

only consider what is meant by commerce, and what by geography. Commerce, in its broadest sense, is essentially the transfer or conveyance of commodities from one part of the world to another: from the place where they are found or manufactured, i.e., the place of supply, to the place where they are wanted, i.e., their market. The merchant, therefore, must know where he may procure his commodities in large and regular supply at reasonable prices and at low cost of transportation. He should know the conditions in which they are found, the circumstances under which they are to be obtained, the facilities for and hindrances to taking them from where they are produced to where they are wanted, the character of that market, and the conditions under which the commodities are to be disposed of there. If the merchant is to be progressive, he must be constantly on the outlook for new sources of supply, and for new fields in which to dispose of his goods.

Now, much of this is plainly associated with the kind of knowledge which geography ought to be able to furnish, and also with the kind of enterprise which we call 'exploration'. Commercial geography is a description of the world in its relations to man as a producer and as a trader. It tells of the geographic and other conditions that assist or hinder man in his efforts to produce commodities, or to buy and sell them. Thus, the slope of the land determines the direction of the rivers, and whether they may be utilized to carry commodities to market. Mountain ranges hinder commerce so far as they tend to keep peoples apart, and increase the cost of transportation. Valleys and

plains are the great sources of food for man and his domestic animals. Mountain regions are the chief sources of the metals and minerals he uses. The luxuriance and variety of vegetation decrease from the equator toward the poles, and from sea level toward high altitudes. The ocean supplies fish and salt, and is the cheapest highway of commerce. All these natural conditions, surely, have a direct bearing upon the needs of the merchant. Commercial geography, therefore, treats of the many influences operating all over the world, which promote or retard the production, transportation or exchange of the commodities, natural or manufactured, which man consumes or utilizes.

It may be thought that geography cannot be of much assistance to the merchant who trades with highly civilized and well-known countries, such as Germany, France, or Holland. But geographers hold that the political, social, and economic conditions that prevail in such countries, the manners and habits of the people, the conditions under which commerce must be carried on, are largely the outcome of the influence of geographical conditions on man, and of man's action in modifying them. What are railways, canals, and telegraphs but successful attempts to overcome topographical disadvantages, and to lessen distance?—and these, surely, are geographical factors? But whether we call it geography or not, we are being continually told by those who have for a time resided abroad, that ignorance of a country, ignorance of its people and their peculiar ways, ignorance of their language, ignorance of the wants special to the country, is con-