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Title: The South American Republics, Part 1 of 2

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Release date: November 4, 2011 [EBook #37920]

Language: English

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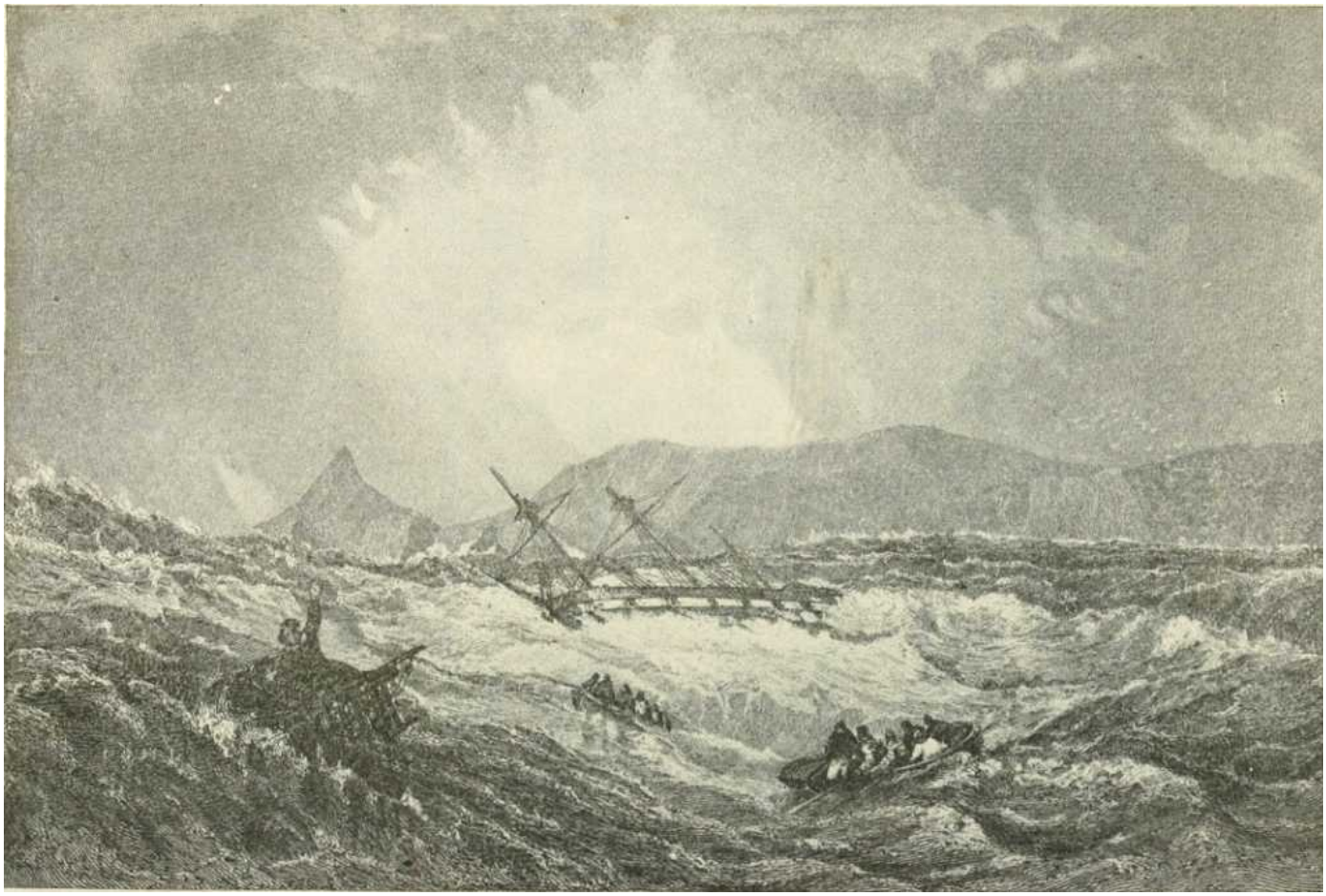

CAPE HORN.
[From a steel engraving.]

THE STORY OF THE NATIONS

THE SOUTH AMERICAN REPUBLICS

BY

THOMAS C. DAWSON

Secretary of the United States Legation to Brazil

IN TWO PARTS

PART I
ARGENTINA, PARAGUAY, URUGUAY, BRAZIL

G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS
NEW YORK AND LONDON
The Knickerbocker Press

Eighth Printing

The Knickerbocker Press, New York

TO MY WIFE

**I DEDICATE THIS STUDY OF THE HISTORY
OF HER NATIVE CONTINENT**

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PREFACE

The question most frequently asked me since I began my stay in South America has been: "Why do they have so many revolutions there?" Possibly the events recounted in the following pages may help the reader to answer this for himself. I hope that he will share my conviction that militarism has already definitely disappeared from more than half the continent and is slowly becoming less powerful in the remainder. Constitutional traditions, inherited from Spain and Portugal, implanted a tendency toward disintegration; Spanish and Portuguese tyranny bred in the people a distrust of all rulers and governments; the war of independence brought to the front military adventurers; civil disorders were inevitable, and the search for forms of government that should be final and stable has been very painful. On the other hand, the generous impulse that prompted the movement toward independence has grown into an earnest desire for ordered liberty, which is steadily spreading among all classes. Civic capacity is increasing among the body of South Americans and immigration is raising the industrial level. They are slowly evolving among themselves the best form of government for their special needs and conditions, and a citizen of the United States must rejoice to see that that form is and will surely remain republican.

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It is hard to secure from the tangle of events called South American history a clearly defined picture. At the risk of repetition I have tried to tell separately the story of each country, because each has its special history and its peculiar characteristics. All of these states have, however, had much in common and it is only in the case of the larger nations that social and political conditions have been described in detail. A study of either Argentina, Brazil, Chile, or Venezuela is likely to throw most light on the political development of the continent, while Peru, Bolivia, and Colombia are more interesting to the seeker for local colour and the lover of the dramatic.

The South American histories so far written treat of special periods, and few authorities exist for post-revolution times. Personal observations through a residence of six years in South America; conversations with public men, scholars, merchants, and proprietors; newspapers and reviews, political pamphlets, books of travel, and official publications, have furnished me with most of my material for the period since 1825. The following books have been of use in the preparation of the first volume, and are recommended to those who care to follow up the subject:

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ARGENTINA: Mitre's *Historia de Belgrano and Historia de San Martin*, in Spanish; Torrente's *Revolucion Hispano-Americano*, in Spanish; Lozano's *Conquista del Paraguay, La Plata y Tucuman*, in Spanish; Funes's *Historia de Buenos Aires y Tucuman*, in Spanish; Lopez's *Manuel de Historia Argentina*, in Spanish; Page's *La Plata*, in English; Graham's *A Vanished Arcadia*, in English.

PARAGUAY: All of the above and Thompson's *Paraguayan War*, in English; Washburn's *History of Paraguay*, in English; Fix's *Guerra de Paraguay*, in Portuguese.

URUGUAY: Bauza's *Dominacion Espanola*, in Spanish; Berra's *Bosquejo Historico*, in Spanish; Saint-Foix's *L'Uruguay*, in French.

BRAZIL: Southey's *History of the Brazil*, in English; Varnhagem's *Historia do Brasil*, in Portuguese; Pereira da Silva's *Fundacao do Imperio, Segundo Periodo, Historia do Brasil, e Historia do Meu Tempo*, in Portuguese; Nabuco's *Estadista do Imperio*, in Portuguese; Rio Branco's sketch in *Le Bresil en 1889*, in French; Oliveira Lima's *Pernambuco*, in Portuguese.

All of the above books may be found in the Columbian Memorial Library of the Bureau of American Republics at Washington, which, taken as a whole, is one of the best collections on South America in existence.

T. C. D.

WASHINGTON, January 22, 1903.

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INTRODUCTORY

THE DISCOVERIES AND THE CONQUEST

Spain's Discovery of America.—Town or communal government has been characteristic of Spain since before the Roman conquest. The Visigoths, who destroyed the advanced civilisation they found in the Peninsula, never really amalgamated with the subject population, and, happily, they did not succeed in destroying the municipalities. The liberal, civilised, and tolerant Saracens who drove out the Goths, left their Christian subjects free to enjoy their own laws and customs. The municipalities gave efficient local self-government while a system of small proprietorships made the Peninsula prosper, as in the best days of the Roman dominion. The population of Spain reached twenty millions under the Moors, but finally dynastic civil wars enabled the remnant of Visigoths who had taken refuge in the northern mountains to begin the gradual expulsion of the Mahometans. In the midst of these currents of war and conquest setting to and fro, the old municipalities survived unchangeable, and always supplying local self-government.

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A tendency toward decentralisation was ingrained in the Spanish people from the earliest times. It was increased by the method in which the Christian conquest of Mahometan Spain was achieved. The Visigothic nobility, starting from separate points in Asturias and Navarre, advanced into Saracen territory and established counties and earldoms which were virtually independent of their mother-kingdoms. The Asturians expanded into Leon and thence over Galicia, northern Portugal, Old and New Castile. The power of the Leonese monarch over Galicia was nominal; Castile and Portugal separated from Leon almost as soon as they were wrested from the Mahometans. The Basques were always independent, and Navarre, though it became

the mother of Aragon, had little connection with the latter region. On the Mediterranean shore Charlemagne drove the Moors from Catalonia and made it a province of his empire, but no sooner was he dead than it became independent. Toward the end of the thirteenth century. The Christian conquest was virtually completed, and the Peninsula had been divided into four kingdoms. Each of these was, however, in reality only a federation of semi-independent feudal divisions and municipalities united by personal allegiance to a single sovereign. In the course of the continual quarrelling of the monarchs their kingdoms frequently divided, coalesced, and separated again. The death of a king or the marriage of his daughter was often the signal for war and a readjustment of boundaries, but these overturnings did not much affect the component and really vital political units. [Pg 5]

More significant than the political kingdoms were the linguistic divisions. Spain then spoke, and still speaks, three languages, each of which has many dialects. From Asturias and Navarre the language, now known as Castilian, had spread over the central part of the Peninsula south to Cadiz and Murcia. From Galicia the Gallego had spread directly south along the Atlantic, where one of its dialects grew into the Portuguese. On the east coast the Catalonian, imported from Languedoc by the French conqueror, is a mere derivative of the Provençal. Its dialects are spoken all along the Mediterranean coasts of Spain as far south as Alicante, as well as in the Balearic islands.

By 1300 A.D. two great political divisions, Castile and Aragon, covered three-fourths of the Peninsula, and their boundaries were well established; each, however, was a mere loose aggregation of provinces, and every province had its own laws and customs, its jealously guarded privileges, its legislative assembly, and its free municipalities. Galicia had never become incorporated with Leon; the Basques ruled themselves; Catalonia was really independent of Aragon; Castile had, from the beginning, been virtually independent, although under the same monarch as Leon, and, indeed, had taken the latter's place as the metropolitan province of the kingdom.

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FERDINAND, KING OF SPAIN.
[Redrawn from an old print.]

The one great unifying force was religious sentiment, stimulated into fanaticism by centuries of wars against the infidels. Nevertheless, during the two centuries before the discovery of America the Spaniards absorbed much culture from their Moorish subjects. In 1479, the whole Peninsula, except Portugal and Granada, was politically united by the accession of Ferdinand to the throne of Aragon, and of Isabella to that of Castile and Leon. With local liberties intact, and peace prevailing throughout its whole extent, the Peninsula enjoyed a prosperity unknown since the golden era of the Moors. The population rose to twelve millions; Andalusia, Galicia, Catalonia, and Valencia were among the most flourishing and thickly settled parts of Europe, while the military qualities of the aristocracy of Castile and Leon and Aragon gave the new power the best armies of the time. [Pg 7]

Colonies founded by a monarchy so organised could never be firmly knit to each other nor to the mother country. The nobility of the sword would try to establish feudal principalities; the new cities would endeavour to exercise the local functions of the old Peninsular municipalities; and the spirit of local independence still animating Catalonians, Basques, Galicians, and Andalusians would be repeated on a new continent. The only bond of union would be personal allegiance to the monarch.

In the fourteenth century, Christian navigators reached the Canary Islands—sixty miles from the African coast and six hundred south-east of Gibraltar. The assurance that land did really exist below the horizon of that western ocean, so mysterious and terrible to the early navigators, gave them confidence to push farther into the deep. In navigation, the Spaniards lagged behind their Portuguese neighbours. But among the Spanish kingdoms Castile took the lead because her Andalusian ports of Cadiz, San Lucar, Palos, and Huelva faced on the open Atlantic. These towns swarmed with sailors who had followed in the track of the

Portuguese and visited their new possessions. The Castilians and Andalusians were naturally jealous of the successful Portuguese. Madeira, the Azores, the Cape Verdes, and the gold mines of the Guinea coast had [Pg 8] fallen to the latter, while the Spaniards had only the Canaries. They gave an eager ear to the rumours that were rife in the Portuguese islands of more marvellous discoveries still to be made—of islands beyonds the Azores. An adventurous Italian, Christopher Columbus, wandering among the Portuguese possessions, heard the stories. Happily for Spain, he believed them and resolved to lead an expedition to the farther side of the Atlantic. He entered her service and proved to be an enthusiast of rare pertinacity. It is immaterial whether the idea of a route to the East Indies by the west occurred to him at the same time he became convinced that there were islands in the far Atlantic waiting to be discovered. That which is certain is that he devoted his life to persuading someone in authority to entrust him with ships and men to make a voyage to the far West. The pilots at Palos backed him, and he finally secured the desired permission and means from Isabella of Castile. Her interest in exploration and colonisation had been shown fifteen years before, in her energetic measures in conquering the Canaries and forcing the Portuguese to renounce their claims to those islands, and she well deserves the title of founder of the colonial empire of Spain.

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THE AUTHENTIC PORTRAIT OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

The story of Columbus's first voyage needs no retelling. He journeyed so far to the west that he returned convinced he had reached the longitude of eastern Asia, and the noise of his great discovery resounded [Pg 10] through Europe and began the transformation of the world. Since the last great century—the thirteenth—Christendom had retrograded. The Tartars dominated Russia and the Turks were pressing hard on Germany. Unless the Christian world could find an outlet—unless it could create other resources for itself and outside of itself; unless feudalism should find an employment for its military energies outside of the vicious circle of fruitless and purposeless dynastic wars, it seemed not improbable that Mahometan aggression would continue until all Europe lay under the deadening influence of the Turk. Only in the Peninsula was apparent that spirit of expansion which is the best indication of internal vitality in a nation. The military nobility, whose determined fanaticism, magnificent courage, and spirit of individual initiative had driven the Moors out of Spain in the thirteenth century, welcomed this fresh opportunity to slay the infidel and carve out new fiefs for themselves.

Conquest of the Andes.—Columbus showed strategic genius of the highest order in choosing Hayti as the

site of the first settlement. That island afforded an admirable base for the conquest of the New World. It was large enough to furnish provisions, and was conveniently situated with reference to the coasts and islands of the Caribbean. Gold washings were soon discovered in the interior and the unwarlike inhabitants were at once impressed into slavery to dig in the mines. The news of gold stimulated interest as nothing else could have done. The Castilian government took immediate steps to exclude all other nations. The Pope divided the [Pg 11] globe between Spain and Portugal, and a treaty to this effect was negotiated between the two countries. Spaniards swarmed over to Hayti, and thence expeditions were sent out in every direction, headed by private adventurers bearing their sovereign's commission. The other Antilles were soon explored and, by the end of the century, the Spaniards had reached the South American mainland and rapidly explored its coast from the Amazon up to the Isthmus. Gold was picked up in the streams flowing from the Columbian Andes into the Caribbean. A few years later the north-western coast of South America was granted out to noble adventurers who undertook its conquest and exploitation with their own means. The Isthmian region became the new centre of Spanish power and commerce in America. In 1513, Balboa crossed the Isthmus to the Pacific Ocean —an event second in its far-reaching consequences only to Columbus's first voyage. During the following years the Gulf of Mexico was explored, and in 1518 the greatest statesman and general whom Spain ever sent to the new world—Hernando Cortes—began the conquest of the empire of the Aztecs.

FRANCISCO PIZARRO.
[From Montain's America.]

The mining done in Hayti and along the Caribbean coast seemed pitiably insignificant compared with the [Pg 12] treasures found in Mexico. There followed a new influx of gentleman adventurers who scoured the coast in every direction seeking another defenceless empire and mines as good as those of Mexico. The expeditions down the Pacific coast of South America started from the Isthmus. Peru was soon found, and in 1532, Pizarro [Pg 13] and his band of blood-thirsty desperadoes, with inconceivable audacity, struck a vital blow at the heart of the great empire of the Incas by capturing its emperor. Within half a dozen years nearly the whole of the vast region over which the Inca power had extended was overrun and the outlying provinces were ready to submit at demand.

The rapidity with which a little band of Spaniards conquered the vast and warlike empire of the Incas is well-nigh incredible. The terror inspired by horses and firearms did much, but the capture of their emperor

demoralised the imperial Inca tribes still more. Once in the possession of the sacred person of the monarch, the Spaniards were regarded by the Indians as his mouthpiece and the successor to his power. From Cuzco, the capital, a splendid system of roads and communications radiated to every part of the empire. The military and political dominance of the imperial tribes had weakened the power of resistance in the provinces. The elaborate structure which had been built up by the Incas rather facilitated than hindered the Spanish conquest, once the decisive blow had been given at the centre. The provinces submitted to the new rulers as fast as the Spanish columns could march over the magnificent mountain roads.

