

# Oil Production in Latin America



R. D. Oilar

BY ROZIER D. OILAR

The Editors, OIL & SOAP.

Dear Sirs:

A few notes on oil and fat production in Latin American countries may be of interest to your readers. The undersigned has spent several years in Mexico and in virtually every country of South America, enabling him to offer the following comment.

Activity in the vegetable oil and related industries in Latin American countries, particularly in Mexico, Peru and Brazil, has been considerable in recent years. It is a fact generally unknown in the United States that Mexico has one of the largest cottonseed oil mills in the world, with forty hydraulic presses, having capacity for crushing six hundred tons of cottonseed daily.

Cotton is grown in almost every country of South America, in Mexico and on the islands of the Caribbean. There is also production of many other oil-bearing seeds in addition to the cottonseed. An interesting salad oil was produced by me on one of the islands. It was made from oil of lime seeds and after refining and bleaching it still retained its characteristic lime flavor which was very agreeable in a salad oil.

Among the many oil-bearing seeds commonly

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Rozier D. Oilar, Chemical Engineer, of West Lafayette, Indiana, has recently returned from Mexico, where for more than two years past he has been engaged in the installation and operation of edible oil, shortening, margarine and soap plants. His most recent work was the installation of a complete mill and refinery operating on coconut oil. He has also remodeled several vegetable oil plants on the west coast of Mexico.

Mr. Oilar, a graduate of Purdue University, was at one time employed by the American Cotton Oil Company, and more recently has spent some years as a consultant in the vegetable oil, soap and dairy industries in South America. He recently completed a course in Dairying Industry at his Alma Mater.

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grown or found in the wild state, or both, in Latin America are: cottonseed, kapoc seed, sesflower seed, palm, cohune, babassu and coquito amum seed, peanuts, wild radish seed, sunnits, coconuts, castor beans and others. Only a small amount of corn oil is produced and no tung (wood) oil or soy bean oil to my knowledge. Very small quantities of animal oils or fats are produced, much lard being imported everywhere to meet a large demand, but considerable fish oil and marine animal oils are produced in some of the countries. Mexico, particularly, is now taking note of the growing importance of these oils, including whale and shark oils.

Vegetable shortenings or compounds, "manteca compuesta," are growing in favor in the southern countries, new plants being installed each year for their manufacture. Manufacturing technique is generally very satisfactory, particularly when United States machinery and methods are adopted. Each Latin country fosters its native products through protective tariffs—Mexico has this year doubled all import duties on fatty oils, their products and oil-bearing seeds. Cuba and Honduras also have particularly high duties.

The general class of labor obtainable in these

countries, once the workers learn their duties, is on the average as efficient in carrying on the work of oil mill or refinery as is the same type of workers in the United States. When semi-skilled labor is required, there is generally some one among them who can be trained to do the work efficiently. Machinists, steamfitters and other repair and construction mechanics are generally very capable, as their work gives them a vent for their native Latin artistic capacity. Naturally local methods in each country will differ somewhat from those of the United States. Labor laws are much more in evidence and in every case more favorable to

the employe than to the employer, being socialistic in trend.

Most of the countries prefer machinery from the United States, but due to our higher prices, much of their oil-working machinery is imported from Europe. The same is true of refined oils and fats. Because of the growing import tariff restrictions Latin American countries are becoming more and more self-dependent with regard to the manufactured products of the vegetable oil industry and are importing less of these commodities each succeeding year.

Yours very truly,

ROZIER D. OILAR.

The United States Circuit Court of Appeals upheld the decision of Judge Lindley dismissing an injunction suit against the Wisconsin State Tax Commission brought by Palmolive Peet Co., in which the latter sought to escape paying a \$200,000 income tax on its Milwaukee plant.

Celowax, a wax with a wide spread between

its softening and melting points, for use in candles, polishes, crayons, cosmetics, etc., has just been introduced by the Glyco Products Company. It is a light yellow to white in color, and is said by the manufacturers to be more soluble in hydrocarbons and chlorinated solvents than other waxes.

## United States Import of Vegetable Oils, January, 1932

	Pounds	Value
<i>Edible Oils—</i>		
Sunflower seed oil.....	13,631,198	\$334,226
Olive oil, pkgs. less 40 lbs.....	3,324,716	353,835
Olive oil other, edible.....	3,961,060	271,366
Palm kernel oil edible.....	.....	.....
Peanut oil.....	285,530	14,164
Other edible vegetable oils.....	262,556	10,654
<i>Inedible Oils—</i>		
Tung oil.....	4,288,594	242,023
Coconut oil.....	19,376,139	545,624
Palm oil.....	19,600,380	633,400
<i>Inedible Oils for Mechanical and Industrial Purposes—</i>		
Olive oil, sulphured or foots.....	4,813,158	183,533
Olive oil, other inedible.....	1,403,885	30,803
Rapeseed oil, gallons.....	36,588	12,631
Palm kernel oil, inedible.....	56,337	2,731
Sesame oil.....	.....	.....
Rapeseed oil, gallons.....	14,659	6,524
Linseed oil.....	98	9
Soya bean oil.....	390	78
Perilla oil.....	449,120	15,434
Other expressed oils, free.....	961,738	32,401
Other expressed oils, dutiable.....	152,025	9,007

Source—Statistical Division of the Department of Commerce.

Compiled by the Meats, Fats and Oils Section of the Foodstuffs Division.