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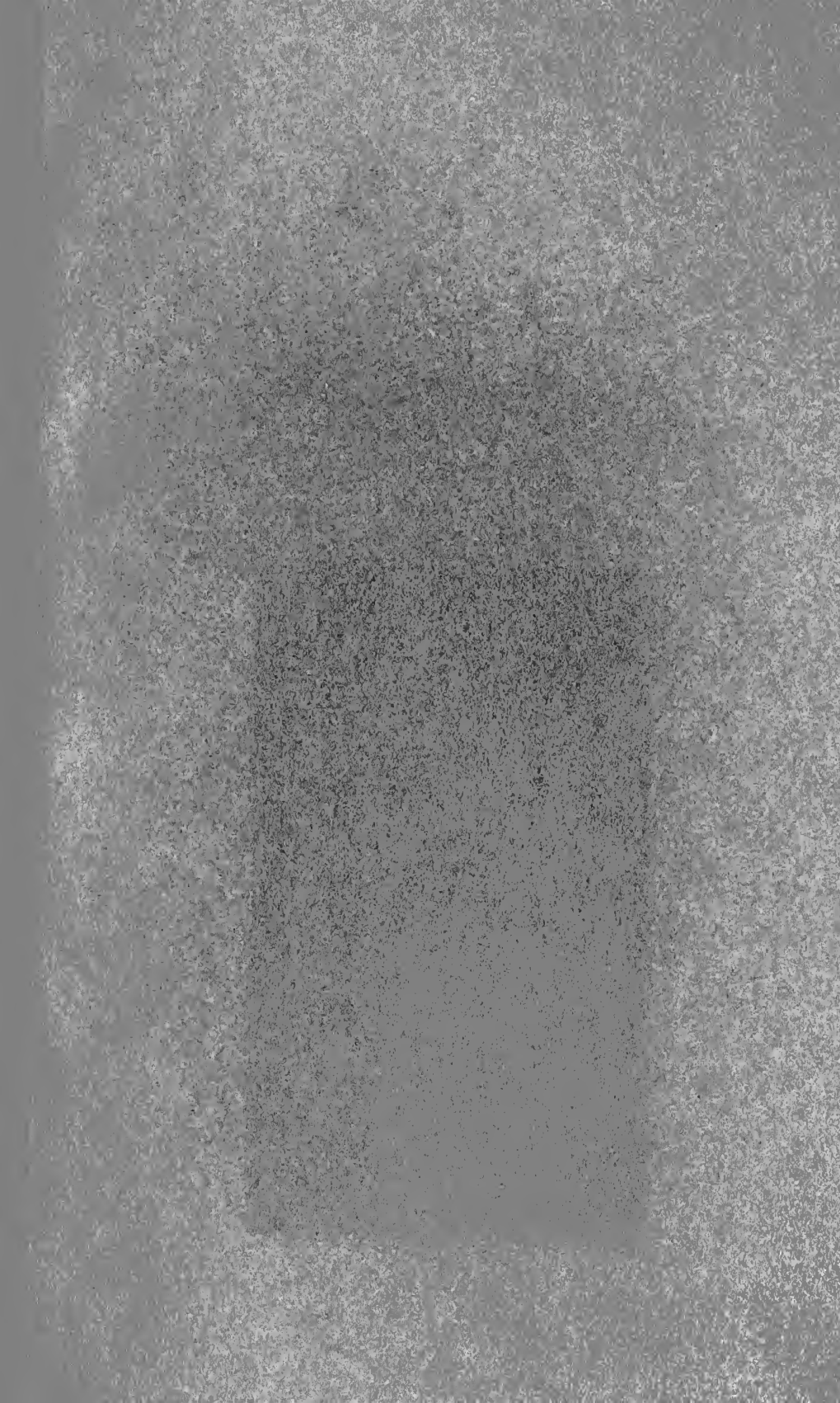
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# SALVADOR

GENERAL DESCRIPTIVE DATA

PREPARED IN JUNE

1909



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

1909



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# SALVADOR

The Republic of El Salvador, sometimes erroneously called San Salvador, the name of its capital, is the smallest of the 21 American Republics. It is the only one of the Central American States lying wholly on the Pacific Ocean and is bordered on the land side by Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua. Salvador has an area of 7,225 square miles, somewhat less than the State of New Jersey, and enjoys the distinction of being the most densely populated country on the American Continent, with 1,707,000 inhabitants, or 236 per square mile, which is more than ten times the population per square mile of the United States of America (23.2), and nearly equal to that of Italy.