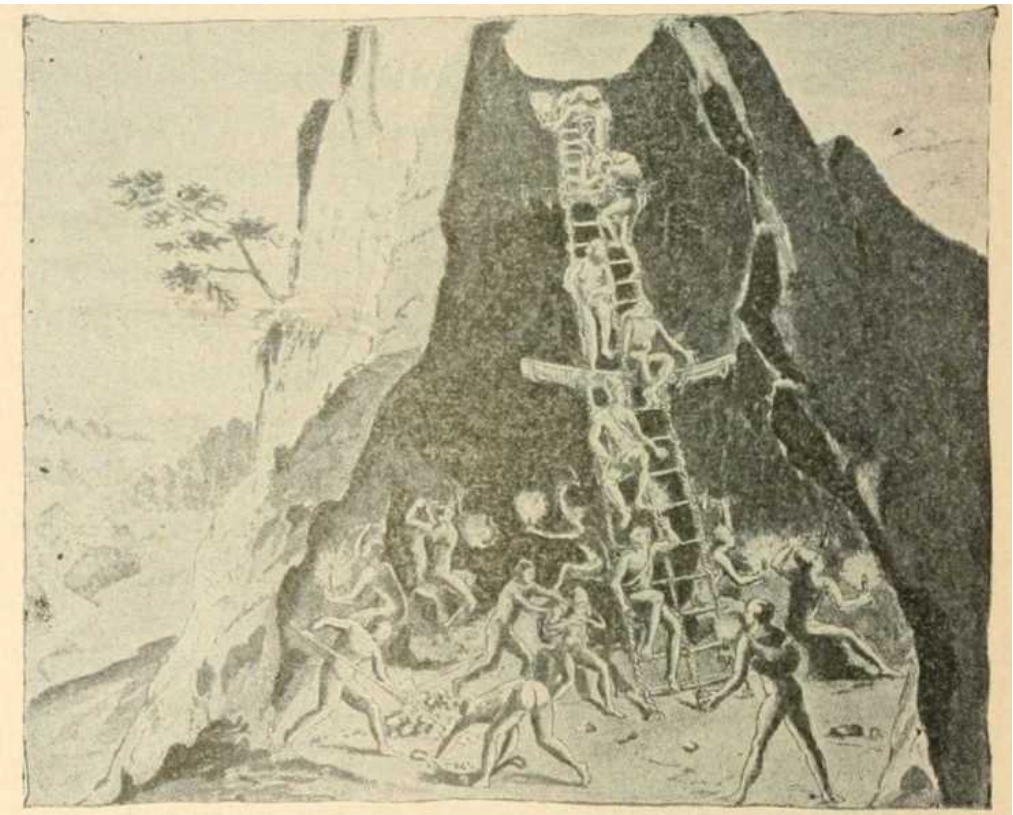
South from Cuzco the Inca empire extended 2000 miles. It covered the whole Andean region as far as the 37th degree of south latitude and extended from the Pacific to the eastern slopes of the Andean foothills. In the present Argentine it included the tribes living in the lesser chains which occupy the north-western part of [Pg 14] the republic. Some of these Argentine tribes seem to have been only tributary to the Incas, others were completely dependent, and extensive colonies had been founded in the cotton regions. The general language was Inca, and that admirable system of irrigation and intensive culture which made Peru proper a garden had been introduced on the eastern slopes of the southern Andes.

The southern part of the great Bolivian plateau seems to have submitted quietly to the Spanish conquerors, and the stream of adventurers passed on to the south. In 1542, Diego de Rojas led the first expedition, of which a record has survived, down through the Humahuaca valley into the actual territory of the Argentine. He himself perished in a fight with a wild tribe near the main chain of the Andes, but his followers continued their march. Near Tucuman, they passed out from the mountain defiles unto the pampa, and, leaving the desert to their right penetrated through Santiago and Cordoba, to the Paraná.

No permanent settlement was then made, but the reports of thousands of peaceable and wealthy Indians inhabiting irrigated valleys, and the accounts of the magnificent pastures which stretched away to the east, soon tempted the Spaniards to take permanent possession. Seven years after the first exploration a town was founded in latitude 27°, midway between the Andes and the Paraná. About the same time other adventurers came pouring over the Andes from northern Chile, and this current soon joined that from the north. The [Pg 15] Spaniards established themselves as feudal lords, and the unhappy Indians were divided among them. In one district, forty-seven thousand Indians were divided among fifty-six grantees. In 1553, Santiago de Estero, for many years the capital of the province of Tucuman was founded.

In 1561, the governor of Chile sent from Santiago de Chile over the Andes an expedition which founded the city of Mendoza in a most beautiful region, where the vine flourishes in perfection, and where a wonderful system of irrigation, inherited from the Indians, still exists to attest the latters' engineering skill. Next year San Juan was founded, and these two towns were the centres for the settlement of the province of Cuyo, which remained a part of Chile for two hundred years. The immigrants from northern Chile and Bolivia established Tucuman in the tropical garden spot of the republic in 1565. From Santiago del Estero, in 1573, an expedition was sent two hundred and fifty miles to the south to a region of fertile valleys and plains at the foot of a beautiful mountain range. This was Cordoba, which at once became, and has since remained, the most populous of the interior provinces.

By the end of the sixteenth century the Spanish power was firmly established in settlements that have since become the Argentine provinces of Jujuy, Salta, Tucuman, Catamarca, Santiago, Rioja, and Cordoba. All these really formed a southern extension of Upper Peru. Their geographical, political, and commercial relations [Pg 16] were with Charcas, Potosí, and Lima. The discovery, in 1545, of the great silver mines at Potosí at once made the high Bolivian plateau, then known as the Audiencia of Charcas, the most valuable and important province of all the Spanish monarch's South American empire. In 1571, the discovery of quicksilver mines in Peru vastly increased the output of precious metals; in 1575, the wonderful Oruro mines were opened, and before the end of the century the copper-pan amalgamation process was invented in Bolivia, revolutionising the production of silver.



MINING SCENE.
[Redrawn from Gottfriedt's Neuw Welt.]

The resulting prosperity of the mining regions of Bolivia stimulated the settlement of the north-western provinces of the Argentine. The miners needed provisions which could not well be raised in the neighbourhood of Potosí. There was a demand for cattle for beef, and for horses and mules for transportation. A solid economic foundation was thus provided for the plains settlements, and the enslavement of the Indians and the breeding of cattle went on apace. By the end of the sixteenth century north-western Argentine—the province of Tucuman, as it was then called—was the seat of many thriving settlements whose Spanish inhabitants were mostly pastoral. The Indians in the neighbourhood of each settlement had been reduced to slavery, and cultivated the fields that had been their fathers' for the benefit of their white masters. The Spanish proprietors lived like feudal lords, while the Spanish authorities left these remote regions largely to their own devices. [Pg 17]

Conditions in Cuyo, the western province just across the Andes from Santiago de Chile, were substantially the same. A political dependency of Chile, the few external relations it had were with that captaincy-general. The Spanish grantees ruled their Indian slaves in patriarchal fashion; agriculture was the principal occupation; pastoral industry was not so profitable as in Tucuman, and the region was more isolated. In both Tucuman and Cuyo Spanish rule was superimposed upon a previously existing commercial and social structure. There was no attempt to expel or destroy the aborigines. On the contrary, they were the sole labourers and their exertions the chief source of the wealth of their conquerors. There began a process of approximation and mutual assimilation between the Spaniards and their semi-civilised subjects. While the former continued to be a privileged and ruling caste, the latter absorbed much European knowledge from them. The Indian language long held its own alongside of the Spanish and is still spoken in many parts of the region. [Pg 18]

On the Atlantic side, among degraded peoples who had not progressed beyond the wandering and tribal stages of existence. Spanish settlement proceeded on entirely different lines. There existed no well-organised body politic, into whose control the conquerors could step with hardly an interruption to industry. Campaigns could not be made with the confident expectation of finding abundant accumulations of food *en route*. Expeditions among the squalid tribes were slow and dangerous and settlement stuck close to the rivers instead of following fearlessly across the plateau to the spots where the finest lands and the most flourishing Indian communities lay ready for the spoiler.

The beginnings of the coast provinces were painful and disastrous; the settlements were feeble; centuries elapsed before the natural advantages of the region were utilised, and before its accessibility and fertility drew a great immigration. The assimilation of Indian blood did not take place on a large scale, and the immigrants and their descendants became perforce horsemen and fighters. [Pg 19]

Discovery of the Plate.—The Portuguese discovery of the east coast of South America, in 1500, was a disagreeable surprise to the Spanish government. The Treaty of Tordesillas had been framed with the purpose of giving America to Spain, while Africa and the shores of the Indian Ocean were left to Portugal. Nevertheless, the Portuguese vigorously asserted their right to the prize they had picked up by accident and insisted on the letter of the treaty. They promptly explored the coast as far south as Santa Catharina, six hundred miles north of the Plate, but they had asserted no ownership farther south at the date when the Spanish expeditions began to be sent to the South Atlantic.

In 1516, a celebrated sea-captain from the north of Spain—Juan Diaz de Solis—was sent out by the Castilian government to explore the southern part of the continent. He simply reconnoitred the Brazilian coast, where the Portuguese had not yet established any settlements, and, pressing on to the south, finally reached the Plate. His first impression on rounding Cape St. Maria, where the Uruguayan shore turns to the north-west, was that he had reached the southern point of the continent and discovered the sea route into the Pacific. But the freshness of the water in the great estuary undeceived him. Following along the northern bank, he landed with a small party and was attacked and slain by a tribe of fierce and intractable Indians.

When the news reached Lisbon, the Portuguese government protested against this invasion of territory, which it claimed lay east of the Tordesillas line. Portugal, however, did not follow up her protest or try to take possession for herself. At this very time a celebrated Portuguese navigator, Fernando Magellan, disgusted by the neglect of his own country, was urging the Spanish government to give him the means of carrying out his great project for the circumnavigation of the globe. He was confident he could reach the East Indies by rounding the southern point of South America or by finding a passage through the continent in higher latitudes than had yet been reached. The year 1519, when Magellan sailed from San Lucar on the first voyage around the world, was big with fate for Spain. Cortes was adding a new empire by the conquest of Mexico, thus giving Spain control of the world's supply of precious metals. The popular assemblies of Castile and Aragon, of Catalonia, Valencia, and Galicia, were preparing for a hopeless struggle against the might of a monarch who ruled two-thirds of Europe. At the very moment that Charles V. was crushing Peninsular freedom by brutal military force, the genius of Magellan and Cortes gave him the whole of America. Spain had heretofore been a federation of self-governing communes and provinces, but their independence was now destroyed. Military despotism proved strong enough to crush liberty, although it was unable to stamp out the feeling of local segregation. The very soldiers that conquered America took over an instinctive feeling that the central government was dangerous and inimical to the people—a sentiment which has always survived in some form among their descendants. [Pg 20] [Pg 21]

Magellan stopped at the Plate in the beginning of 1520, and explored the estuary to make sure that it did not afford the passage he was seeking. In October he reached the mouth of the strait that bears his name, and, wonderfully favoured by wind and weather, threaded his way to the Pacific in five weeks. Subsequent wayfarers were not so fortunate and the strait never became a practicable commercial route until after the introduction of steam navigation. In the succeeding hundred years not half a dozen ships reached the Pacific around South America. Practically, the Pacific was accessible only over the Isthmus or by the immensely long journey around the Cape of Good Hope. Nevertheless, the importance of this epoch-making voyage has not been overestimated. The Pacific became, in a sense, a Spanish lake, in which she could maintain at will a naval preponderance. She occupied the Philippines and secured control at leisure of the Pacific coast of America. However, the scientific results were more important. Thereafter, the thorough exploration of all the shores of the South Sea was only a question of time. Magellan's voyage made geography an exact science. He sketched the map of the world with broad and sure strokes and left nothing for subsequent explorers except the filling-in of details.

The occupation of the Philippines and Moluccas gave rise to new disputes between Spain and Portugal as to their rights under the Treaty of Tordesillas. The imperfect instruments of those days left the line doubtful on the eastern South American coast, as well as on the other side of the world. In 1526, Sebastian Cabot was [Pg 22]

sent by the Spanish government to determine astronomically the location of the line in America, and then to follow Magellan's track to western Asia. At the mouth of the Plate he heard rumours among the Indians of silver mines on the river's banks and of the existence of a great and wealthy empire at its headwaters. This was Peru—not yet reached by the Castilians on their way south from the Isthmus, but the coast Indians showed Cabot silver ornaments which had been passed from hand to hand from the highlands of Peru and Bolivia down the river to the Atlantic.

Cabot and his band of adventurers determined to neglect their surveying, trusting that the discovery of silver mines would excuse their disobedience. They spent three years in vain journeying and prospecting—exploring the Uruguay to the head of navigation and following up the Paraná as far as the Apipé rapids. Signs of neither silver nor gold, nor of civilised inhabitants, were found on either river. Their upper courses came down from the east—the direction opposite to that in which Eldorado was reported. The gently flowing Paraguay, coming down the plains in the centre of the continent, seemed to offer a better hope of success. But Cabot's forces and provisions were inadequate to penetrating farther north than the present site of Asuncion. Returning to a fort he had left on the lower Paraná, he found that it had been taken by Indians and its garrison massacred. Discouraged by such a succession of difficulties and misfortunes, he returned to Spain. [Pg 23]

The news of Cabot's expedition, and its failure, stimulated the Portuguese to undertake the colonisation of the east coast of South America. Affonso da Souza started from Lisbon with an expedition, intending to take possession of the Plate. Lack of provisions, fear of the Indians, the presence of a Portuguese castaway—one of those insignificant chances that sometimes change the course of empires as a twig diverts the current of a river—stopped Alfonso before he reached his destination. Instead of establishing a colony on the estuary he founded San Vicente, just south of the Tropic of Capricorn. This became the southern outpost of the Portuguese possessions, and the temperate zone of South America was left open for the Spaniards to occupy when they chose.

Two years after Cabot's failure, Pizarro overran Peru. All Europe rang with the exploit. The Spanish king was besieged by nobles who literally begged the privilege of risking their lives and fortunes in America. These "adelantados" contracted to conquer, at their own charges, the particular districts granted them, certain profits being reserved to the crown, and Charles V. freely granted such patents. Among the grantees was a Basque nobleman, Pedro de Mendoza, to whom was given the territory beginning at the Portuguese possessions south two hundred leagues along the Atlantic coast toward the Strait of Magellan. He raised more than two thousand men and reached the Plate in 1535, where he immediately founded a city on the [Pg 24] south bank which he named Buenos Aires. He intended to make it a base for an advance up the Paraná to find and conquer another Peru. His attempt was foredoomed to failure. The Indians surrounding Buenos Aires were implacable in their hatred of the invaders. They lived in scattered little tribes, and neither would nor could furnish food enough to maintain the Spaniards. The provisions brought from Spain were inadequate; sorties were useless; the Indians fled from large parties and ambushed small ones. The preparations for the advance up the river were delayed for months. Hundreds died of hunger and disease. Within a year the place had to be abandoned, and in a desperate condition the expedition fled up the river to Cabot's solid fort. Here the adelantado stopped, sick and discouraged, while a few hundreds of the more daring and persevering pressed on to the north, determined to reach Eldorado. Arrived at the junction of the Paraguay and Paraná, they chose the former river, and pushed on up it as far as the twentieth degree, to a place they called Candelaria. There they found vast lakes and swamps spreading to the west. It was necessary to protect their retreat before plunging into the difficult country that extends across to Bolivia. Accordingly, they divided and one party remained on the dry ground near the river, while two hundred desperate adventurers pressed on through the wilderness, hoping to reach the Bolivian plateau.

The party that stopped behind as a reserve was commanded by Domingo Irala, the real founder of the [Pg 25] Spanish settlements in the Paraná valley. The main expedition never returned. Years afterward friendly Indians brought back the tale that it had reached the slopes of the Bolivian mountains, obtained much gold and silver and started back triumphantly, but had perished to the last man in an Indian ambush not far from the Paraguay and safety. Irala waited the appointed time and then floated down the river. He and his companions were well-nigh in despair. So far as they knew, they were the only survivors of the three thousand people who had accompanied Mendoza. To the north the country was inhospitable and impenetrable, and from their experiences of the year before they knew that at the mouth of the river no provisions or succour were to be had. On their way up the river they had passed, about the twenty-fifth degree, a beautiful and fertile rolling country, covered with magnificent forests, with park-like openings, and inhabited by a large and friendly Indian population. Opposite the mouth of the Pilcomayo, where there was a large Indian village, they stopped on their downward journey, determined to settle down and take some repose from their interminable and fruitless wanderings in search of the will-o'-the-wisp Eldorado. There, in 1536, they founded the city of Asuncion, the first Spanish settlement on the Atlantic slope of South America.

The Foundation of Buenos Aires.—The failure of Mendoza, first adelantado, to establish a colony on the Plate, did not discourage others from soliciting the grant of his territory. In 1540, Cabeza de Vaca, a [Pg 26] "conquistador" celebrated for his feats in Florida, was appointed adelantado and set out gallantly to find the second Peru, which everyone believed to exist at the headwaters of the Paraguay. Intent on reaching the interior as soon as possible, he made no attempt to establish a town and port at the mouth of the river Plate, but landed at Santa Catharina on what is now the Brazilian coast in the latitude of Paraguay, and set off across country with four hundred men and twenty horses. The distance was a thousand miles; the route led up a heavily wooded mountain range on the coast, and thence across a broken, but open, plateau, where great rivers point out the natural routes to the Paraná. The soil was fertile and the Indians along the road were able to furnish considerable food supplies. Cabeza de Vaca made the journey without appreciable loss and arrived in Asuncion eager to take command and dash across to the Andes. But the sturdy Basques had selected their able countryman—Domingo Irala—as chief of the colony and gave the new adelantado a cold welcome. Irala insisted that a reconnoitring expedition be sent before risking the body of the Spaniards. Its command was given him and he penetrated almost to the headwaters of the Paraguay. Next year Cabeza de Vaca followed, but as soon as he left the Paraguay he got into difficulties. He could not penetrate the swamps nor make headway against the savage Indians who lived between the river and the eastern slopes of the Cordillera. He returned defeated and discouraged, and the people of Asuncion bundled him back to Spain. [Pg 27]

Though Irala subsequently did succeed in reaching Peru, by the route up the Paraguay, no practical results followed. Paraguay remained isolated from the Spanish empire on the Pacific coast until a roundabout communication was established down the river and thence west across the dry and level plains that stretch from the mouth of the river Plate to the Cordillera.

