

**INTERAMERICAN
GEOGRAPHICAL
READERS. A CENTRAL
AMERICAN JOURNEY**

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Interamerican Geographical Readers. A Central American Journey by Roger W. Babson

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ROGER W. BABSON

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A typical Central American country scene.

Interamerican Geographical Readers

A Central American Journey

By Roger W. Babson

*Member of United States Commission to
Central America in 1916; President of
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Author of "Business Barometers,"
"The Future" Series, etc.*



Illustrated with engravings
maps and original drawings

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1920

PREFACE

THE attempt to combine in the form of a story for children an account of travel in the various countries of Central America and certain information on our commercial relations with these countries needs a word of explanation. The second of the two elements may seem, at first sight, to have no place in a book for young readers; for the commerce of today is so many-sided and complex in its operations, it depends for its success on so many elements in agricultural, political, and financial conditions, that the subject might well seem too involved for the understanding even of Macaulay's often quoted schoolboy.

It must be remembered, however, that salesmanship is the romance of today, and the linking of nation with nation, the world over, by friendly trade relations is the romance of the immediate future. Children hear their parents, older brothers, and uncles talk of some successful adventure in salesmanship as the youngsters of a past generation heard of the settlement of the Great West and the voyages of daring Yankee merchantmen to the Orient. It will be found that the subject of commerce has in itself great possibilities of interest for boys and girls.

Successful commerce, as our exporters have found out, must take into account an element which is not down in tables of statistics, which has never been reduced to a formula — and that is human nature. Every business transaction is a human relation. Every time an exporter receives an order from a ranchero in Guatemala or a dealer in a coast city of San Salvador, every time he sends out a consignment of shoes, or barbed wire, or

striped drilling, or oil stoves, to some remote mountain locality of a little-known country, his success in the transaction depends a great deal upon what he knows of the people to be supplied and of their ways and wishes.

The foregoing facts were most forcibly brought home to the author in the course of a journey made in the spring of 1916 as a member of the Central American Commission appointed by W. G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, under the direction of the President. It was on this journey that the idea occurred to him of writing a story to set forth the unique conditions and picturesque features of our trade with Central America. Considering that the commerce of the next fifty years will be in the hands of the boys and girls of today, it seemed well worth while to attempt a book that might help to give our young people a more sympathetic knowledge of one of the most important fields of our commercial relations.

It is the belief of the author that no successful trade relations can be established with any country on merely selfish principles. Action and reaction take place whenever one man has anything to do with another, whether they meet on a street corner or cable half around the globe. Unfairness begets unfairness, and fair dealing sooner or later insures fair dealing. The old saying that he who would have friends must show himself friendly is quite as true in the export business as it is in any other form of human association.

It is not the purpose of this little book to preach any particular business creed or establish any special theory in commercial dealing. Nevertheless, truth is truth, and no book not based on the truth is of much value in either prose or poetry, history or fiction. Every

American must desire that the American standard of business dealing, the American sense of honor, should be such as every American will be proud of. It rests with the boys now growing up to maintain what is fine and high and to root out, as far as they can, what is unwise and selfish in our business world.

In this story, the Carroll family, in their travels through Central America, see not only the beauty of mountain and valley, the quaint costumes of señorita, caballero or peón, but also the forces that help to make civilization. In the cities and towns of Central America they find people as interesting as any of their friends at home. They learn, as only the traveler can learn, the infinite variety and complexity of human life and the peculiar pleasure of adapting oneself to new conditions and making new friends where no friends were.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of the author's indebtedness to the President of Guatemala and to various other persons in official position in Central America who put at his disposal every opportunity for observation and for the gathering of information; also to Mr. John Barrett, Director-General of the Pan American Union, for valuable suggestions given. For assistance in adapting the material to the interests and the comprehension of boys and girls, thanks are due to Miss Louise Lamprey. The photographs which are used to illustrate the book have been gathered from many sources; the author wishes to acknowledge especially the kindness of the Pan American Union and the Washington Office of the Panama Canal in permitting the use of prints from their collection.

1. The first part of the document discusses the importance of maintaining accurate records of all transactions and activities. It emphasizes that proper record-keeping is essential for transparency and accountability, particularly in the context of public administration and financial management. The text highlights that records should be kept in a clear, organized, and accessible manner, ensuring that they can be easily reviewed and audited.

2. The second part of the document addresses the challenges associated with record-keeping, such as the volume of data, the complexity of information, and the risk of data loss or corruption. It suggests that implementing robust data management systems and protocols can help mitigate these risks and ensure the integrity and security of the records. Additionally, it stresses the importance of regular backups and disaster recovery plans to protect against potential data loss.

3. The third part of the document focuses on the role of record-keeping in decision-making and strategic planning. It argues that well-maintained records provide valuable insights into trends, patterns, and performance metrics, which can inform policy decisions and resource allocation. The text also notes that records can serve as a historical reference, allowing organizations to learn from past experiences and make more informed choices in the future.

4. The fourth part of the document discusses the legal and regulatory requirements for record-keeping. It mentions that various laws and regulations, such as the Freedom of Information Act and the Records Management Act, impose specific obligations on organizations regarding the retention, access, and disposal of records. Compliance with these requirements is crucial to avoid legal penalties and ensure the organization's operations are lawful.

5. The fifth part of the document explores the impact of record-keeping on organizational culture and employee behavior. It suggests that a strong emphasis on record-keeping can foster a culture of transparency and accountability, where employees are more likely to document their work and share information. This, in turn, can lead to improved collaboration, productivity, and overall organizational performance.

6. The sixth part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in crisis management and disaster recovery. It notes that having up-to-date and accurate records is essential for quickly assessing the impact of a crisis, identifying the root cause, and implementing effective recovery strategies. Records can also be used to document the response and recovery process, providing valuable lessons learned for future incidents.

7. The seventh part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in public relations and communication. It suggests that well-maintained records can help organizations respond quickly and accurately to media inquiries and public concerns. This can enhance the organization's reputation and build trust with the public. Additionally, records can be used to track and analyze communication trends, allowing organizations to tailor their messaging and improve their public relations efforts.

8. The eighth part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in research and innovation. It notes that records of research activities, experiments, and findings are essential for the advancement of knowledge and the development of new technologies. Well-organized records can facilitate the sharing of information, collaboration between researchers, and the replication of experiments, all of which are critical for scientific progress.

9. The ninth part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in environmental management and sustainability. It suggests that records of environmental data, such as emissions, resource usage, and compliance with regulations, are essential for monitoring and improving an organization's environmental performance. This information can be used to identify areas for improvement, set targets, and report on progress to stakeholders.

10. The tenth part of the document discusses the role of record-keeping in human resources management. It notes that records of employee performance, training, and development are essential for making informed decisions about hiring, promotion, and compensation. Well-maintained records can also help organizations track and analyze workforce trends, allowing them to better manage their human capital and improve their overall organizational effectiveness.

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