Two mountain chains cross the country almost in its entire length, sending out numerous spurs and attaining considerable altitudes. Inclosed by these ranges are numerous valleys, among which that of the River Lempa is the most important. Coffee, cacao, tobacco, indigo, india rubber, and the so-called "Peruvian balsam," the product of the *Myroxylon pereiræ*, are the most important products. Gold and silver are at present the only mineral products exported.

## HISTORICAL SKETCH.

When Cortez had completed the conquest of Mexico, he dispatched his lieutenants in all directions to explore the country to the south and bring it under the Spanish domain. To PEDRO ALVARADO fell the task of exploring what is now the Republic of Salvador, and in the year 1524 he invaded the country, defeated the natives, and early in the year 1525 captured their capital, Cuscatlan. Salvador then became a part of the captain-generalcy of Guatemala and later of the vice-royalty of Mexico. It was governed by the Spanish authorities residing in Guatemala City.

Although Salvador suffered less from Spanish rule than some of the other countries, being farther removed from the central seat of authority, it nevertheless gladly adhered to the movement for independence, which had been initiated in Guatemala on September 15. 1821, and joined the Central American Federation. When the federation was incorporated into the Mexican Empire, in the year fol-

lowing, Salvador protested vehemently against this annexation, and a resolution was adopted by which the people declared themselves in favor of annexation to the United States rather than to Mexico. On the fall of ITURBIDE's short-lived empire in 1822, Salvador became once more a State of the Central American Federation.

A constituent congress adopted a constitution on November 22, 1824. In 1839 the Central American Federation was dissolved, but it was not until the year 1841 that Salvador formally withdrew, and on February 18 of that year declared its independence and separation from the federation. The various efforts to reestablish the union which have been made from time to time have not been successful.

GEN. FERNANDO FIGUEROA was inaugurated as President of the Republic on March 1, 1907, for four years.

#### CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNMENT.

The constitution of Salvador now in force was promulgated on August 13, 1886.

The legislative power is vested in the National Assembly, composed of one chamber, called the National Assembly of Deputies. It has 42 members, 3 deputies being elected for each Department by direct popular vote for a term of one year. Every citizen over 18 years of age is not only entitled but obliged to vote.

The President and Vice-President of the Republic are elected by popular vote for a term of four years. A Cabinet of four Ministers or Secretaries assists the President in the administration of the affairs of the country. Its members are appointed by the President, but are also responsible to the National Assembly.

The judiciary of the country is composed of a National Supreme Court, several courts of first and second instance, and a number of minor courts. The justices of the Supreme Court are elected by the National Assembly for a term of two years and the judges of the first and second instance are appointed by the Supreme Court for a term of two years. The justices of the minor courts are elected by popular vote.

#### INTERIOR GOVERNMENT.

The Republic is divided politically into 14 Departments, subdivided into districts, and these into towns and municipalities. The governors of the Departments are appointed by the President for a term of four years, as are also the executive chiefs of the districts. The mayors and municipal councils of the cities are elected by direct vote.

The Departments of El Salvador and their respective capitals are:

	Capital.
San Salvador.....	San Salvador (also the capital of the Republic).
La Libertad.....	Santa Tecla.
Sonsonate.....	Sonsonate.
Ahuachapan.....	Ahuachapan.
Santa Ana.....	Santa Ana.
Chalatenango.....	Chalatenango.
Cuscatlan.....	Cojutepeque.
Cabañas.....	Sensuntepeque.
San Vicente.....	San Vicente.
La Paz.....	Zacatecoluca.
Usulután.....	Usulután.
San Miguel.....	San Miguel.
Morazan.....	San Francisco.
La Union.....	La Union.
President.....	Gen. FERNANDO FIGUEROA.
Minister of Foreign Affairs and Justice.....	Dr. SALVADOR RODRIGUEZ G.
Minister of the Treasury and Public Credit.....	Señor D. MANUEL LOPEZ MENCIA, <i>pro tem.</i>
Minister of Public Instruction, Public Works, and Government.....	Dr. NICOLAS ANGULO.
Minister of War and Marine.....	Dr. EUSEBIO BRACAMONTE, <i>Assistant Secretary.</i>

The salary of the President is \$9,600 per annum.