The early days of the Asuncion settlement were stormy. The rough adventurers fell to fighting among themselves, and their cruelties often drove the patient and submissive Indians into rebellion. Their greed for bigger plantations and more slaves pushed them on to conquering the aborigines in an expanding circle. By 1553 they had founded a settlement on the Upper Paraná and were dominant from river to river in the southern half of the present territory of Paraguay. Until his death, in 1557, Irala was the dominating personality in the colony. According to his lights he was just in his dealings with the Indians. When he died the settlement was firmly on its feet, and even the Indians revered him as their benefactor. The mass of the population was Indian, and Guarany has always remained the prevalent language in Paraguay. Absolutely isolated from the other European colonies, and almost without communication with the mother country, the settlement was, however, an unpromising affair. The few hundreds of Spaniards might have sustained their social and military superiority over the hordes of Indians by whom they were surrounded, but, without [Pg 28] material and intellectual communication with Spain, they could achieve no commercial success.

YOUNG GAUCHO.
[From a lithograph.]

An outlet to the sea was necessary. The original settlers had been adventurers, willing to follow Mendoza through swamp and forest up to the walls of Eldorado, and their children were not less enterprising. The [Pg 29] horses brought over by the adelantados had multiplied amazingly, and were spreading wild over the pampa to the south. Cattle, sheep, and goats bred by millions. Before long the attractions of a pastoral life began to appeal to the Spaniards and creoles of Asuncion. The braver and more energetic preferred the free open existence of the pampa to idleness in the sleepy villages of Paraguay.

The Argentine nation proper began its existence when the creole mounted his horse and took to cattle-breeding on the plains. The possession of horses, as much as of firearms, gave the gaucho his military predominance over the fiercest aborigines, and the horse was also the cornerstone of his industrial system. The cattle of the open pampa gave him an unlimited supply of the best food, and his horses enabled him to procure it with a minimum of effort. Irala's successors repeatedly tried to establish a colony near the mouth of the Plate, but they were not successful until the creoles on horseback had pushed their way south along the pampa and driven back or subdued the wandering Indians. In 1560, the Guaranies of Paraguay were definitely crushed in the horribly bloody battle of Acari, but it was not until 1573 that the Spaniards from Asuncion succeeded in founding a city south of the confluence of the Paraná and Paraguay. Santa Fé was the first Spanish settlement on the Plate in territory now a part of the Argentine Republic.

The man who led the creoles to the pampa was Juan de Garay, a Basque, who had been one of the soldiers [Pg 30] in the army that conquered Peru. His energy and vigour, and the bravery of the creole cavalry who followed his expeditions down the river and over the pampas, at length opened up communication from Paraguay to Europe and gave Spain a seaport on the South Atlantic. Curiously enough, in the very year that Garay founded Santa Fé, the Spaniards from Peru founded Cordoba—the most eastward of the Andean settlements. Their hard riders had pushed on from Cordoba, reconnoitring as far as the Paraná and there ran across Garay's men. The two currents of Argentine settlements met almost at the beginning, though two centuries were to elapse before they completely coalesced.

Eight years later, Garay succeeded in founding Buenos Aires after Zarate, the third adelantado, had failed as badly as any of his predecessors. Garay, by sheer force of energy and fitness, became the real ruler of the settlements. Active, far-sighted, and able, he perceived that a purely military establishment at the mouth of the river was foredoomed to failure. To be permanent, the port and town must be self-sustaining, and

therefore must be surrounded by farms and ranches and be accessible by land from the upper settlements. In the spring of 1580, the acting governor sent overland from Santa Fé two hundred families of Guarany Indians, accompanied by a thousand horses, two hundred cows, and fifty sheep, besides mares, carts, oxen, and other necessaries. The soldiers of the convoy were mostly creoles born in Paraguay. Boats carried down from Santa [Pg 31] Fé arms, munitions, seed grain, tools, and whatever in those rude days was essential to a settlement. He, himself, went by land with forty soldiers, following the highland that skirts the west bank of the Paraná from Santa Fé to Buenos Aires.

The Plate estuary affords no proper harbours; the immense volume of water spreading over vast shallow beds chokes it with sand-bars, and the shores are so shelving that even small boats cannot approach the land. The north side is bolder, and at Montevideo and at the mouth of the Uruguay affords bays partly sheltered from the storms which sweep up over the level pampas and make anchorage in the river so unsafe. But the north bank was cut off from land communication with the existing Spanish towns by the mighty Uruguay and Paraná, and Garay desired that his new city should be always accessible from his older settlements on the right bank of the Paraná. His choice of the particular spot where the largest city of the southern hemisphere has since grown up, seems to have been determined by a few trifling circumstances. He kept as near the head of the estuary as possible, in order to shorten the land route from Santa Fé, and picked upon a slight rise of ground between two draws, which made the site defensible. The fact that a nearby creek—the Riachuelo—afforded a shelter for little boats, may also have been given weight in reaching a decision.

Though his settlers did not number five hundred, Garay laid out his city like a town-site boomer. The surrounding country was divided into ranches and the neighbouring Indians were distributed among the [Pg 32] citizens of the new town. A "Cabildo," or city council, was named, with the full paraphernalia of a Spanish municipal government. The new town started off in the full enjoyment of all the guarantees known to immemorial Spanish constitutional law. Troubles broke out almost immediately between the creole settlers and the Spaniards who had been sent over by the adelantado to fill offices and get the best things in distributions of land and slaves. Garay had hardly left the town to look after the rest of the province than the creoles, indignant over unfair treatment, forcibly demanded an open Cabildo. This was an extraordinary popular assembly which, according to old Spanish custom, might be called at critical times, and was something like a town meeting. In theory, the property-owners and educated citizens were called together merely to give advice, but in practice, it was a tumultuous assemblage to overawe the office-holders. The Argentine creoles were doing nothing more than asserting their constitutional rights as vassals of the king of Castile. They compelled the Spanish office-holders to compromise.

Meanwhile, Garay was clinching his claim to immortality as the founder of the Spanish power on the Plate. He explored the pampas to the south and west of the new city, and reduced many of the tribes to slavery or vassalage. He found the plains already overrun with hundreds of thousands of horses—the descendants of the few abandoned there forty-five years before when the remnants of Mendoza's ill-starred expedition fled up the [Pg 33] river. On his way back to Santa Fé this great Indian fighter was ambushed by Indians and stabbed while he slept.

His death was followed by outbreaks among the creoles, who resented the efforts of the adelantado's new representatives to establish a monopoly in horse-hair. Scarcely had they found a way to make a little money, by hunting wild horses for their hair, than the officials tried to absorb all the profit. The struggle between the repressive commercial policy of Spain, and the interests of the Plate colonists, began with the foundation of the colony of Buenos Aires and went on for more than two hundred years.

In 1588, the creoles obtained a foothold in the extreme north of the mesopotamian region by founding the city of Corrientes near the junction of the Paraná and Paraguay. All the new commonwealths south of Asuncion obtained a solid economic foundation in the herds of cattle and horses which covered the plains. In the regions adjacent to the Andes the Spaniards did not become so exclusively pastoral as their brethren of the pampas near the Plate. While they had more and better Indian slaves, their pasturage was not so good. Though apparently more isolated, their proximity to Upper Peru and the trade that went on with that great mining country—the goal of fortune-hunting Spaniards in those years—placed them more directly under the control of the viceregal authorities. Tucuman was a mere southern extension of the jurisdiction of the Audiencia at Charcas, and Cuyo was an integral part of Chile, but this did not prevent the early development [Pg 34] of a strong sentiment in favour of local self-government and of hatred of the imported Spanish satraps.

By the year 1617 the settlements on the Lower Paraná had become of considerable importance. Buenos Aires was a town of three thousand people; the right bank of the river as far as Santa Fé was a grazing-ground for the herds of the creoles; towns and ranches were flourishing in Corrientes. In that year the Spanish crown abolished the office of adelantado and erected the lower settlements into a province separate from Paraguay. The new province included the territory that is now Uruguay, as well as the four actual Argentine provinces of Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, Entre Rios and Corrientes. Entre Rios and Uruguay were, however, as yet entirely unsettled.

While the creoles were thus firmly establishing themselves along the Lower Paraná and in the Andean provinces, the Jesuits were converting the Indians in the east of Paraguay, and early in the seventeenth century these indefatigable missionaries had penetrated to the Upper Paraná, crossed it, and were gathering the Indians by thousands into peaceful villages.

[Pg 35]

ARGENTINA

[Pg 37]

CHAPTER I

THE ARGENTINE LAND

South from where the great mass of the Bolivian Andes shoves a shoulder to the east, as if seeking to join the Brazilian mountain system, and from where a low ridge stretches out to form the watershed between the Madeira and the eastward-flowing affluents of the Paraguay, extends an immense flat plain. Two thousand miles from north to south, and nearly five hundred miles in breadth, hardly a hillock rises above its surface from the foothills of the Andes westward to the sea. In the tropical North its surface is partly covered with trees, but south of the Chaco the only woodlands are narrow belts following the streams. Everywhere stretch the grassy plains, without an obstruction or interruption. The soil is a fine alluvium, full of the right chemical elements, and admirably adapted to agriculture, wherever the rainfall is sufficient. As a pasture-ground it is the finest on the planet. Within recent geological times this plain was the bottom of a great shallow gulf which received the detritus washed down from the Andes on the one side and the Brazilian mountains on the other. [Pg 38] The gradual uplifting of those youngest mountains—the Andes—raised their flanks until the adjacent floor of the gulf appeared dry land, a land all ready and prepared for human occupancy. Nowhere does man encounter fewer obstacles to his freedom of movement or find it easier to procure his food supply than on the pampa—the characteristic topographical feature of the political division of South America known as Argentina.

Skirting the ridge on the east and draining the vast slopes of the Brazilian mountains of their tropical rainfall, is the great river Paraná. In latitude 27° it turns abruptly to the west, as if about to cross the pampa, but a hundred miles farther on it resumes its southward course. At this last turn the Paraná flows into a river which comes straight down from the north, draining the bed of the old inland sea that used to divide South America. This junction of the Paraná and the Paraguay forms the second largest river in the world—a river without obstructions to navigation, but which is so immense that it cannot be bridged. In latitude 32° it turns back to the south-east, soon receives the Uruguay,—a swifter stream, that drains the southern part of the Atlantic highlands,—and then opens out into the great shallow estuary known as the River Plate. Between the Uruguay and the Paraná is the Argentine Mesopotamia,—a flat region where the low-lying plains, covered with luscious grasses, intersected with streams, and interspersed with timber, gradually rise up-stream into the highlands of the Missions.

ARGENTINA, PARAGUAY, URUGUAY, BOLIVIA AND CHILE

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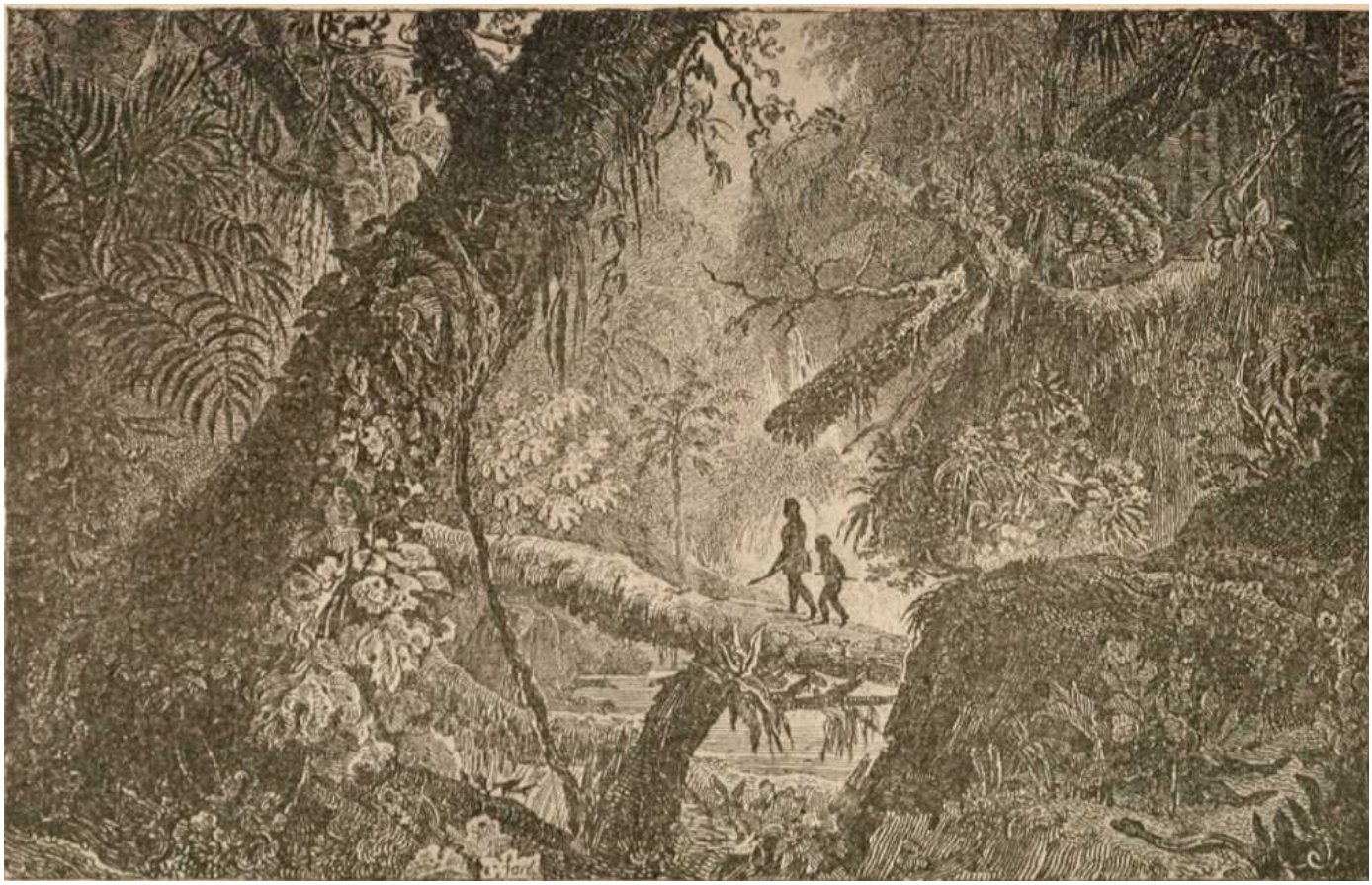


FOREST SCENE IN ARGENTINA.
[From steel print.]

To the west the pampa is bounded by the foothills of the Andes and the parallel chains with which that great [Pg 40]
mountain system reinforces its flanks. At the Bolivian frontier, the great outward-jutting shoulder of the Andes looms up among a series of subordinate chains. South of them, for a thousand miles, is a belt of broken country averaging two hundred miles in width. The pampa creeps up to the very foot of the mountain ranges and where it is watered blossoms like a garden. A quarter of the population of the Republic lives in the irrigated valleys of these Andean provinces.

A comparatively narrow, arid, belt stretches diagonally across the South American continent from the Pacific, in Northern Chile, to the Atlantic in Northern Patagonia. Consequently, from north to south, and from the Atlantic back toward the north-east border of this arid belt, the rainfall of Argentina decreases. On the north-eastern frontier it is about 80 inches a year; at Rosario, 40; at Cordoba, 30; at Buenos Aires, 35. In the Andean provinces it decreases from over forty, near the Bolivian frontier, to five or six at San Juan in the latitude of Santa Fé and Cordoba. In the eastern part of the great pampa the rainfall is ample for cereal crops; in the western half the rains are periodical and the region is better adapted to grazing than to agriculture, and there the grass lands are intersected with tracts of desert which grow larger towards the south. In the Andes the eastern ranges, catching the rain-laden upper currents, send down ample water to irrigate the valleys and adjacent plains. [Pg 41]

The mesopotamian region and the country directly south of the Plate estuary have, of course, an ample rainfall. South of the latitude of Buenos Aires the rainfall of the Andean region, which has grown steadily less from the northern boundary, begins again to increase. The eastern slopes of the mountains south for an indeterminate distance are well watered, while the Patagonian plains to their east are dry and desolate.

The climate varies from tropical, on the northern frontier, to arctic in Tierra del Fuego. The southern pampa and the Andean provinces are temperate or subtropical, and admirably adapted for habitation by men of European descent. Tucuman is the hottest of these provinces. There the average temperature of the coldest month is 53°; at Buenos Aires it is 50°; at Cordoba 47°. The average temperatures in these localities for the whole year are, respectively, 63°, 61°, and 63°.

When Columbus landed in the West Indies, this vast territory was occupied by two separate sets of aborigines. The Andean provinces were a part of the great Inca Empire. South as far as Mendoza, the Andean valleys were filled with a vigorous yet peaceful population who had brought the art of irrigation to a high degree of perfection. Plantations of corn, mandioc, and potatoes flourished on the terraced hillsides and in the fertile valleys. The lower and hotter plains furnished cotton. Constant communication, both commercial and governmental, was kept up with the centre of the Inca power in Cuzco, along roads that followed the easiest routes along the valleys and up over the passes to the Bolivian plateau, and thence to the central [Pg 42]
provinces of the Empire. Chile, on the other side of the Cordillera, was a sister province, and the passes over the great range were well known and constantly used. The population was greater than it is at the present day. While the political solidity of the Inca Empire is doubtless exaggerated, it is certain that the same civilisation extended from Ecuador to Mendoza and Santiago de Chile, and that the Cordilleran region was the home of twenty millions of people, organised into vigorous, progressive, and expanding communities.

