
Norwegian . . . . .	43	25,223
Swedish . . . . .	23	14,344
French . . . . .	21	32,503
German . . . . .	63	88,569
Austrian . . . . .	a1	2,350
Italian . . . . .	2	2,671
Spanish . . . . .	11	22,671
Danish . . . . .	14	19,863
Nicaraguan . . . . .	1	50
Costa Rican . . . . .	2	88

## SAILING VESSELS.

British . . . . .	7	171
American . . . . .	<sup>b</sup> 8	5,902
Nicaraguan . . . . .	3	6
Honduras . . . . .	3	37
Colombian . . . . .	8	125
Costa Rican . . . . .	16	185
Total . . . . .	415	423,759

<sup>a</sup>Man of war.<sup>b</sup>Barges.*Maritime movement for 1901—Continued.*

## ENTRANCES AT PUNTARENAS.

## STEAMERS.

British . . . . .	51	67,088
American . . . . .	55	97,751
Chilean . . . . .	33	48,459
German . . . . .	<sup>a</sup> 1	3,500
Austrian . . . . .	8	17,943
	<sup>a</sup> 1	2,340

## SAILING VESSELS.

British . . . . .	2	2,055
Norwegian . . . . .	9	8,741
German . . . . .	6	4,854
Italian . . . . .	1	1,399
Danish . . . . .	1	1,050
Colombian . . . . .	2	52
Costa Rican . . . . .	1	14
Total . . . . .	171	255,226

<sup>a</sup>Man-of-war.

## RECAPITULATION.

	En- trances.	Tonnage.
Limon . . . . .	415	423,759
Puntarenas . . . . .	171	255,226
Total . . . . .	586	678,985

*Movement of passengers for 1901.*

	En- trances.	Depar- tures.
Limon . . . . .	5,071	2,921
Puntarenas . . . . .	636	702
Total . . . . .	5,707	3,623

Difference in favor of entrances, 2,084.

A very large number of these passengers consist of negro laborers from Jamaica.

From Limon, there are four lines of steamers to Europe: The Royal Mail, English; the Hamburg-American, German; a French and a Spanish line. Each maintains a monthly service. The American tonnage at Limon is made up of the steamers of the United Fruit Company, and of several small launches running along the coast.

#### **Gold standard.**

The gold standard has been steadily maintained. Exchange has at times risen above the exporting point, and, as appears in the list of exports above given, a considerable quantity of gold has been exported. The shipment has probably been larger than the figures indicate. The provision of the law requiring import duties to be paid in gold tends to prevent excessive exportation, and the American gold imported by the fruit company also helps to preserve the equilibrium. All indications are that the gold standard is permanently established.

#### **Exchange.**

Exchange during the year has ranged from the par, 215 (\$1 Costa Rica = \$0.465 American gold; \$1 American gold = 2.15 colones) to 222; average, 217 or 218.

By the terms of the law which established the gold standard, the American dollar, the English sovereign, French franc, and German mark were slightly undervalued. By a decree of February 18 of the present year these coins are in future to be taken at their par value, viz, dollar = 2.15 colones, sovereign = 10.45 colones, franc = 0.4125 colones, mark = 0.51 colones.

JOHN C. CALDWELL,  
*Consul,*

SAN JOSE, February 28, 1902.