## SALVADOR IN 1908.

Gen. FERNANDO FIGUEROA, President of the Republic of Salvador, in his message to the Congress, delivered on February 20, 1909, spoke of the period of evolution through which the Republic was passing, stating that the Government had done its best to enable the country to enlarge its agricultural resources, increase the volume of its commerce, develop its arts and sciences, improve the customs and culture of its people, strengthen the good name of the nation abroad, and insure international and domestic justice in the affairs of the Republic. The results have been most gratifying.

The published returns of the trade for the year 1908 recorded an increase in total valuations amounting to \$500,000 as compared with the preceding year, the balance in favor of the Republic being over \$1,000,000. With the improvement of communication facilities with the United States a still further increase in the volume of commerce between the two countries is looked for.



SR. GENERAL FERNANDO FIGUEROA,  
PRESIDENT OF SALVADOR.

## FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

The relations of Salvador with the countries of Europe and America continue to be friendly and amicable, those with the United States being still further strengthened during the year by a Convention of Arbitration approved by the National Assembly of the Republic on May 1, 1909. Salvador participated in the Fifth Pan-American Medical Congress, which met in the neighboring Republic of Guatemala, early in 1908, in the inauguration of the Central American International Bureau in the city of Guatemala, on September 15, 1908, and in the opening of the Central American Court of Justice at Cartago, Costa Rica. Delegates were also sent to the First Central American Conference which met at the capital of Honduras on January 1, 1909. The next meeting of this body is fixed for January 1, 1910, at San Salvador.

On July 13, 1908, the Republic ratified all of the conventions of the Third Pan-American Conference, and on July 20 of the same year signed a naturalization treaty with the United States.

Foreign trade relations were strengthened by a commercial treaty with Germany concluded in April, 1908, the contracting parties agreeing to a most-favored-nation clause with reference to commercial, maritime, and consular matters.

The adherence of the Republic to the Universal Postal Union of Rome, May 26, 1906, was announced by decree dated May 22, 1908.

## FINANCE.

The financial condition of the country is very satisfactory, the credit of the nation at home and abroad having been strengthened by a judicious disbursement of the public funds. The debt of the Republic at the close of 1908 was reported as \$11,283,185, while the revenues for the year amounted to \$4,003,626, showing an increase over the year 1907 of \$752,861. As a result of the conservative administration of 1908 the Republic was enabled to enter upon the year 1909 with a credit balance of \$208,981. The budget law for the year 1908-9 estimates receipts at \$6,799,200 and disbursements at \$6,865,711. Estimated receipts are classified as follows: Imports, \$930,000; exports, \$717,862. Internal taxes: Liquors, \$937,500; stamps, \$86,250; miscellaneous, \$246,750; and proceeds of the £1,000,000 loan at 75 per cent are placed at \$3,375,000.

A decree of April 7, 1908, imposed a tax of one-half of 1 per cent on all sales of real estate in the Republic, the proceeds to be devoted to the construction of public works in accordance with the judgment of the departmental governors and the Executive.

## COMMERCE.

In its foreign commerce for the year 1908 Salvador enjoyed a period of prosperity, the total trade values reported amounting to \$10,028,237.48, of which imports figured for \$4,240,580.21 and exports for \$5,787,677.34, an increase in trade of over \$500,000 as compared with 1907, when imports amounted to \$3,440,721.23 and exports to \$6,065,383.88.

The leading countries of origin for imports, in the order of their importance, were Great Britain, United States, Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, and Honduras; the principal articles being cotton manufactured goods, hardware, flour, drugs and medicines, boots and shoes, silk fabrics, and woolen goods.

The countries of destination of the exports from the Republic during the year were: United States, \$1,984,000; Germany, \$993,221; France, \$971,813; Great Britain, \$429,003; Italy, \$243,762; and Austria, \$211,917. Of the coffee exported from the country, France takes something over 37 per cent; the United States, 18 per cent; Germany, 15 per cent; followed by Italy, Great Britain, Austria, and Spain in diminishing ratios.

Exports in the order of their importance were: Coffee, 55,215,110 pounds, \$3,899,430; minerals, 66,068 pounds, \$1,235,831; sugar, 7,042,178 pounds, \$251,076.75; indigo, 421,350 pounds, \$197,036.11; balsam, 143,678 pounds, \$77,473.86; other items shipped were hides, tobacco, rubber, and rice, aggregating 3,927,708 pounds, worth \$338,200. Shipments to the United States for the year amounted to \$1,984,000, showing a slight decrease as compared with 1907, when they amounted to \$2,018,459. For the same period the United States reports shipments to Salvador amounting to \$1,404,573, as compared with \$1,592,473 in 1907.