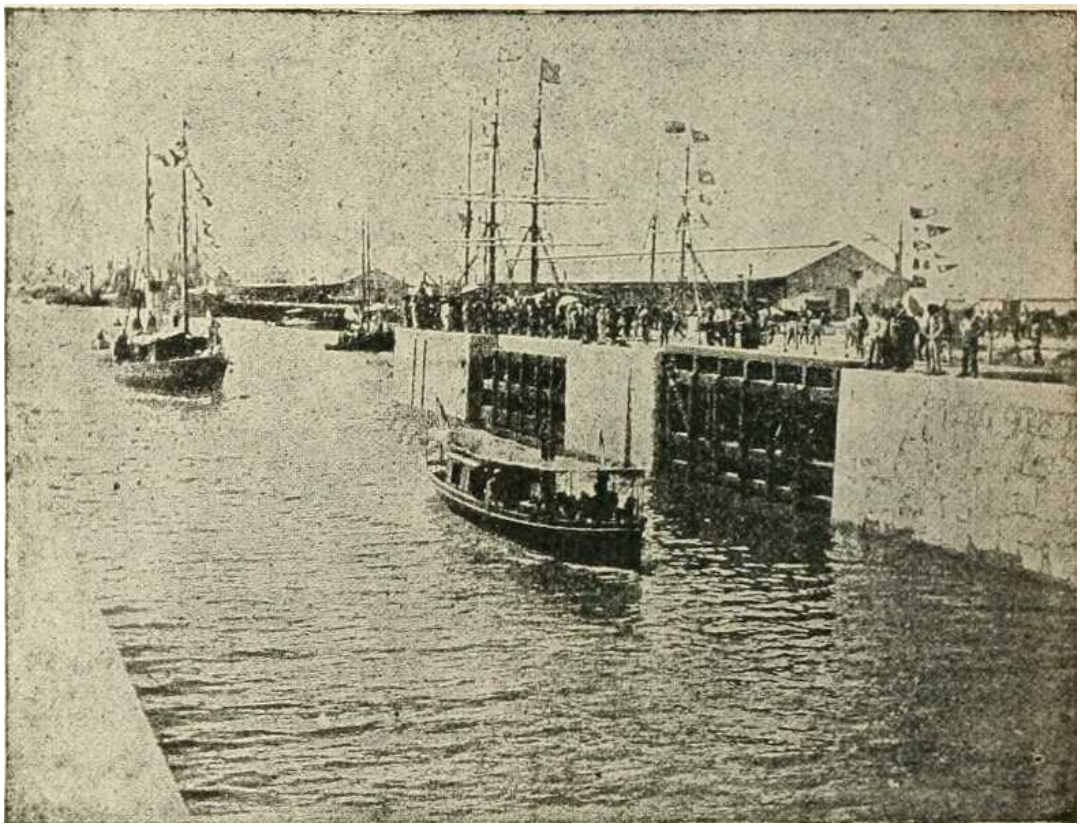
The Andean civilisation never showed any tendency to expand over the tropical plains of the great central depressions. The Incas themselves never cared to penetrate far down the wooded and steaming slopes of the Andes lying directly to the east of their own capital. Their dependent states bordering on the Argentine pampa did not cross the desert plains, where irrigating ditches could not reach. So far as we now know, the Andean Indians had never penetrated to the Atlantic.

East of the pampas, in the hilly woods of Paraguay and Brazil, tribes vastly inferior in intelligence, political

organisation, and civilisation, maintained a precarious existence. Many of those who belonged to the great Guarany family lived in palisaded villages and cultivated the soil, but none had advanced far on the road toward a reasonably efficient social and military organisation. The procuring of food for their daily wants was their chief occupation; the tribes were too small to make effective warfare on a large scale; there was no [Pg 43] prospect of any development into a higher culture. Certain tribes, inferior to the Guaranies, had spread from the wooded regions over the mesopotamian provinces and into the adjacent pampa, and the districts on both sides of the estuary, but they never ventured far from the water-supply. Though brave and intractable, these people showed no real fighting capacity until after white men had taught them the use of horses. With this knowledge, however, they were able to offer a very effective resistance, which was not completely overcome until twenty years ago.

The area of the whole Republic is 1,212,600 square miles. The mesopotamian region contains 81,000 square miles, being larger than England and even more uniformly fertile. The pampa suitable for grain production, including the semi-forested Chaco plain in the north, has an area of not less than 350,000 square miles. The Andean provinces contain nearly 300,000, and Patagonia 316,000. The grazing pampa is partly included in the Andean provinces; its boundaries to the south and toward the Atlantic are not capable of exact definition, but it includes perhaps half the territory of the Republic. Except the higher mountains, and the so-called deserts of the centre, the whole territory is productive.

[Pg 44]



DOCKS AT BUENOS AIRES.

The description of the white man's spread over this immense country—the largest, except Brazil, of the South American states, and of all these the most immediately and unquestionably suitable for maintaining a large population of European blood—is tedious when told in detail. But it is a story fraught with significance for the future of the world. On the plains of Argentina the descendants of the Spanish conquerors have fought out among themselves all the perplexing questions arising from the adaptation of Spanish absolutism and ancient burgh law to a new country and to personal freedom. After more than half a century of civil war, constitutional equilibrium has been attained. The country ought to be interesting where there has grown up within a few decades the largest city in the Southern Hemisphere, and the largest Latin city, except Paris, in the world. The growth of Buenos Aires has been as dizzying as that of Chicago, and the world has never seen [Pg 45] a more rapid and easy multiplication of wealth than that which took place in Argentina between the years of 1870 and 1890. Interesting, too, is Argentina as the scene of the most extensive experiment in the mixture of races now going on anywhere in the world except in the United States. In forty years more than two millions of immigrants have made their homes in Argentina. The majority are from Southern Europe, but the proportion of British, Germans, French, Belgians, and Swiss is a fifth of the whole. Will the Northerners be assimilated and disappear in the mass of Southerners, or will they succeed in impressing their characteristics on the latter? Will a mixed race be evolved especially suited to success in subtropical America? Will the system of administration painfully evolved out of the old Spanish laws prove permanently suited to the great industrial and commercial state that is growing up on the Argentine pampa? Will the municipal and bureaucratic system prove adaptable and elastic enough to furnish a political framework for the tremendous economic development which has already made such strides, but which really has only begun? Will the intellectual and social ideals of the coming Argentine nation be military, bureaucratic, leisurely, or will they be purely commercial? Certain answers to these questions cannot yet be deduced from the data furnished by the history of Argentina. Their solution, however, inheres in the past of its people. The future of Argentina will have a profound influence on the rest of the continent. It has the largest territory except Brazil, the greatest [Pg 46] per capita wealth, its population is increasing most rapidly, and it has received the greatest amount of foreign capital. Immigration and investment in the other countries may be expected soon to begin on a large scale. The experience of Argentina promises to prove invaluable to all of South America.

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CHAPTER II

THE SPANISH COLONIAL SYSTEM

Spain, as a world-power, reached her apogee in the year 1580, when Juan de Garay founded Buenos Aires. In that year Portugal was united to the Spanish Crown, and the East Indies and Brazil doubled Spain's colonial dominions. But at the very same moment the first symptom of her decline appeared. For the first time it was proved to the world that she could not hold the seas against her young rivals from Northern Europe. Sir Francis Drake, the earliest harbinger of Britain's dominance on the seas, appeared off the Plate on his way to the Pacific. Spain had trusted that the difficulty of threading the Straits of Magellan would protect the South Sea, but Drake slipped through in a spell of favourable weather and found few Spanish ships which were fit to fight him along all the coast to Panama. Drake's wonderful raid humbled Spanish pride where Spain was thought strongest, and encouraged Englishmen to fight with a good heart, a few years later, the overwhelming Invincible Armada.

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In 1616 a great Dutchman, Schouten, found the passage into the Pacific around Cape Horn. This discovery revolutionised the navigation routes of the world. Heretofore the only practicable commercial route to the Pacific had been across the Atlantic to the north shore of the Isthmus. Nombre de Dios was the metropolis and the market where all the goods for South America were landed. Those intended to be sold on the shore of the Caribbean were sent along its coast, and those intended for the Pacific were carried overland to Panama to be shipped on coasters down to their destination. Direct communication across the Atlantic to Buenos Aires was forbidden by the Spanish government.

Schouten's epoch-making discovery opened up the way for countless Dutch and English ships to ply a contraband trade with the towns of the Pacific coast, but did not induce the Spanish government to change its time-honoured policy or vary its trade routes. America was treated as the private property of the sovereign of Castile, and its commerce was to be exploited for his sole benefit. No Spaniard was allowed to freight a ship for the colonies, or to buy a pound of goods thence, without obtaining a special permission and paying for that privilege. Cadiz was the only port in Spain from which ships were permitted to sail for America, and the whole trade was farmed out to a ring of Cadiz merchants. To protect this monopoly and to prevent the export of gold and silver were the chief purposes of the Spanish colonial policy. Every port on the seaboard of Spanish South America was closed to trans-oceanic traffic, except Nombre de Dios on the north shore of the Isthmus. The towns on the Pacific and Caribbean coasts might admit coasting vessels properly identified as coming from the Isthmus and loaded with the consignments of the Cadiz monopolists, but the South Atlantic ports were absolutely closed so far as law could close them. Legally, no ships whatever, coasters or ocean carriers, could enter and unload at Buenos Aires. Her imports from Spain must first go to the Isthmus, be disembarked, and then transported across the mule-paths to the Pacific. Thence the goods had to go in coasters to Callao, in Peru, where they were again disembarked, transported up the Andean passes along the Bolivian plateau, and finally down into the Argentine plain. Under such conditions in the southern provinces European manufactures could only be sold at fabulous prices.

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On the other hand, such a system made exports impossible, except those of precious metals and valuable drugs. Hides, hair, wool, agricultural products, would not stand the cost of such long transport by land and sea. The Spanish authorities seem deliberately to have come to the conclusion that America should be confined to producing gold and silver, and they ruthlessly strangled all other industries. The Plate settlements especially suffered from the ruinous consequences of this system. Having no mines of precious metals, they were considered worthless; their interests were ignored, and their complaints given no attention. The mere existence of Buenos Aires was a source of anxiety to the monopolists and to the Spanish government. They feared that the English or Dutch might take possession of the mouth of the Plate and thence send expeditions to intercept gold and silver shipments along the overland routes. More immediate and real was the danger of the establishment of a contraband trade which would deprive the Cadiz merchants of their enormous profits on goods sent by the Isthmian route.

[Pg 50]

The home government enacted laws of incredible severity in trying to enforce this policy. In 1599 the governor of Buenos Aires was instructed to forbid all importation and exportation under penalty of death and forfeiture of property. The shipping of hides and horsehair to Spain would seem to be harmless enough, but the Spanish government dreaded that gold and silver might be smuggled out in the packages. The government would lose its royal fifth and the precious metals might be sent to Spain's rivals and enemies in Europe. According to the economic ideas then accepted, gold and silver alone constituted wealth, and every ounce mined in America which did not reach Spain's coffers was considered irretrievably lost. To prevent clandestine shipments of the precious metals all commercial intercourse from the coast to the interior was made illegal, and no goods whatever were permitted to pass along the road between Buenos Aires and Cordoba.

In the very nature of things such laws were unenforcible. Even the governors sent out for the special purpose of repressing evasions recommended modifications. But the Cadiz monopolists were stubborn and [Pg 51] their influence with the Court was all-powerful. The laws remained on the statute books only to be constantly disregarded. No human power could keep people who lived on the seashore, and who had hides, wool, and horsehair to sell, from exchanging them for clothing and tools. Perforce Buenos Aires became a community of smugglers. English and Dutch ships surreptitiously landed their cargoes of manufactures and took their pay in hides or in silver dollars that had escaped the Spanish soldiers on the road down from Potosí.

Rio and Santos, in Brazil, became intermediate warehouses for the commerce of the Plate. The officials in Buenos Aires itself connived at evasions, and the very governors made great fortunes in partnership with smugglers. The guards along the interior routes shut their eyes when the mule trains passed, and the goods of Flanders and France reached Cordoba, Santiago, Potosí, and even Lima, by way of Buenos Aires, and were sold at prices with which the Cadiz monopolists could not compete. Silver came surreptitiously from Chile and Bolivia to pay for these goods. The net result was that trade followed its natural and easiest route, although there was a fearful waste of energy in the process. The bribe-taking official, the idle soldier at the road station, the smuggler handling his goods in small boats and risking his life at night, and the numerous middle men absorbed what might have been legitimate profit to the seller or to the consumer. Commerce was half strangled, and with it the industries of the Spanish colonies. Civil government itself suffered, for a community [Pg 52] whose daily occupation it was to break one law could not be expected to have much respect for other laws, nor for the bribe-taking rulers and mulish legislators.

Nevertheless, against these outrageously unreasonable regulations the colonists for centuries made no armed protest. They never questioned the abstract right of the Crown to forbid them to sell what the labour of their hands had produced. They evaded but did not contest. Centuries of this sort of thing ingrained into South Americans the belief that industrial and commercial activity exists only by sufferance of the government. The right to sell, to buy, to exercise a profession or a trade, depended on the permission of the government. The people saw the executives taxing industry at their pleasure, and suppressing its very beginnings, until such a procedure came to seem a matter of course. Commercial spirit was constantly hampered and business skill deprived of its rewards. The evil effects of such a policy can be seen at every step of the development of the Spanish-American countries. It is no wonder that office-holding became the most popular of avocations. The farmer, the stock-raiser, and the merchant seemed to be allowed to exist only to pay the Spanish functionary, instead of the government's existing for the benefit of the producing community. To this day, service with the government is more esteemed than commercial pursuits. The national ideals are only slowly becoming industrial. [Pg 53]

The King of Castile was absolute sovereign and sole proprietor of America. The continent was an appanage of his crown; it did not form an integral part of Spain; America and Spain were connected solely through their common allegiance to him. The King governed America directly, assisted not by his regular ministers, but by a body of personal advisers called the Council of the Indies. His representatives in South America were the Viceroys of Mexico and Peru. The latter's jurisdiction extended over all South America. Certain great territorial divisions had been made Captaincies-General, and though theoretically subordinate to the Viceroy, they were in effect independent of him. In the great capital cities sat bodies of high judicial and executive officials known as Audiencias. Among their functions was that of exercising the powers of the Viceroy during his absence. Charcas, the capital of the mining region of Bolivia, was the seat of an Audiencia, and since this city had no resident Viceroy or Captain-General its Audiencia was the real supreme authority over the Argentine and all the territory east of the Cordillera, from Lake Titicaca to the Straits.

Viceroyalties and Captaincies-General were divided into provinces, each of which was ruled by a royal governor. When the Spaniards permanently occupied a new region their first step was to found a city and organise a municipal government. Like the Romans, they knew no other unit of political structure. The governing body was called a Cabildo and consisted of from six to twelve members who held office for life. It [Pg 54] conducted the ordinary judicial and civil administration through officers selected by itself and from its own members. Though the governor was *ex-officio* president of this body, and although its members had bought their places, they were not mere figureheads to register his will. Limited though their functions were, they represented the time-honoured governmental form into which Spaniards had always crystallised, and the Creoles could not be prevented from obtaining a preponderant influence in them. Throughout colonial times they represented local and Creole interests and operated continually as a check to the aggression of the military governors.

The territorial jurisdiction of a municipality was usually ill-defined. Indeed, as a rule, in the days of settlement it extended in every direction until the claim of another city was encountered, and the terms "city" and "province," were, therefore, usually synonymous. As population grew denser new cities were founded which as municipalities were independent of the capital town, but they were not necessarily separated from the original province. The Cabildo of the capital of a province bore a peculiar relation to the royal governor, and often tried to exercise a control over the affairs of the whole province, deeming themselves his associates and the sharers of the functions he exercised, outside of its own boundaries, as well as within them. This assumption was favoured by the fact that no general body representing all the cities of a province existed, nor [Pg 55] any constitutional machinery by which they could act in common.

Spanish-Americans have known only two forms of government, which have everywhere and always co-existed, though they seem inconsistent. First, there is an executive—the limits of his power ill-defined, and often imposing his will by force, in essence arbitrary and personal, and feared rather than respected by the people; secondly, the Cabildos and the modern deliberative bodies. Never really elective, these have nevertheless performed many of the functions of bodies truly representative; they have checked the arbitrary executives and furnished a basis for government by discussion. For centuries the communities looked to them for the conduct of ordinary local governmental affairs, and they survived all the storms of colonial and revolutionary times. On the other hand, their importance in the Spanish governmental scheme has been a most potent influence in preventing the growth of local representative government by elective assemblies and officials. Consequently, in national matters, freely elected and truly representative assemblies have been hard to obtain. Legislation has been controlled by the functionaries, and there has been no general and continuous participation in governmental affairs by the body of the people. Government by discussion and by the common-sense of the majority is difficult to establish among a people accustomed for centuries to seeing matters in the hands of officials whom they had no practical means of holding to responsibility. The people have rarely felt that the executive was their own officer. He was imposed on them from above, he was not [Pg 56] amenable to them, and so far as they were concerned he ruled at his own risk. The Creoles were intensely democratic in feeling and hard to control, and when they could not tolerate an executive they turned him out

by force, because no effective machinery existed by which they could turn him out peaceably.

Though the colonial governor was required to give an account of his administration at the close of his term, as a matter of fact he was an irresponsible and despotic satrap, who taxed, judged, and imprisoned people at his pleasure, restrained only by his traditional respect for the Cabildos and by the fear of exciting revolt. He commanded the armed forces, and his power was, in fact, rather military than civil in origin, method, and application. The Cabildos selected the ordinary judicial officers of first resort from among their own members' list, but their authority was not very effective outside the town itself. The vast plains between the settlements were largely governed patriarchally by the ranch owners and the popular and capable gauchos who grew into leaders.

A taste for town life soon became characteristic of the Spanish-Americans, and wherever able they crowded into the towns in preference to staying on their ranches. Wealth, intelligence, and political activity, therefore, came to be concentrated in a few *foci*. The system of granting immense tracts of land and dividing up the Indians as slaves among the proprietors would apparently have a tendency to produce a landed aristocracy. [Pg 57] But the money profits in colonial days were small, and the great landowner lived in the same style as his poorer neighbour. Titles of nobility did not exist, and the constitution of society was decidedly democratic. From the very earliest times no love was lost between the Creoles and the newly arrived Spaniards. The governor was almost invariably a Spaniard, while the Cabildo and its officers were usually Creoles.

