

## NEW ANIMALS PRODUCED FROM OLD IN PERU

The age-old effort of the Incas to interbreed different species of their native wool-bearing animals and thus obtain types combining several desirable qualities seems at last to have met with success - at the hands of the white man, however. Two hybrids have been produced at the experimental farm at Puno, Peru, under the direction of Col. R. J. Stordy.

One of these newcomers is the "huarizo", a cross between the llama and the alpaca, the other the "paco-vicuna", a cross between the domestic alpaca and the wild vicuna. Whether these animals will be fertile and reproduce is not yet known, according to Wilson Popence, agricultural explorer who has recently returned to Washington from Peru.

The llama, one of the ancestors of the new "huarizo", has for centuries been the cow and the horse and the "ship of the Andes" to the people of Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador. It is the largest of the four cameloid types of wool-bearing animals native to this region. It is said that centuries before the European conquest it has been domesticated from the wild huanaco by the Indians who prized it as a gift from the gods, without which there would be no existence, trade or travel.

Huge numbers of these animals were said to have existed at one time. Spanish chroniclers say that 300,000 of them were used to carry the gold and silver from the mines of San Luis Potosi to the waiting galleons of the Spaniards. Today the number is not so great but these animals, nevertheless, are the only means of transportation, and sources of food and clothing to the large part of the population.

Although it is the largest of these animals, the llama's flesh is not exactly a delicacy, and its coat of wool is coarse and rough. The alpaca, the other parent of the "huarizo", is smaller and has a wool whose quality is prized in commerce. By interbreeding these two it was hoped to obtain wool that was finer than that of the llama and in quantity greater than that of the small alpaca.

But the rarest of all the small humpless camel-like animals of the Andes is the vicuna. Graceful as a gazelle, it is still wild or half wild and inhabits the high mountain ranges and inaccessible places bordering the region of perpetual snow. It was a prize to the hunters seeking it among the rocky precipices of Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. Its wool and skin have always been considered of special value, a poncho of vicuna being worth a mint of money today. This and the fact that it had to be killed to obtain its wool have nearly caused its extinction. Today there are very stringent regulations for its protection.

This graceful animal, although wild, has an amount of curiosity that often made it the victim of the hunter. It can be captured and tamed and even domesticated to some extent. By crossing this animal with the alpaca it is hoped to obtain a type that will be easily domesticated and propagated in large numbers. The wool if obtainable in quantities should have a great commercial value, for that of the alpaca is noted for its lightness and strength and its ability to take dye, while that of the vicuna is unsurpassed in softness and beauty.

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The U. S. Air Service has established a landing field for airplanes which overlooks the great crater of the famous Kilauea volcano in Hawaii.

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