The shipments to the United States were made up in part as follows: Gold bullion, \$822,181; coffee, \$719,455; gold and silver, \$387,902; sugar, \$26,680; rubber, \$10,595; indigo and hides about \$10,000; and other articles in lesser valuations. Substantial gains were noted in shipments of gold and silver bullion, rubber, sugar, and indigo; balsam, copper, and miscellaneous items remaining stationary; while in hides and lead there was a considerable decline. As the development of the mining resources of the country increases, larger shipments of gold and silver bullion will undoubtedly be made to the United States. The coffee of the country has always found its best market in Europe.

## PRODUCTION AND INDUSTRIES.

The interests of the country are essentially agricultural, the principal crop being coffee, of which the annual output amounts to 37,500

tons, valued at approximately \$5,000,000. A number of articles are cultivated more or less extensively, among them cacao, rubber, balsam, sugar, indigo, tobacco, and bananas. Formerly cotton ranked as a crop of importance among the agricultural products of the Republic, about \$700,000 of this staple being exported, but shipments have gradually declined, the crop yielding in importance first to indigo and later to coffee. The forests of the Republic contain cabinet and hard woods of different grades and qualities, mahogany, cedar, mulberry, ironwood, walnut, and laurel; also dyewoods, barks, balsams, gums, and resins. Among the textile fibers produced are henequen, ramie, escobilla, cocoanut, and capulin.

Mining is a profitable branch of enterprise conducted to some extent in different sections. Numerous valuable deposits of copper, iron, lead, gold, and silver are being exploited, while other minerals have been located in different parts of the country. The richest mineral section of the Republic is the Department of Santa Ana, where numerous veins of iron, copper, lead, gold, and silver ores are known to exist, particularly lead and copper. Smelters in the district are few and the methods employed for treating the ore antiquated.

Of the gold-mining properties the San Sebastian, owned by an English company and situated in La Union, is reputed to be the richest. The Tabanco mine, the property of a French syndicate, the San Bartolo, Eva, and Copetillo, the latter properties being owned by American interests, also produce a high grade of ore. The San Miguel district contains several mines producing ore of high grade.

The manufacturing industries, though of less importance, have attained a degree of progress in the following articles: Fiber ropes and hammocks, cigars and cigarettes made of native tobacco, palm-leaf mats and hats, saddlery, confectionery, and dairy products. The manufacture of textiles is successfully conducted, the value of the cotton and silk tissues made in the country amounting to about \$80,000 per year. The cotton thread employed in the elaboration of the product comes principally from England. Forge iron, furniture, boots and shoes, and tanned leather are also manufactured to some extent.

Cattle and horses are bred with profit, especially near the seacoast.

#### COMMUNICATION.

Progress in railway construction during the year in the Republic was satisfactory, new lines being undertaken and negotiations entered into with a view to still further increasing the existing mileage of the country. The present railway system in operation is about 100 miles in extent and includes a line from the capital to the port of Acajutla with branch connection to the city of Santa Ana, while



another line runs from the capital to Santa Tecla. Work on the road between Santa Ana and the Guatemalan frontier has been contracted for and negotiations are in progress looking to the construction of a line from the capital to San Miguel and La Union. The importance of this contract lies in the fact that it covers the section of the Pan-American line belonging to Salvador, as defined in the convention signed in Washington on December 20, 1907, on the occasion of the Central American Peace Conference. The road leaving the port of La Union will connect with the cities of Usulután, San Vicente, and Cojutepec, and, uniting with the line already built between the capital and Santa Ana, proceed to the Guatemalan frontier to make connection with the Atlantic railway of that country recently inaugurated. Government aid is guaranteed in the building of the line and free entry for material needed in construction granted.

Other contemplated extensions include a line from Santa Ana to Ahuachapán via Chalchuapa and Atiquizaya, and a union of the Central Railway of Salvador with the Northern Guatemala. The former carries a subsidy of \$10,000 per annum for the life of the grant, which is thirty-five years, and the latter offers an advantageous connection, in that it would greatly stimulate the mining industry in the entire western section of the Republic.

The Republic of Salvador is accessible by water only from the Pacific Ocean, its ports being La Union, Espiritu Santo, La Concordia, La Libertad, and Acajutla, of which La Union is the most important and the commercial center of the Republic. La Libertad and Acajutla are the remaining two ports at which ocean-going vessels call, the other ports being used for the coastwise trade only.