[Pg 58]

CHAPTER III

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

The greatest name in the history of Buenos Aires during the early years of the seventeenth century is that of Hernandarias Saavedra. Of distinguished ancestry and pure Spanish blood, he was born at Asuncion in 1561. A thorough Creole, his education was confined to the instruction he received at the convent of the Franciscan Fathers in his native town. At fifteen he left school and joined an expedition against the Indians of the Andes. He showed remarkable capacity in fighting on the plains, and his shrewdness and firmness in dealing with the aborigines were even more valuable than his courage. Juan de Garay, the far-sighted Basque who founded Buenos Aires, was the patron, model, and hero of young Hernandarias, who followed him in his great expedition over the southern pampa. When Garay, the great Indian fighter and coloniser, perished, his mantle fell on the young man's shoulders. In 1588 Hernandarias distinguished himself in the defence of Corrientes against the Indians of Chaco and was the leader in the difficult campaigns undertaken in retaliation. By the [Pg 59] time he had reached thirty he was the leading Creole in all the vast region from the Upper Paraguay down to Buenos Aires, and when the Spanish Lieutenant-General of Asuncion was deposed an open Cabildo called him to the vacancy.

Eleven years later (1602) the governor of Buenos Aires died, and by common consent Hernandarias filled the office *ad interim*. This popular selection was soon confirmed by royal commission. He signalised his term of office by an expedition down the coast in which he carried the terror of the white man's arms to the limits of the continent, and defeated the Indians wherever they resisted. Severe with the Indians when occasion demanded, he was inflexibly just, and as a rule protected them against the unlawful aggressions of his countrymen. Though he did so much to curb their military power, he left behind him the name of being their best friend. He manumitted his own slaves; he opposed the extension of the system of "encomiendas" with its enslavement of wild Indians, and after his first term as governor of Buenos Aires he was named official protector of the aborigines.

Although a Creole, such was his ability as a military leader, and his shrewdness, wisdom, and firmness as a civil ruler, that the Spanish government could not ignore him. Though a governor was soon sent out from Spain to replace him and fatten off the provincials, Hernandarias remained the most powerful man in the colony. The Spanish authorities found that they needed him, and he retained their confidence as well as that [Pg 60] of the Creoles. He wisely advised the latter against open opposition, believing that continued peace must make the colony so strong that its interests could not continue to be ignored. In 1610 the Spanish government promulgated laws forbidding the further enslavement of Indians, and Hernandarias did much to secure their enforcement. At the same time he encouraged the Jesuits to extend their missions over the upper valley of the Uruguay, while he secured the ranchers of the western plains against the encroachments of these energetic priests. The Creoles prospered in the pastoral pursuits on the pampas, while the Jesuits developed the more purely agricultural resources of the wooded hills in the east. The success of his policy soon became evident in the increasing prosperity of the colony. Three hundred thousand hides were smuggled out of Buenos Aires in British ships alone in the year 1658, and by 1630 the Jesuit missions extended in a broad, continuous belt along the Paraná and the Uruguay from the Tropic of Capricorn to the thirtieth degree. They were the rulers of a great theocratic republic, whose area could not have been less than 150,000 square miles, and whose population of something like a million was concentrated in thriving and peaceful villages. The Jesuits systematically studied the resources of the country and taught their Indians the cultivation of many crops

suitable for export. Their territory was commercially tributary to Buenos Aires and contributed to her growth and prosperity.

When the governorship of Buenos Aires again became vacant in 1615, by the death of the Spanish incumbent, Hernandarias entered on his own third term, and two years later, by his advice, the rapidly growing province was divided. Paraguay became a separate province, and the new province of Buenos Aires included all the territory east of Tucuman and south and east of Paraguay. The three provinces of Paraguay, Buenos Aires, and Tucuman were administratively separate, and each was directly dependent upon the Audiencia at Charcas and the Viceroy at Lima. One immediate purpose of the Spanish government, in erecting Buenos Aires into an independent province, was the enforcement of the prohibition of trade. It was thought that a governor always on the ground, and concentrating his attention on the subject, would be efficient in that direction. However, the result was the opposite of that expected. No governor of Buenos Aires could avoid making the interests of his capital city his own. If honest, he was constantly pressing the home government to open the doors a little and to make exceptions of particular cases; if dishonest, he went into partnership with the traders. [Pg 61]

Hernandarias's career is the one striking example of success by a Creole in colonial times. Though the conquest and settlement of South America was accomplished by individual initiative, the men who had done the pioneering, who had fought and journeyed and suffered, who had stained their souls with horrible cruelties, whose adventures and successes would not be credited if the physical evidences did not prove the truth of the chronicles, were displaced with scant ceremony to make room for impoverished Court favourites. If the original conquerors were thus badly treated, the Creoles, unfortunate to have missed the inestimable advantage of being born on Castilian soil, could not look for favour, or equal treatment with the office-holders sent out from Madrid year after year. [Pg 62]

The story of the provinces that now form the territory of the Argentine Republic has not great interest during the long years that intervene from the completion of the romantic conquest until the uprising against Spanish authority. With the end of the sixteenth century, the spirit of enterprise among both Spaniards and Creoles diminished. Throughout the seventeenth century little progress was made in extirpating the savage Indians even in regions as close to Buenos Aires as Entre Rios and Uruguay. Settlements were confined to the right bank of the Paraná, and the Indians on the left bank, protected behind the wide flood of that river's delta, were left undisturbed. On the other hand, the dry and level pampas gave easy access to the thriving towns of the province of Tucuman. The Cordoba range, the greatest of the outworks of the Andes, rises from the plain less than two hundred miles from the Paraná at Santa Fé, and only four hundred miles from Buenos Aires itself. The city of Cordoba, in the fertile and well-watered slope at the foot of the sierra, was the capital of the province, the seat of a university from 1613, and the centre of Creole culture. The intercourse of the Buenos Aireans with their neighbours of the interior constantly increased in spite of the prohibitions of the Spanish government, while Cordoba and the other towns of Tucuman prospered with the sale of pack-mules to the mines of Bolivia. [Pg 63]

In the fertile Andean valleys of Rioja and Catamarca had lived since Inca times the powerful nation of the Calchaquies. Though they had acknowledged the suzerainty of the Cuzco emperors, they were ruled by their own chiefs. The first Spaniards that penetrated south from the Bolivian plateau failed to reduce them to submission. After a bitter experience the invaders passed to the west. For fifty years this gallant people were left undisturbed in their Andean fastnesses. Late in the sixteenth century aggressions again began. The Indians fought desperately, but were overcome. Forty thousand were sold into slavery; eleven thousand were exiled to Santiago del Estero, to Santa Fé, and Buenos Aires. The town of Quilmes, now one of the suburbs of Buenos Aires, was named from the mountain fastness where the Calchaquies made their last stand. Rosario was also settled by families of these brave Indians who were dragged across the pampas by the victorious Spaniards.

About 1655 a leader presented himself to the remnants of this warlike people, claiming to be the descendant and heir of the ancient Inca princes. He was known to the Indians as Huallpa-Inca, while the Spaniards called him Bohorquez. A woman of his own race, by the name of Colla, accompanied him, and she was greeted with all the ceremonious honours that belonged to the Inca Queen according to ancient customs. Even the Jesuit missionaries recognised the validity of the claims of Bohorquez, but the governor regarded him only as a menace to Spanish rule. He was pursued relentlessly; his followers rose in revolt; the rebellion spread northwards, but with the capture of the Inca it collapsed. He was sent to Lima, tried for treason, and executed, while the Calchaquies were placed under a military deputy-governor, subordinate to the governor of Tucuman. Their descendants have repeatedly proved that they came of fighting stock. They were among the best soldiers on the patriot side in the war of independence; the province of Rioja never submitted to Rosas, it resisted Mitre even after Pavon, the last and decisive battle of the civil wars, and it was the last province to give its allegiance to the confederation. [Pg 64]

The third province into which the whole territory which is now Argentina was then divided, was Cuyo,—including the three modern provinces of Mendoza, San Juan, and San Luiz. In its early years, these settlements did not extend far from the Andes. Late in the sixteenth century San Luiz was added, thus connecting the Spanish dominions from Chile across to the borders of Cordoba.

The complicity of the Spanish governors with the contraband commerce which they were especially charged to suppress is abundantly shown by contemporary documents. The very first governor sent to Buenos Aires after its erection into a separate province was accused of agreeing to allow a Lisbon merchant to land a shipload of goods. He fled to sanctuary among the Jesuits and there perished of grief and shame. But others were more impudent and successful. Mercado Villacorta came to his post announcing that he would so effectively enforce the prohibition that "not a bird could pass with food in its beak from Buenos Aires to the interior." However, not many months passed before a Dutch ship applied for permission to disembark its cargo, presenting papers signed by a natural son of King Philip himself. The captain offered to turn over his cargo in return for a certain amount of hides, wool, silver, and enough food to take him back to Flanders. The proposition, on its face, was very advantageous, and Villacorta accepted it on account of the royal treasury. He made a faithful return of the enormous profits accruing from the cargo of the ship in question, but neglected to report that three other Dutch ships were anchored just out of sight and that she passed over to them in the night what had been laden on her the day before. By chance, a royal commissioner was in Flanders and watched the unlading of all four ships. He certified that three million dollars worth of hides, wool, woods, and silver were taken out of their holds. Villacorta was cashiered for the moment, but a few years later we find him installed as governor of Tucuman. Another governor, Andres de Robles, engaged so publicly and impudently in fraudulent transactions and corrupt contracts that his conduct was the text of sermons in all the churches, but he calmly went his way and paid no attention to the clerical boycott and [Pg 65]

priestly denunciations. Imports by way of Buenos Aires increased so rapidly that soon the Cadiz monopolists were complaining to the Council of the Indies that the Potosí shops were filled with goods which had come by way of the Plate. Absolute prohibition had manifestly failed, and so palliative measures were tried. Permission was given to special ships to sail from Cadiz for Buenos Aires, carrying only enough merchandise to supply the demand of Buenos Aires itself, and giving bonds to return to Cadiz, so that the return cargo could be checked over to see that no silver was included. Naturally, this system proved impracticable and only opened another road to evasion. [Pg 66]

The first severe blow to the extension of the Spanish dominions over the valley of the Paraná was struck by the Portuguese Creoles of São Paulo in 1632. Though King Philip of Spain was at that time also monarch of Portugal and Brazil, the Paulistas viewed with alarm and jealousy the encroachments of the Jesuits into the regions lying to the south-east of the homes they had occupied for a century. They had had a hard fight to keep the Jesuits from establishing villages in their own neighbourhood, and now they saw these old enemies creeping up the slope of the tributaries of the Upper Paraná, shutting them off from expansion over the remoter interior. The Paulistas hated Spaniards and Jesuits; they wanted Indian slaves; they recked little of the fine-spun discussions as to the whereabouts of the dividing line between the Castilian and Portuguese possessions; their allegiance to the Spanish monarch sat lightly upon them. Their homes were on the [Pg 67] headwaters of tributaries of the Paraná, and their expeditions followed fearlessly down the streams and across the plateau and burst unheralded on the northern villages of the Jesuits. The poor Indians were defenceless and totally unprepared. The Jesuits had taught them the arts of peace but not of war; they had no arms; their spiritual rulers had bethought themselves safe in these remote plateaux in the middle of the continent; the few thousands of Paulistas, away over on the Atlantic border, had not been considered worth taking into consideration. Though few in number, the band of Portuguese Creoles created immense havoc. The Jesuit chroniclers say that three thousand Paulistas killed and carried away into captivity four hundred thousand Indians in a few years. This is certainly an exaggeration, but we know that all the Jesuit villages were wiped out as far south as the Iguassu, and that north of that tributary the Spanish line was pushed back to the Paraná. The Jesuits protested, but their complaints availed nothing. A few years later Portugal regained its independence of Spain and the work of the Paulistas stood. Spain lost her opportunity of securing the whole Plate valley, and the way was opened to the Brazilians to make the interior of the continent Portuguese.

The Paulistas' raids extended as far as the Jesuit villages in Paraguay and those on the Upper Uruguay, but here the priests managed to hold their own. Portugal's next move toward getting possession of all the territory east of the Paraná and the Uruguay was made from the coast. In 1680, an expedition sent by the [Pg 68] governor of Rio landed directly opposite the city of Buenos Aires and built a fort—calling it Colonia. This was the first permanent occupation of Uruguayan soil, either by Portugal or Spain. Both nations claimed it under differing interpretations of the Treaty of Tordesillas. Portuguese historians claim that the Paulistas had explored and asserted a right to the region in the early years of the seventeenth century; and Spanish authorities state that Jesuits had established a mission on the Lower Uruguay about the same time. As a matter of fact, Colonia was the first permanent European settlement south of Santa Catharina and north of the Plate, on or near the Atlantic coast.

The governor of Buenos Aires promptly raised a force, sailed across the estuary, and captured the new fort. However, Spain's diplomatic position in Europe at the time did not justify risking serious trouble over a matter that seemed so trifling as the possession of a piece of desert in South America. The governor was ordered to restore Colonia to the Portuguese authorities, leaving open for subsequent discussion and determination the question as to which nation was entitled to the territory on the north bank. With some interruptions, Portugal remained in possession of the port of Colonia for a century, and its existence was a constant source of annoyance to the Buenos Aireans. It immediately became a rival for the trade with the interior, and its merchants had the advantage of the open aid of their own government. Their competitors at [Pg 69] Buenos Aires across the river were confessedly engaged in breaking the law of their country. Exportable goods were never safe from seizure until they had left Argentine soil. Colonia was a convenient storing-place, and the river crafts, once within its port, could discharge at their leisure, free from anxiety that active officials might threaten to enforce inconvenient laws. Every time a war broke out between the two countries in Europe, the exasperated governor of Buenos Aires would send over an expedition and capture the Portuguese town. Three times was it taken and as often restored on the conclusion of peace. Colonia in Portuguese hands interfered with the trade of Buenos Aires merchants, and the illicit gains of Spanish officials, and also destroyed any remnant of efficiency remaining to the prohibition of commerce across the Atlantic. Back of these commercial and temporary considerations was the menace to the future occupancy by Spaniards of the vast and fertile region extending from the boundaries of São Paulo to the mouth of the Uruguay.

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CHAPTER IV

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The rapid decadence of Spain itself during the reigns of the last kings of the House of Austria was reflected in the colonies. With the accession of the Bourbons a forward movement began, and the colonial administration was roused into an appearance of activity. Something was done in the direction of adopting a more rational commercial policy, but it was already too late. The control of trade had irrevocably passed to Holland and England, and Spain could not recover the business of her own colonies. The efforts to improve administration were largely nullified by the conservatism of her aristocracy. It seemed that her mediæval governmental machinery could not be adapted to the conditions created by her active rivals.

In 1726, Montevideo, the strategic key to Uruguay and the north bank of the Plate, was occupied and fortified. Thereafter, though Colonia still remained in Portuguese hands, it was isolated and scarcely tenable. Immediately the north shore of the Uruguay began to be settled by Spaniards. Simultaneously the ranchers of [Pg 71]
the right bank of the Paraná, who had long been tempted by the fine pastures on the opposite shore, finally ventured to secure a foothold in Entre Rios. The warlike Charruas had kept the white man out of this favoured region for two centuries, although it was so near to Buenos Aires. They did not yield without a struggle, but they were overcome, and those who refused to submit fled to the east bank of the Uruguay River—the present country of that name. There they were followed by the proselyting Jesuits, and it was only a question of a few years before the Argentines proper had crossed the Uruguay and were pasturing their herds in the rolling champaign country that extends from that river to the sea. The Spanish advance would have continued up the coast, probably as far as the northern boundary of the Rio Grande do Sul, if the Portuguese had not in the meantime established a town and fort at the mouth of the Duck Lagoon, which is the only port that gives access to the interior of that most valuable region.

The increase of population, the extension of the occupied pasture-ground, and the greater demand from Europe for hides and wool, tended to multiply the volume and value of Argentine exportable commodities. Northern Europe made marvellous strides in purchasing power during the eighteenth century, and prices all over the world felt the impetus. The commercial policy of the Spanish government became more lax and the trade prohibition fell into contempt and disuse. The system of fleets of Spanish ships under convoy was abandoned, and single ships, mostly foreign owned, and trusting to their sailing qualities and equipment to [Pg 72]
escape capture, carried all the trade. The trade of Buenos Aires grew and the population of the city increased in proportion. The exhaustion of the surface deposits and richer lodes of precious metals in the mining provinces during the eighteenth century tended to increase the relative importance of Buenos Aires and her territory, even in the mind of the Spanish government, and to turn a current of immigration toward the pastoral and agricultural provinces.

In 1750 the Spanish government made an effort to get rid of the Portuguese in Colonia by negotiation. Portugal agreed to exchange that port for the Jesuit Missions which covered the fine pastures in the western half of the present Brazilian state of Rio Grande. The helpless Indians were driven off or massacred in spite of their feeble resistance, but as soon as the treaty was made public, Spanish and Jesuit protests against the abandonment of the territory were so violent that the agreement was formally annulled by mutual consent. The Portuguese retained Colonia, and though they gave up their formal claims to the Missions the military operations they had so promptly undertaken against that region had pretty well rooted out Spanish influence on the east bank of the Upper Uruguay. It was never re-established, and the dividing line of 1750 is still substantially the boundary between Spanish and Portuguese South America.

