

RAINFALL AS A FACTOR IN THE CACAO INDUSTRY.

A certain amount of controversy exists as to the best physiological conditions under which cacao can be grown, but it is generally accepted that the plant requires a lot of moisture. Its original habitat was the high forest country of South America, and, today, it is grown commercially only in the wetter parts of the tropics. It seems, however, to prosper under wide ranges of rainfall as can be seen by a comparison between West Africa and Trinidad. In the former country the cacao areas probably have an average rainfall of about 60" whereas in the latter this rainfall is generally considered to be too small for the successful practice of cacao farming, and most of the plantations are in areas which receive an annual rainfall of over 80". The Northern Range of Trinidad has grown cacao for over 100 years and there the rainfall lies between 80" and 100".

The island of Trinidad with its small area, irregularities of physical features and wide diversity in rainfall, offers a unique opportunity for the study of this problem. The present economic survey has made possible a comparison between annual rainfall and success in cacao farming. It is the purpose of this paper to discuss the facts brought out by the examination of this factor.

Rainfall of Trinidad. The accompanying map gives a rough idea ^{of} ~~an~~ the rainfall of the island. It is based on a five years' average obtained from the rainfall stations supervised by the local Department of Agriculture and is an improvement on Mr. Ulrich's map as many other stations have been added. There are not, unfortunately, enough guages in Trinidad to make possible the compilation of a perfectly accurate map. Certain areas had to be guessed in this case, but generally speaking, the rainfall in the cacao growing areas is pretty accurate and for the present purpose, the map serves as ^a sufficiently accurate indication. A list of the stations used is given in the

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