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company and the Kosmos Line call regularly at the three ports mentioned, employing from nineteen to twenty-one days in the trip from San Francisco, from which port they sail regularly every ten days, first-class passage being \$100 to any one of these ports. The capital of the Republic, San Salvador, can best be reached by rail from the port of Acajutla.

Among the numerous rivers of Salvador the most important are the Lempa, the Paza, and the San Miguel, the first mentioned flowing through the entire territory of the Republic, but all navigable only for small craft.

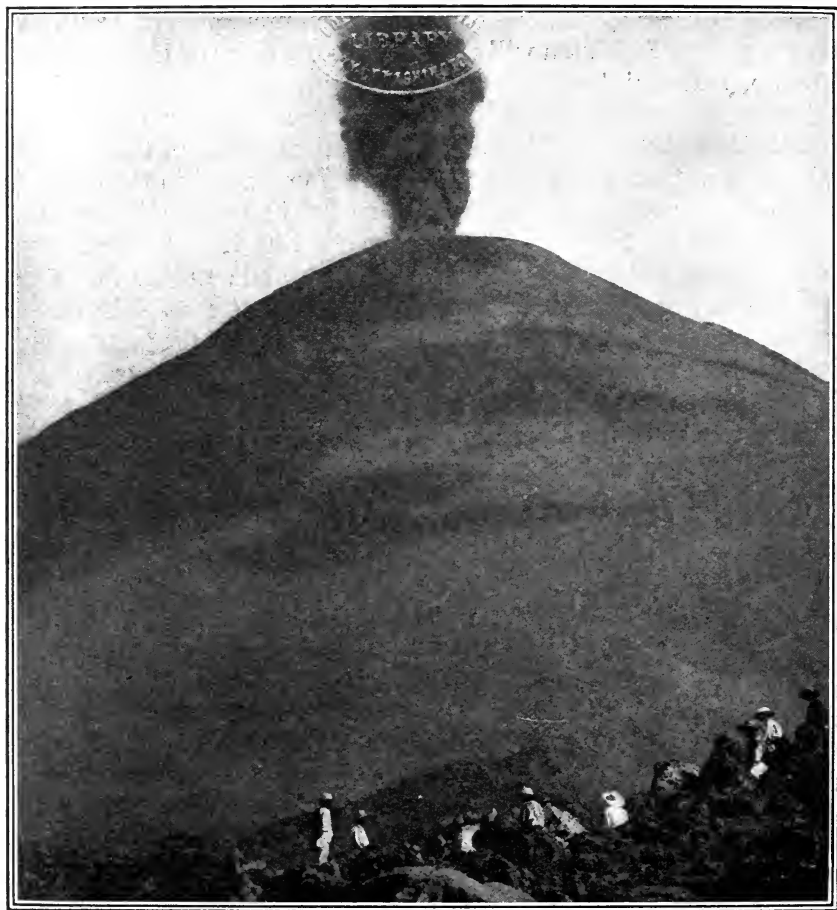
A number of picturesque lakes are in the country, Lake Guijar, the largest, being 15 miles long and 5 miles wide. Lake Ilopango is 9 miles long and 3 miles wide. All are navigable for small vessels of light draft.

Along the coast are a number of islands which belong to the Republic, viz, Punta Zacate, Conchaguaita, Meanguera, Martín Pérez, Perico Chuchito, Conejo, Irca, and Meanguerita, most of these being located

in the Gulf of Fonseca. The largest of these is Punta Zacate, 30 miles in length.

A new tramway line has been opened to traffic in the capital of the Republic.

Internal improvements have also occupied the attention of the Government. To the 2,000 miles of highroads already in existence new



THE IZALCO VOLCANO NEAR SAN SALVADOR, SALVADOR.

This volcano is almost continuously active. In 1798 it rose out of the plain and gradually attained an elevation of about 6,000 feet. Is sometimes called the "Safety valve of Salvador," also the "Light-house of Salvador."

roads have been added and repairs made, bridges built and repaired and new construction projected; public buildings have been inspected and repaired; the schools of the country reorganized; modern methods of instruction introduced, and modern sanitary laws promulgated throughout the Republic.

The postal service of the Republic is satisfactorily administered, the post-offices being graded according to the population of the different cities. Offices of the first class are Santa Ana, San Miguel, Sonsonate, Santa Tecla, Cojutepeque, and San Vicente. The latest figures available showed that at the beginning of 1907 there were 82 post-offices in the Republic and 200 telegraph offices, operating 2,400 miles of wire, over which 1,039,778 telegrams were sent. The telephone system represented 100 stations and 1,924 miles of line.

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