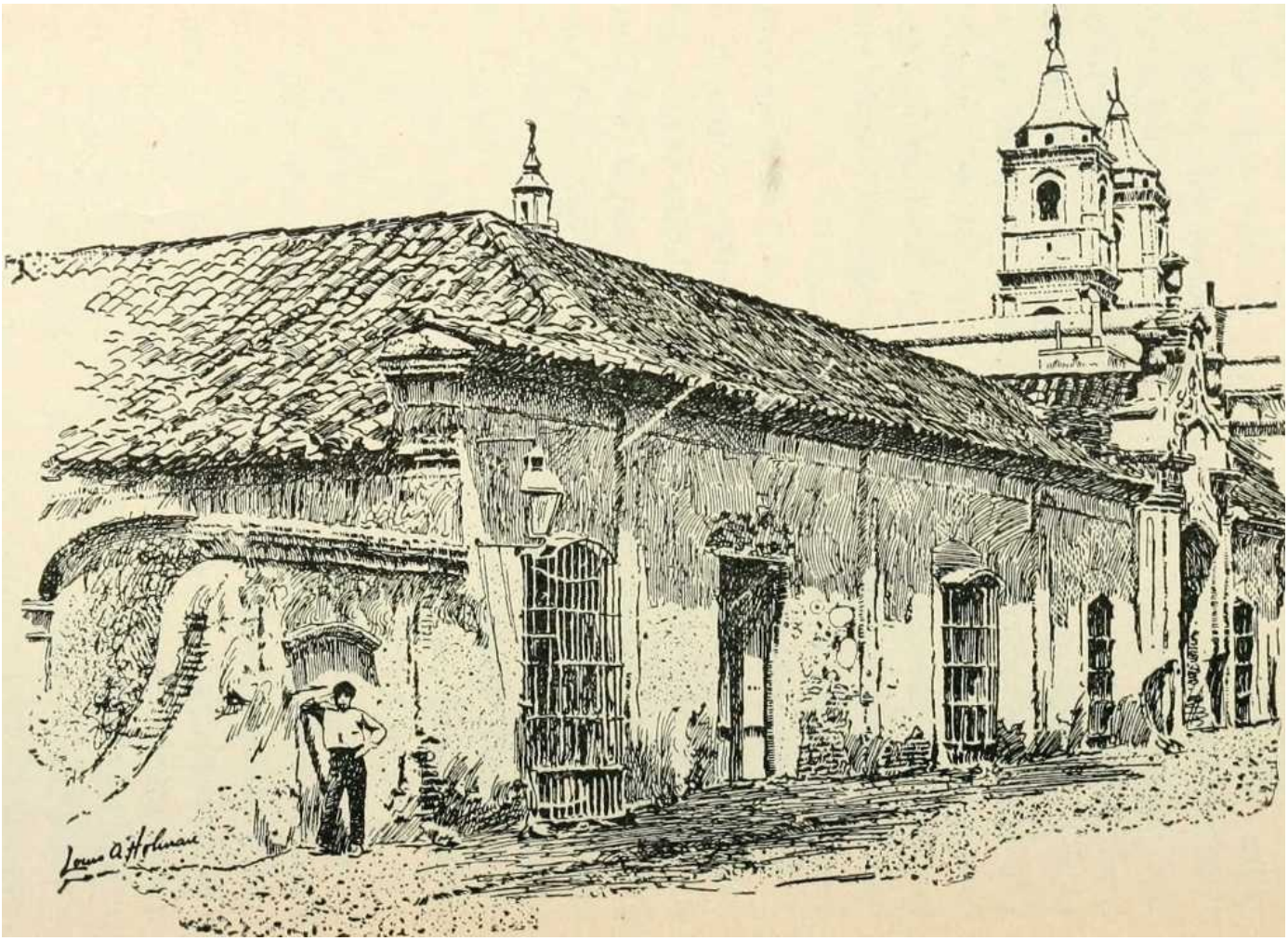
In 1767 Spain followed the example of Portugal and France and expelled the Jesuits from her dominions. [Pg 73]
For generations they had been the largest property holders in the Plate provinces. In the larger towns popular education was in their hands. Their great schools, convents, and churches were the finest edifices in the country. To endow their educational and religious work they had accumulated town houses, ranches, plantations, mills, cattle, ships, and even slaves. Along the banks of the Upper Paraná and Uruguay they had succeeded in dominating and absorbing the whole productive life of the community. Their system in the Indian regions smothered everything else; no white man was allowed to visit their settlements; the Indians were kept in absolute ignorance of the existence of an external world; the Jesuits required their subjects to work, gathering matte tea, cutting wood, cultivating the soil, and tending cattle. However, the Indians were kindly treated and were content with the easy life they enjoyed under the mild Jesuit rule. The Fathers exported immense quantities of hides and controlled the production of matte, then, as now, the favourite drink of Creoles and Indians in the southern half of the continent. The Indians received their living and the Jesuits absorbed the surplus. Their misfortunes in Brazil had taught them a lesson, and they had tried to erect their theocracy in regions where they need not come into close contact and constant conflict with the lay settlers. For a century, they had been left undisturbed in South-eastern Paraguay and the region between the Upper Paraná and Paraguay.

Neither their services to civilisation nor regard for the interests of the Indians, nor their wealth and [Pg 74]
influence, could avail anything against the mandate of the Spanish monarch, backed by the Vatican and joyfully enforced by the colonial authorities. The Jesuits who had been employed in teaching in the towns were incontinently imprisoned and summarily shipped off across the seas, while their schools were placed under the charge of other ecclesiastics, and their estates sold at auction. In the missions resistance was anticipated, but none was made. The Indians, accustomed to look to the Fathers for guidance in everything, were aghast when they saw the Jesuits leaving, and Spanish officials taking their places. The new shepherds had not the skill to drive the flocks to the shearing, and could not keep the Indians together so as to exploit them for the benefit of the royal treasury. From their cruelties and exactions the Indians fled and sought refuge among the Creole settlements of Entre Rios and Uruguay, where they constituted a valuable addition to the population.

This transplantation had hardly been accomplished when the Spanish government took a step which revolutionised the administration of the southern half of the continent during the remainder of colonial times, and determined the future boundaries of the nations of South America. On the 1st of August, 1776, the Viceroyalty of Buenos Aires was created. All the territory south of Lake Titicaca was separated from the Viceroyalty of Peru, and the province of Cuyo was detached from the Captaincy-General of Chile. The new Viceroyalty covered the territory that has since become the four countries—Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay, and [Pg 75]
Argentina. In colonial times it was divided into eight "intendencias," of which the northern four covered the region that is now Bolivia and was then known as Upper Peru. The four southern intendencias were: Paraguay; Salta, covering the northwestern provinces; Cordoba, covering the central and western provinces; and, finally, Buenos Aires, which, besides the present province, included Santa Fé, the whole mesopotamian region, Uruguay, and the Jesuit country of the Upper Paraná.

The creation of the Viceroyalty was a reluctant and tardy reversal of the colonial policy which had steadfastly refused to recognise in Buenos Aires the inevitable outlet of the region. Although the four

northern intendencias contained more than half the population, and Paraguay probably half the remainder, Buenos Aires was made the capital. Situated at the mouth of the great system of waterways, it was the natural commercial centre of the whole Viceroyalty. In fifty years it had doubled in population, while the old cities on the Bolivian plateau had remained stationary. In 1776 its population did not much exceed twenty thousand souls, but was rapidly increasing. Heretofore, it had been rather a resort of smuggling merchants than a centre of political and social influence. Nevertheless, from this unpromising root was to spring the spreading tree of South American independence. Buenos Aires is the only capital that never readmitted the Spanish authorities, once they had been expelled, and within her walls San Martin drilled the nucleus of the armies that drove the Spaniards out of Chile and Peru. [Pg 76]



AN OLD SPANISH CORNER IN BUENOS AIRES.

The alarming growth of the Portuguese power southward was another potent reason for the establishment of a strong and independent military jurisdiction at the mouth of the Plate. The Spanish government had at last determined on vigorous measures to take Colonia, drive the Portuguese from Rio Grande, and push the Spanish boundaries east to the original Tordesillas line. Pedro de Zeballos, the first Viceroy, sailed in November, 1776, in command of the largest force which up to that time had been sent to the Western Continent. Against his twenty-one thousand men and great fleet the Portuguese had no force, military or naval, strong enough to make a serious resistance. [Pg 77]

The flourishing Brazilian settlement of Santa Catharina was easily reduced, and, leaving it garrisoned, the fleet and army went on to the Plate. Colonia surrendered without resistance, and the army prepared to march northward and drive the Portuguese from all the coast as far north as Santa Catharina. Hardly was the advance begun, when news was received that peace between Spain and Portugal had been signed. The latter retained eastern Rio Grande, and Santa Catharina was restored, while Spain's title to Uruguay and the Missions was recognised.

Zeballos returned to Buenos Aires and actively engaged in the military and civil organisation of the new Viceroyalty. A fresh set of special regulations had been prepared in Spain, creating an elaborate hierarchy of executives. The chief provincial governors, now called "intendentes," were subject to the orders of the Viceroy in military matters, but as to taxation they were directly responsible to the Crown. They were entrusted with the paying of governmental employees, which gave them great influence with the Cabildos and functionaries. [Pg 78]

The intention of the Spanish government was manifestly to enforce close relationship and greater subjection to the central authority at Madrid. In practice, however, the financial independence of the provincial governors stimulated the feeling of local independence, increased the influence of the Cabildos, and paved the way for the revolution.

Since 1765 the rest of South America had enjoyed the privilege of free commerce from the mother country. Now, the same rule was applied to Buenos Aires, and trade with Spain quickly attained respectable dimensions. In the five years from 1792 to 1796 more than one hundred ships made the voyage to Spain, and exports ran up to five million dollars annually. Buenos Aires became the *entrepôt* of the wine and brandy of Cuyo; the poncho and hides of Tucuman; the tobacco, woods, and matte tea of Paraguay; the gold and silver of Upper Peru; the copper of Chile; and even the sugar, cacao, and rice of Lower Peru. By the end of the century the population of the city was forty thousand. Thirty thousand more lived in the immediate vicinity; Montevideo had seven thousand, and the outlying settlements of Uruguay twenty-five thousand inhabitants. [Pg 79] The civilised population of the Buenos Aires intendencia was about one hundred and seventy thousand, and in

population and in wealth it had become easily the first among the eight great districts of the Viceroyalty.

[Pg 80]

CHAPTER V

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE REVOLUTION

The Viceroyalty was a heterogeneous mass. The common subjection of its component parts to the Viceroy gave it a mere appearance of cohesion. The centring of the commercial currents in Buenos Aires did not furnish an organic connection sufficiently strong to unite provinces and cities so widely separated and so different in social and industrial constitution. Upper Peru had been a mining region, and its white population was largely of a shifting character. The bulk of the population were Indians, and the inhabitants of Spanish blood were still taskmasters. Society was as yet in unstable equilibrium, and the different elements had not thoroughly coalesced. Paraguay was an isolated and almost self-sufficing commonwealth. It was essentially theocratic, and averse to receiving external impressions. In Salta and Cordoba the proportion of Indian blood was not so preponderant as in Bolivia and Paraguay; agriculture was the economic basis; the Creoles and Indians had largely amalgamated politically and socially; and, though the people of Spanish descent lived [Pg 81] mostly in the towns, they were in close and friendly contact with the civilised Indians who laboured in the irrigated valleys. On the wide pampas a new race of men had sprung into existence—the gauchos, whose business was the herding of cattle, whose homes were their saddles, and who were as impatient of control and as hard to deprive of personal liberty as Arabs or Parthians. The proportion of white blood increased toward the coast. Buenos Aires was the boom town of the region and the time. Its population was recruited from among the most adventurous and enterprising Spaniards and Creoles. Lima and Mexico were centres of aristocracy and bureaucracy, while the social organisation of Buenos Aires and its surrounding territory was completely democratic. All were equal in fact; neither nobles nor serfs existed; the Viceroy was little more than a new official imposed by external authority, and having no real support in the country itself. It is not a mere coincidence that the three centres—Caracas, Buenos Aires, and Pernambuco—whence the revolutionary spirit spread over South America should all have been democratic in social organisation and far distant from the old colonial capitals. In Buenos Aires, the Viceroy himself could not find a white coachman. An Argentine Creole would no more serve in a menial capacity than a North American pioneer; and a Creole hated a Spaniard very much as his contemporary, the Scotch-Irish settler of the Appalachians, hated an Englishman.

Not even religion furnished a strong bond of union between the widely dispersed cities and provinces of the [Pg 82] Viceroyalty. The priests had not been organised into a compact hierarchy. They had little class feeling; they lived the life of the Creoles and shared the same prejudices. Half the members of the first Congress after the revolution were priests, but they pursued no distinctive policy of their own and offered no effective resistance to the growth of the power of the military chiefs.

Commerce with Spain had been authorised, but with other nations it was still unlawful. The Cadiz monopolists still fought hard to preserve their privileges and to control the Atlantic trade as they had controlled the route by the Isthmus. Great Britain had enjoyed a monopoly of the traffic in negroes during most of the colonial period, but in 1784 all foreign ships carrying slaves were allowed to enter, unload, and take a return cargo of the "products of the country." The Cadiz merchants contended that hides—then the principal article of export—were not "products" within the meaning of this law, and the Spanish courts decided in their favour. This absurd decision created a storm of opposition in Buenos Aires, but even more unreasonable restrictions continued to be insisted upon. The proposition to allow the colonies to trade with one another was vehemently opposed by the people of Cadiz and their agents in Buenos Aires.

Meanwhile, England's maritime victories in the wars of the French Revolution were sweeping Spanish commerce from the sea, and the people of the Plate saw themselves again about to be shut off from the sea [Pg 83] unless permission were granted to ship in foreign vessels. Dissatisfaction grew apace, and the prestige of the Viceregal government and the influence of resident Spaniards were seriously compromised. At the same time there were fermenting among the intelligent and educated youth of the city the new ideas of the North American and French revolutions—liberty, the rights of man, representative government, and popular sovereignty.

For generations England had cast covetous eyes at South Africa and South America. Menaced with exclusion from Europe in her giant conflict with Napoleon, her statesmen determined to seize outside markets and possessions. The Cape was captured in 1805, and the next year came the turn of Argentina. June 25, 1806, Admiral Popham appeared in the estuary, and fifteen hundred troops, under the command of General Beresford, were disembarked a few miles below Buenos Aires. The Viceroy fled without making resistance, and on the 27th the British flag was run up on his official residence. At first the population appeared to acquiesce, but finally Liniers, a French officer in the Spanish employ, gathered together at Montevideo a thousand regulars and a small amount of artillery. The militia of Buenos Aires soon proved themselves anxious to rise against the heretic strangers. Liniers crossed the estuary and, advancing without opposition to the neighbourhood of Buenos Aires, established a camp to which the patriotic inhabitants flocked. Within a short time he had armed an overwhelming number of the citizens, the scanty British garrison was shut up in [Pg 84]

the fort, and on the 12th of August the Argentines advanced. After some hard street fighting, the English were forced to surrender, and the flags which were captured that day are still exhibited in the city of Buenos Aires with just pride as trophies of Argentine valour. The British expedition might have been successful had it been more numerous, or had it been promptly re-enforced. If the capture of Montevideo had followed that of Buenos Aires, the Argentines would have had no base of operations, and their militia would have remained without ammunition and artillery stores. It is interesting to speculate what would have been the subsequent history of the temperate part of South America in such a case. It is possible that the Plate would have become part of the British Dominion; British immigration would have followed, and the Plate might have become the greatest of British colonies.

But the opportunity was quickly gone. The successes of 1806 so strongly aroused the spirit of national and race pride that thereafter the conquest of Argentina was a task too great for the small armies which in those days could be transported overseas. No sooner was Beresford expelled than the victors met in open Cabildo, declared the cowardly Viceroy suspended from office, and installed the royal Audiencia in his place. A few months later the dreaded British re-enforcement came. Four thousand men disembarked in eastern Uruguay, and Montevideo was taken by assault. In Buenos Aires all was confusion, but the people were resolute to [Pg 85] resist. Again an open Cabildo assembled, and Liniers, the French officer under whose leadership the victory of last year had been won, was given supreme authority. Military enthusiasm spread among all classes and the people were rapidly enrolled in volunteer regiments. When General Whitelocke approached the city with several thousand regulars the Argentines confidently marched out to meet him. In the open they stood no chance, and they were compelled to fly back to the shelter of their narrow streets and stone houses. On the 5th of July, 1807, the British troops, disdaining all precautions, marched into the city. Both sides of the narrow streets were lined with low, fireproof houses, whose flat roofs afforded admirable vantage-ground. The Buenos Aires men were well supplied with muskets, and the women and boys rained down stones, bricks, and firebrands on the masses crowding the pavements below. The British could not retaliate on their enemies, but pushed stubbornly on toward the centre of the city, dropping by hundreds on the way. At the main square, in front of the fort, barricades had been thrown up, and there the English met a reception which flesh and blood could not endure. For two days the conflict raged, but finally the English general was obliged to give up and ask for terms. He had lost a fourth of his force and was allowed to withdraw the remainder only on agreeing to evacuate Montevideo within two months.

The political and commercial consequences of the English invasions were vastly important. The military [Pg 86] power of the Argentine Creoles, hitherto unsuspected, stood revealed; local pride had been stimulated; and, at the same time, the invasions gave a tremendous impulse to foreign commerce. A fleet of English merchantmen had followed the warships. Untrammelled commerce with the world at last became a fact. English manufactured goods flooded the market. Articles until then beyond the reach of all but the wealthiest now became cheap enough for the purses of the gauchos. Buenos Aires's trade was boomed by the sales of imported goods to the interior provinces. Creole jealousy of Spaniards rapidly became accentuated. From this time dates the general use of "Goths," applied to Spaniards as a term of opprobrium, and of "Argentines," as a designation for the natives of the Plate. Recognition could no longer be withheld from the men who had organised and commanded victorious troops, and henceforth the Creoles were in fact, as well as in law, eligible to offices of trust and profit. Even in the Buenos Aires Cabildo, though all the members were native Spaniards, Creole ideas predominated.

Scarcely had the English retired from Montevideo when the course of events in Europe precipitated Spanish South America into confusion. Charles IV., the pusillanimous King of Spain, allied himself with Napoleon and aided the latter's aggressions against Portugal. The Portuguese monarch was driven to Brazil, the latter country thereby gaining complete commercial freedom and virtual political independence. This naturally suggested to the Argentines that they were entitled to the same privileges from Spain. Charles IV. [Pg 87] and Godoy, the accomplice of his wicked wife, who really governed in his name, were bitterly hated at home. Napoleon's troops swarmed over the country and the monarchy itself was clearly tottering to its fall. Ferdinand, heir of Charles IV., conspired against his father and forced the latter to resign in his favour. The Spanish governor of Montevideo at once took the oath of allegiance to the new monarch, an act of insubordination to his titular superior, the Viceroy. The latter was the Frenchman, Liniers, who sympathised with the Creole party in desiring to wait and obtain concessions for the colony before recognising any of the various claimants. A dispute over the oath of allegiance to Ferdinand arose which marked a definite rupture between the Creoles and the old-line Spaniards—between those who regarded the special interests of the colony as paramount and those who wished at all hazards to maintain connection with the mother country.

Charles's abdication was only the beginning of complications. He protested that it had been obtained from him by duress, and with Ferdinand he appealed to Napoleon as arbiter. The latter forced them both to renounce their claims in favour of his brother Joseph. Everyone in South America was agreed not to recognise Joseph Bonaparte as King of Spain, but there was wide diversity of opinion as to what affirmative action ought to be taken. Most regarded Ferdinand as the legitimate king, but he was in a French prison. Charles still claimed the throne, while provisional governments were formed in many cities of Spain to resist the [Pg 88] enthroning of Joseph. A central junta at Seville claimed to be the depositary of supreme executive power pending Ferdinand's return, and to this junta the Spaniards of the Plate gave their earnest and unhesitating allegiance. But the Creoles could not see their way clear to an unconditional recognition of such a self-constituted revolutionary body. Few believed that the Spanish patriots could withstand Napoleon's armies. If Spain had submitted to Joseph the various parts of South America would have become independent without any serious struggle. The "Goths" in the Plate were united in a definite policy—loyalty to the only Spanish government that was vindicating the nationality. The Creoles could agree on no affirmative programme, but all of them were determined that the "Goths" should not get the upper hand. The latter rose against Liniers and tried to install a junta on the model of that at Seville. In view of the menacing attitude of the Creole militia, the attempt was a failure, but the Frenchman did not have the resolution to maintain his advantage. The Seville junta finally named a Viceroy, and, though some of the resolute spirits among the militia leaders wished to resist, the majority shrank from open defiance of the highest existing Spanish authority. On the 30th of July, 1809, the new Viceroy took possession. He gained popularity by his decree declaring free commerce with all the world, but his next act opened the eyes of the Creoles to the real effect of the re-establishment of the Spanish system. He sent a thousand men to Charcas, in the northern part of the [Pg 89] Viceroyalty, to aid in the bloody suppression of a revolutionary movement undertaken by the Creole inhabitants of that city. The story that shortly came back of wholesale confiscations and executions widened the breach between Spaniards and Creoles.

Meanwhile, another crisis in Spanish home affairs was approaching. Napoleon's armies were sweeping the Peninsula from end to end. In the early months of 1810 they overran Andalusia, the centre of resistance. It

seemed as if the subjection of Spain was about to be completed. On the 18th of May, Viceroy Cisneros issued a proclamation frankly revealing the critical situation of the Spanish patriot, and of the junta under whose commission he was acting. All classes of Buenos Aires immediately engaged in feverish discussions as to what should be done. The Spaniards wished to retain their privileged position; the Creoles were determined to put an end to discrimination against themselves. These were the real purposes of the two parties. The Spaniards did not especially favour absolutism, nor did the Creoles in general intend to renounce the sovereignty of Ferdinand, should he ever escape from captivity. Among the Creoles were many liberals, mostly young and ardent men, whom study and travel had convinced of the necessity for racial reform and colonial autonomy. Among their leaders were Saavedra, commander of the most efficient militia regiment; Vieytes, at whose house the meetings of the conspirators were held; Manuel Belgrano, afterwards the brains and right arm of [Pg 90] the movement; and two eloquent young lawyers, Castelli and Paso. The active spirits conspired to depose the Viceroy, confident that this measure would be popular among all classes of Creoles. On the 22nd of May a committee of popular chiefs waited on him to demand his resignation. Resistance was futile, for he could not rely on the troops. They were Creoles and proud of the fact that Argentines had expelled the British. The office-holders tried to arrange a compromise by which an open Cabildo should elect the ex-Viceroy president of a new governing junta. The populace and the militia would not submit, and on the 25th of May—now celebrated as the anniversary of the establishment of Argentine liberty—a great armed assembly met in the Plaza. The Creole badge was blue and white—then adopted as the Argentine colours. The proceedings were frankly revolutionary. A junta was named from among the Creole leaders, and the Buenos Aires Cabildo obediently proclaimed this body the supreme authority of the Viceroyalty. There was no pretence of consulting the other provinces. Spanish constitutional law provided no machinery through which they could be heard, and the capital assumed, as a matter of course, the right of governing the dependencies.

The events of the 25th of May were not intended to sever relations between Spain and Buenos Aires. The acts of the new government ran in the name of Ferdinand VII., King of Castile and Leon. An able and ambitious coterie of young men came to the front, whose achievements in war, administration, and diplomacy [Pg 91] were to change the face of South America. In the neighbouring cities there were no spontaneous uprisings against the Spanish governors, but the Buenos Aires patriots lost no time in sending out armies to spread their liberal and anti-Spanish doctrines. The first movement was towards the old university town of Cordoba. Here ex-Viceroy Liniers had managed to get a few troops together, but not enough to make effective resistance. At the first encounter they were all captured, and the Buenos Aires junta immediately ordered the execution of the captured officers and of the anti-Creole chiefs. This barbarous act is a fair sample of the horrible bloodthirstiness of the war between Creoles and Spanish sympathisers. As a rule, both sides slew their prisoners, and the combats were, therefore, incredibly bloody for the numbers engaged.

The Buenos Airean army continued its triumphal march through the provinces of Cordoba and Salta up to the Bolivian mountains. The Creole townspeople reorganised the municipal governments on an anti-Spanish basis, and the army increased like a rolling snowball. Not until it had reached the high lands of Bolivia was serious resistance encountered. On the 7th of November the patriots gained the battle of Suipacha. The Creoles of Bolivia rose, and the Buenos Aireans penetrated rapidly as far as the boundaries of the Viceroyalty. Meanwhile, Manuel Belgrano had led a small expedition to Paraguay. However, the inhabitants of that isolated region showed no disposition to join the Buenos Aireans in their revolutionary movement. The [Pg 92] Spanish governor allowed Belgrano to advance nearly to Asuncion, but there his little army was overpowered and forced to surrender on honourable terms. Montevideo's capture seemed essential to the safety of Buenos Aires itself. Spanish ships under the orders of its governor blockaded the river and constantly menaced an attack on the patriot capital. Early in 1811, Artigas with a band of gauchos from Entre Rios crossed the Uruguay and overran the country up to the walls of the fortress, defeating the Spaniards in the battle of Piedras. Re-enforcements came from Buenos Aires, and a siege of Montevideo was begun.

At this juncture news came of a great disaster in the north. The Argentines had at first been joined by Bolivian patriots, but the latter were jealous; and the former, bred on the plains, could not well endure the high altitude, suffering in health and efficiency. The Viceroy of Peru rapidly recruited a considerable army among the sturdy and obedient Indians of the high Peruvian plateau. On the 20th of June, 1811, the patriot army was attacked at Huaqui, near the southern end of Lake Titicaca, and was virtually annihilated. Bolivia was lost to the patriots and Spanish authority was re-established as far down as the Argentine plains.

This great defeat completely changed the attitude of affairs. The Argentines evacuated Uruguay, and the Spanish colonial authorities everywhere took the offensive. The heroic resistance which the Spanish people were now making to the army of Napoleon's marshals encouraged the Viceroy and governor to believe that [Pg 93] Ferdinand would soon again be seated on the throne of his fathers. Spanish ships dominated the delta of the Paraná, and the Spanish troops from Montevideo descended at pleasure on the banks of the Plate or its tributaries. The Spanish residents at Buenos Aires plotted against the junta, but their conspiracy was betrayed, and in the middle of 1812 their chiefs, to the number of thirty-eight, mostly wealthy merchants, were arrested and garrotted. The situation of the revolutionary government was so desperate that it is not hard to understand why the junta ruthlessly repressed all signs of disaffection. Victorious Spanish armies threatened them from both Bolivia and Montevideo, and fire in the rear would have been fatal.

In this crisis of their fate, Manuel Belgrano, the great leader of the Buenos Aires Creoles, came to the front. A native of the city, he had been educated in Spain, where he had imbibed liberal principles. On his return he threw himself with all the prestige of his learning, talents, and wealth on the side of the Creoles. His faith in the triumph of liberal principles was unalterable, and he was a more radical advocate of independence than most of his associates. Though without military training, and though his expeditions in Paraguay and Uruguay had not been successful, his prestige and his unwavering confidence in the patriot cause pointed him out as naturally the fittest leader. Again he was entrusted with the command, and went north to Tucuman, where the disheartened fragments of the patriot army were fearfully waiting for the descent of the victorious [Pg 94] Spaniards. The inhabitants of Jujuy and Salta had been driven from their homes, and for the first time gaucho horsemen appeared as the principal element of an Argentine army. The junta ordered Belgrano to retire, so as to protect Buenos Aires, but he disobeyed and stuck to Tucuman and let the Spaniards get between him and the capital. With the country up in arms, and the exasperated gauchos harassing his march, the Spanish general did not dare leave Belgrano's army behind him. The Spanish army turned back to Tucuman to finish with the mass of militia there before resuming its march on the capital. To the surprise of South America, the result was a decisive patriot victory. The gaucho cavalry, armed with knives and bolos, mounted on fleet little horses, carrying no baggage, and living on the cattle they killed at the end of each day's march, followed the fleeing Spaniards up into the mountains and inflicted enormous losses. This victory gave the Argentines for another year assurance against invasion by land, and Buenos Aires remained a focus whence anti-Spanish influences could spread over the rest of South America. The patriots again invaded Uruguay, shut up the

Spaniards within the walls of Montevideo, and prepared once more to carry the war into Bolivia.

[Pg 95]

MANUEL BELGRANO.
[From an oil painting.]

All this while the government at Buenos Aires was involved in internal quarrels. The first junta soon expelled its fiercest, strongest, and most active spirit,—Moreno,—who seems to have been the only man of the period who foresaw the necessity of establishing a federative form of government. With the disaster of Huaqui the necessity for a more compact executive became urgent. A triumvirate assumed the direction of affairs. Its policy was at once despotic and feeble and satisfied neither federalists, advanced liberals, nor the military [Pg 96] element. The latter was becoming daily more predominant. A radical republican society called the "Lautaro," composed largely of young officers, was organised and became virtually a ruling oligarchy. San Martin and Alvear arrived from Europe, and the prestige which they had acquired on European battle-fields at once secured for them prominent positions. When the news of the victory of Tucuman reached the city the military classes revolted, deposed the old triumvirate, and installed a new one. This revolution marked the final triumph of the sentiment of independence. The new government was active in every sense of the word. Belgrano was re-enforced; San Martin was encouraged in his chosen work of forming the nucleus of a disciplined army, fit for offensive warfare; the worn-out pretence of employing Ferdinand's name on public documents was dropped; the inquisition, the use of torture, and titles of nobility were abolished. The Argentine revolution had finally assumed a military and republican character; independence was clearly henceforth its end and purpose.

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CHAPTER VI

COMPLETION OF THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

Belgrano followed up his victory at Tucuman by another invasion of the Bolivian plateau. Even to a trained general and a regular army such a campaign would have been difficult. The defective organisation of his hastily gathered militia, his own unfamiliarity with the art of war, and the fact that he was opposed by a clever commander whose army was better drilled and better adapted to operations in that high altitude, all conspired to leave the result in no doubt. October 1, 1813, he was badly defeated at Vilapugio, and six weeks later his army was nearly destroyed at Ayohuma. With the remnant he fled south to Argentine territory and was replaced in his command by San Martin.

The advent of this consummate general and single-minded patriot revolutionised the character of the military operations. Unlike his predecessors and colleagues, he did not concern himself with political ambitions. He had but one purpose—to drive the Spaniards from South America; he knew but one way of achieving it—to whip them on the field of battle. He had none of the brilliantly attractive qualities, none of the [Pg 98] eloquence or charm of most South American leaders; he had a horror of display, and made but one speech in all his life.

By sheer force of will and attention to detail, he organised an efficient regular army. The victories that followed were as much due to his painstaking care and foresight as to his brilliant strategical combinations and admirable tactical dispositions. Because he thought another could finish his work better than himself he voluntarily resigned supreme power on the very eve of the campaign which expelled the last Spaniard from South America, and, disdaining to offer an explanation, went into life-long exile. So modest was he that his name and services well-nigh fell into oblivion. That he is now recognised as the saviour of South American liberty is due as much to the literary labours of the greatest of Argentine historians, Bartolomé Mitre, as to the spontaneous opinion of his countrymen during the first decades after his retirement.

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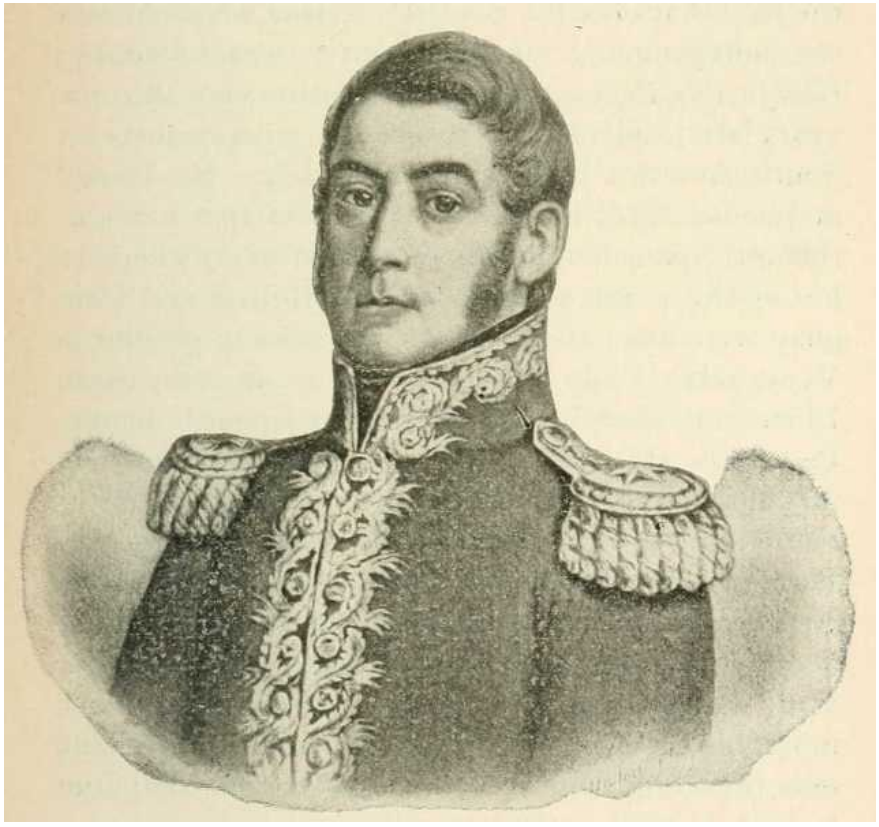


GENERAL SAN MARTIN.
[From a steel engraving.]

General San Martin was born on the 25th of February, 1778, in a little town which had been one of the Jesuit missions far up the Uruguay River. His mother was a Creole and his father a Spanish officer, who destined his son to his own profession. When a child of only eight, he was taken to the mother country and educated in the best military schools of Spain. At an early age he entered the army and served in all the many wars in which Spain engaged after the outbreak of the French Revolution. He saw much active service and became a thorough master of his profession. He imbibed liberal ideas and joined a secret society pledged to the work of establishing a republic in Spain and independent governments in her colonies. When the Spanish people rose against the French conquests, San Martin threw himself heart and soul into the conflict on the side of the patriots, and distinguished himself in the battles that opened the way to the recovery of Madrid. He was promoted to a lieutenant-colonelcy, but the next year he resigned his commission to return to his [Pg 100] native land to aid her in her fight for independence. By a curious coincidence the ship that bore the South American who achieved the independence of his country was called the *George Canning*, after the European who, thirteen years later, did most to secure the independence of South America from external attack. He landed in Buenos Aires in March, 1812. At that moment the anti-Spanish revolution seemed everywhere to be on the point of suffocation. Bolivia and Uruguay were lost; the reaction was gaining ground in Venezuela; Chile was menaced by an army from Lima and shortly fell back into Spanish hands; Peru was steady for the old system. Only in Argentina and New Granada were the fires of insurrection still burning, and between them intervened Peru, the stronghold of Spanish power in South America—a citadel impregnable behind mountains, deserts, and the ocean. The War of Independence could only succeed by aggressive campaigns which must be conducted through difficult country and over the whole continent, and against forces superior in both numbers and equipment.

San Martin's first step was to organise and drill some good regiments in Buenos Aires. He selected the finest physical and moral specimens of youth that the province afforded and subjected them to a rigid

discipline. After his ruthless pruning only the born soldiers remained, and this select corps furnished generals and officers for the wars that followed. On succeeding Belgrano in command of the army of the north, San [Pg 101] Martin saw at once that all attempts to conquer Peru by an advance through Bolivia were foredoomed to failure. A campaign over a mountainous plateau, with the Spaniards in possession of the strategic points, and the inhabitants divided in their sympathies, would be suicidal. On the other hand, to attack and defeat the Spanish forces in Peru itself was absolutely necessary. The three hundred thousand inhabitants of Argentina, distracted by intestine warfare, could not hope indefinitely to resist the Spanish power, backed by secure possession of the rest of the continent. Decisive victories were necessary to encourage the partisans of independence in Chile, Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador.

San Martin's solution of the problem was to organise an army on the eastern slope of the Andes; to invade Chile; to drive the Spaniards thence, and make that country the base of further operations; to improvise a fleet and with it gain command of the Pacific; and, finally, to attack Peru from the coast. The scheme seemed complicated, but San Martin was one of those rare geniuses born with a capacity for taking infinite pains, and his pertinacity was indefatigable. He foresaw and provided against every contingency and carried his plan to a triumphant conclusion. The story of the liberation of South America within the succeeding eight years might be completely told in the form of two biographies—San Martin's and Bolivar's.

Trusting the defence of the Bolivian frontier to a few line soldiers and the gauchos of Salta, San Martin [Pg 102] solicited and obtained an appointment as Governor of Cuyo. This province was directly east of the populous central part of Chile, and was the refuge of the patriot Chileans who had been compelled to flee into exile after quarrels among themselves had delivered their country to the Spaniards. His authority was purely military and derived only from the dictum of the revolutionary government at Buenos Aires, but San Martin was not a man to hesitate on account of scruples over constitutional questions. He laid the province under contribution and started to create an army capable of crossing the Andes and coping with the Spanish regulars in Chile. The inhabitants of Cuyo were determinedly anti-Spanish, brave, enduring, and enthusiastic. It was a good recruiting ground in itself; the Chilean exiles were numerous and all anxious to join in an effort to redeem their country. The government at Buenos Aires sent him a valuable addition in a corps of manumitted negro slaves, but his nucleus was the regiments which he himself had drilled at Buenos Aires. Though civil wars went on in the coast provinces, he was not to be diverted from his purpose. He kept aloof from them, and for three years laboured steadily, building his great war machine—recruiting, drilling, instructing officers, taxing his province, gathering provisions, building portable bridges, making powder, casting guns, organising his transport and commissariat.

Meanwhile, Alvear, his old colleague in the Spanish army, had assumed the leading position in the oligarchy [Pg 103] that ruled at Buenos Aires. He suppressed the triumvirate and placed his relative, Posadas, at the head of the government. The patriot armies were besieging Montevideo from the land side, but it was not until a fighting demon of an Irish merchant captain, William Brown, had been placed in command of a few ships which the Buenos Aireans had gathered, that there was any hope of reducing the place. This remarkable man was nearly as important a factor as San Martin himself in the war against Spain. With incredible audacity he attacked the Spanish ships wherever he found them. Numbers and odds made no difference, and he was never so dangerous as just after an apparent reverse. His victory of the 14th of June put the Spanish fleet out of commission; the reduction of Montevideo followed, as a matter of course; and the destruction of the Spanish sea power on the Atlantic side made San Martin's campaign on the Pacific coast possible.

Civil wars broke out between the Buenos Aires oligarchy and local military chiefs in the gaucho provinces and soon hurled Posadas from power. He was succeeded by Alvear, but the commanders of the armies refused to recognise the latter's authority and an insurrection in Buenos Aires itself drove him, too, into exile. One military dictator succeeded another, while the provinces more and more ignored the Buenos Aires pretensions to hegemony. The frail fabric of the confederation fast crumbled into fragments. With the end of the Napoleonic wars re-enforcements began to arrive from Spain, and the royal arms were again victorious [Pg 104] and threatened to wipe out the distracted Republic. Rondeau, one of the generals who had helped depose Posadas and Alvear, had been rewarded with command of the army of the north. Disregarding the experience of his predecessors, he made the third great effort to conquer Bolivia and strike at the heart of Spanish power in Peru by the overland route. His campaign ended with the crushing defeat at Sipe-Sipe. Considerable Spanish forces followed him down into the Argentine plains, but, as San Martin had predicted, the gaucho cavalry under Guëmes were able to keep back their advance.

Belgrano and Rivadavia had been sent to Spain in 1813 to try to arrange terms on the basis of autonomy, or the making of Buenos Aires a separate kingdom under some member of the Spanish family. They were informed that nothing except unconditional submission would be accepted, and they were then ordered to leave Madrid. Scheme after scheme was presented in Buenos Aires, discussed, and abandoned. Belgrano wanted to make a descendant of the Incas emperor of South America. Others wished to offer submission to Great Britain in return for a protectorate. The English government rejected the overtures. A more popular idea was to elect a monarch from the Portuguese Braganza family, then reigning in Brazil. The only definite result of all these confused negotiations was a formal declaration of independence made on the 9th of July, 1816, by a Congress at which most of the provinces were represented, and which met in the city of Tucuman. [Pg 105] Many of the members had no hope of being able to enforce such a declaration. However, it cleared the way for obtaining foreign help, and negotiations were continued with a view to inducing some European prince to accept the throne.

Artigas, the independent military chieftain of Uruguay and Entre Rios, attacked in 1813 the Missions to the left of Upper Uruguay which the Rio Grande Brazilians had seized twelve years before. He was defeated by the troops of John VI., who followed him into Uruguay proper and in 1816 captured Montevideo. Though the Buenos Aireans had been compelled to concede Uruguay's independence, this movement excited among them an intense jealousy of the Portuguese. The scheme for a Braganza monarch at once became unpopular and impracticable.

The taciturn general in Cuyo was, however, preparing a thunderbolt that would clear the Argentine sky of all these clouds except that most portentous of all—civil war. After three years of incessant preparation, San Martin believed that his army was ready to undertake the great campaign. Though it numbered only four thousand men, it was the most efficient body of troops that ever gathered on South American soil. Among the Argentine contingent were the picked youth of Buenos Aires and the provinces—reckless, enthusiastic youths whose ambition, patriotism, or love of adventure made them willing to follow anywhere San Martin might dare to lead. Not inferior to their white comrades were the manumitted negroes. The cruelest charges and [Pg 106] the heaviest losses fell to their lot and few of them ever returned over the Andes. The Chilean exiles were picked men—those who preferred death to submission, or who had offended so deeply that their only hope of

seeing their homes was to return sword in hand. This force had been drilled and instructed in all the art of war as practised during the Napoleonic era by San Martin himself, a veteran soldier of the great European campaigns—one who had fought with Wellington and against Massena and Soult. He was indefatigable in attending to details, and he seems to have foreseen everything. The last months were spent in preparing rations of parched corn and dried beef; in gathering mules for mountain transportation, and in making sledges to be used on the slopes which were too steep for cannon on wheels. The most careful calculations were made of the distances to be traversed; every route was surveyed; spies were in every pass; the Spaniards were kept in uncertainty as to which of the numerous passes along hundreds of miles of frontier would be used for the attack. San Martin's real intentions were not revealed by him even to the members of his staff until the very eve of the advance.

When summer came in 1817, and all the passes were freed from snow, he was ready. In the middle of January he broke camp at Mendoza and divided his army into two divisions. Directly to the west was the Uspallata Pass, then as now the usual route between western Argentina and central Chile. Its Chilean outlet opens into the plain of Aconcagua, which is north of Santiago and only separated from that capital by one [Pg 107] transverse spur of the Andes. Off to the north was the more difficult pass of Patos, its eastern entrance also easily accessible from Mendoza, though by a longer detour, and opening at its other end into the same valley of Aconcagua. The smaller of the two divisions was to advance over the Uspallata Pass, so timing its movements as to reach the open ground of the Aconcagua valley at the same time as the larger division, which, under San Martin himself, went to the north around the Patos route. The Spaniards had a guard at the summit of the Uspallata Pass, but the advance troops of the Argentines charged it. Before re-enforcements could come up, the division was over and advancing confidently down the cañon on the Chilean side. Had the Spaniards sent up a force sufficient to prevent the Uspallata division from debouching on to the Aconcagua plain it would have been caught in a trap. The second division could have bottled it up from below by leaving a small body at the mouth of the cañon. But before the Spanish commander had made up his mind what to do, news came that another army was rapidly coming down the valley leading into the Aconcagua valley from the north. Disconcerted by this attack from an unexpected direction, the Spanish commander hastened off with an inadequate force to repel it. He did not reach a defensible point in time; his vanguard was defeated and he retreated along the highroad to Santiago, leaving San Martin to reunite his two divisions at his leisure in the broad Aconcagua plain. Though the army had crossed the Andes over two of the loftiest and steepest passes [Pg 108] in the world, so admirably had all dispositions been made that hardly a stop was necessary to refit and recruit. Artillery and cavalry, as well as infantry, were ready within four days after reaching the Chilean side to take up the pursuit of the Spaniards.

Marco, the Spanish governor, had not had sufficient time to concentrate his scattered regiments since the first news had come that San Martin was coming in force by the northern passes. Of his five thousand men only two thousand were able to get between San Martin's advance and Santiago. The Argentine general was sure of having the largest numbers at the point of conflict, but the Spanish troops were veterans of the Peninsula and were commanded by a skilful and resolute general. He concentrated his force in a strong position in a valley on the south side of the transverse range that separates Santiago from the Aconcagua valley. He had hoped to make his stand at the top of the pass, there four thousand feet high, but San Martin had been too quick for him. However, the position was admirable for a stubborn defence. The highroad to Santiago descended from the pass down a narrow valley, which, just in front of the Spanish position, opened into a larger valley running at right angles. The artillery of the Spaniards commanded the narrow mouth of the upper valley, and on a side hill there was room to deploy the infantry and cavalry. The Argentine troops would be enfiladed in the close gut before they could form in line of battle. San Martin employed the tactics of [Pg 109] the Persians at Thermopylæ. There was an abandoned road running over the summit a little to the west of the travelled route and debouching into the same valley a little below the Spanish position. Through this O'Higgins, the chief of San Martin's Chilean allies, at two o'clock in the morning of February 12th, started with eighteen hundred men. By eleven he had reached the main valley and turned up it to attack the Spaniards on their left flank. His first assault, made without waiting for the other division to come down in front, was repulsed. San Martin, sitting on his war-horse on the heights above, galloped down the slope, leaving orders to hasten the descent of the main body. As he reached the lower ground and joined the Chileans, he saw the head of his main column appear through the mouth of the pass. O'Higgins again attacked, and the Spaniards, taken in flank and with their centre assailed in *échelon* by the Argentine squadrons and battalions, were at a hopeless disadvantage. The position of their infantry was carried by the bayonet, while the patriot cavalry charged the artillery and sabred the men at their guns. The infantry were the flower of the Spanish regulars; they formed a square and for a time held their stand. Finally, surrounded on three sides, their artillery gone, and fighting against double their number, they broke and retreated over the broken ground in their rear. Less than half escaped and a quarter were killed on the field and in the pursuit. The patriots lost only twelve killed and one hundred and twenty wounded. [Pg 110]

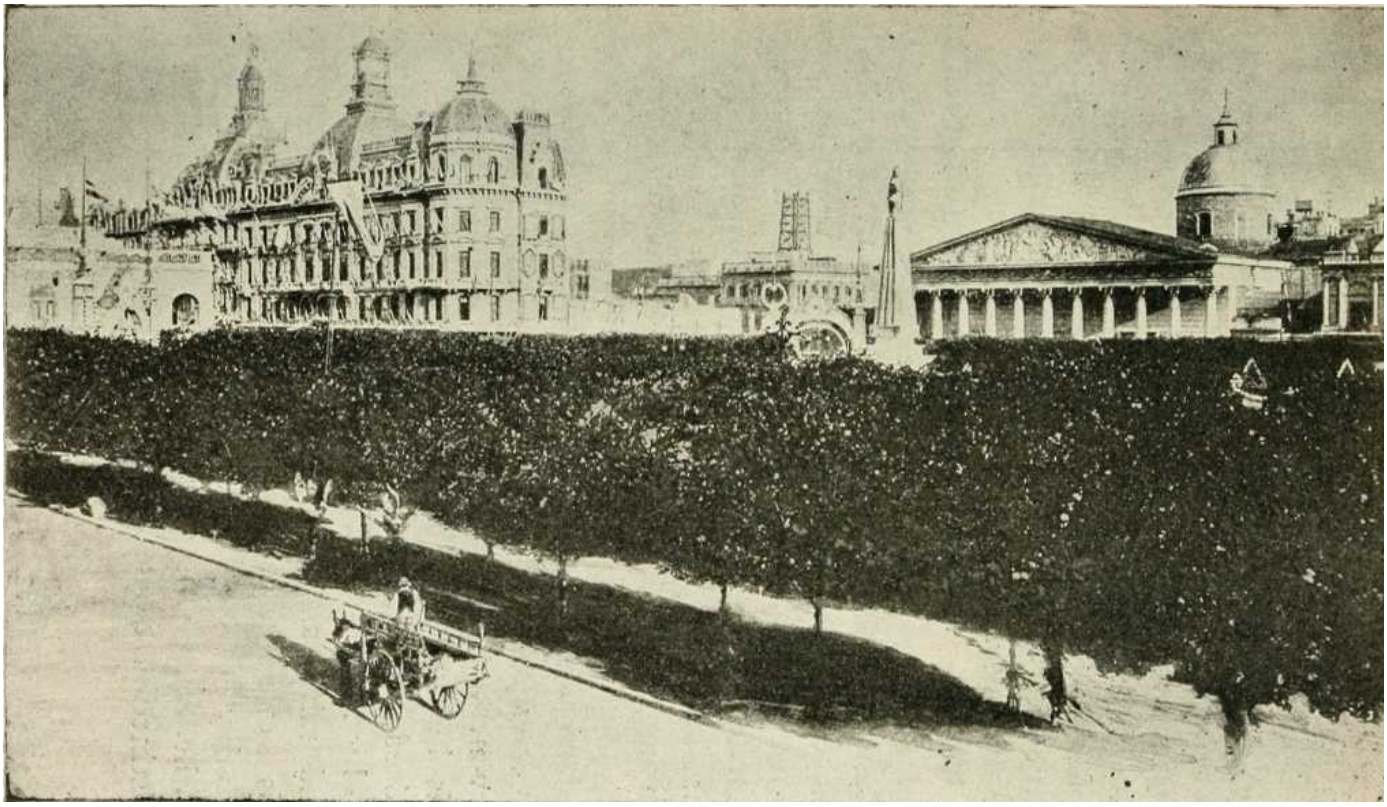
Though the numbers engaged were insignificant, and though the victory was easily won, the battle of Chacabuco was decisive in the struggle between Spain and her revolted subjects in the southern colonies. Since the outbreak of 1810 the revolutionary cause had been losing not alone territory but morale, conviction, and self-confidence. Spanish authority seemed certain finally to be completely re-established, perhaps by a compromise and concession of autonomy, but still on a basis gratifying to the pride of the mother country. The day before San Martin started on his march over the Andes, Chile was quietly submissive; Uruguay was occupied by Portuguese troops; Argentina was a mere loose aggregation of discordant and warring provinces, whose most intelligent statesmen had nearly given up hope of peace and autonomy, except by foreign aid or submission to some alien monarch. But the day after Chacabuco the Spanish governor was flying from Santiago to the coast; Chile had become, and has remained, independent. In Argentina there was no more talk of Portuguese princes, of British protectorates, of compromise with Spain. The declaration of Tucuman had become a reality. There was much more hard fighting still to be done, and time after time during the next seven years the final result seemed to tremble in the balance, but hope and national spirit had been so aroused in South America that defeat was never irremediable.

The rest of San Martin's military career belongs rather to the history of Chile and Peru than to that of [Pg 111] Argentina. It is enough to say that he established his friend O'Higgins as dictator of Chile, thus assuring her co-operation in the prosecution of the war against Peru. Spanish successes in Chile and civil war in Argentina delayed for years his overmatching the Spanish naval power on the Pacific. Without command of the sea he would have had to march his army up a desert coast between the Cordillera and the ocean—an undertaking almost impossible. The help of the Buenos Aires fleet was essential and so was the aid of the Argentine treasury in buying more ships and paying foreign seamen. His friends at Buenos Aires were struggling for their lives against their rivals for supreme power. To San Martin's demand for assistance they responded by begging him first to use his army to crush the rebellion. That he refused them in their hour of bitter need has

been pointed out as a blot upon his fame, but his resolution was Spartan. Not even the considerations of gratitude to personal friends diverted him from his great purpose. He had that element of supremely great achievement—steadfastness to adhere to a purpose once conceived that nothing could shake. Puerreyedon might be driven into exile; the warring factions might tear Argentina into fragments, and jealous Cochrane might unjustly accuse him; the ambitious and selfish Bolívar might regard him only as an obstacle to his own supremacy; none of these things could change his course or alter his devotion to the one great purpose of his life.

In 1820 he finally started up the coast, and in four months, without a pitched battle, he had rendered the [Pg 112] Spanish position on the coast of Peru untenable. He met Bolívar at Guayaquil, and the personal interview between the liberators of the northern and southern halves of South America was the end of San Martin's public career. He went to it with the purpose of arranging a joint campaign to drive the Spanish from their last stronghold, the highlands of Peru. But Bolívar did not see his own way clear to co-operation. San Martin explained his predicament to no one; he uttered no word of complaint or regret; he simply gave up the command of the army which he had led for seven years and resigned the Dictatorship of Peru. There was no place for him in distracted Argentina except as a leader in the civil wars—a rôle he disdained. He went into exile without saying a word as to the reasons for his action. Rather than precipitate a division between the patriots before the last Spaniard had been driven from South America, he submitted in silence to the reproach of cowardice. Rather than jeopard independence he sacrificed home, money, honours, even reputation itself. The history of the world records few examples of finer civic virtue.

The rest of his life he spent poverty-stricken in Paris. Only once he tried to return to his native country. At Montevideo he heard that Buenos Aires was in the throes of another revolution and that his presence might be misconstrued. Without a word, he took the next ship back to Europe. For many years his struggles against poverty and ill-health were pathetic. It was the generosity of a Spaniard, and not a fellow-countryman, that [Pg 113] relieved the last days of his life. But throughout those weary thirty years he never wavered in his devotion to South America. His last utterance about public affairs was a vehement laudation of Rosas—tyrant though he thought him—because the latter had defied France and England when they disregarded Argentina's rights as a sovereign member of the family of nations.



PLAZADE MAYO AND CATHEDRAL AT BUENOS AIRES.
[From a lithograph.] [Pg 114]

Reading was the only resource left to lighten his old age, and his last months were embittered by the approach of blindness. His heart began to be affected, symptoms of an aneurism appeared, and he went to Boulogne to take the sea air. Standing one day on the beach he felt the awful shock of pain that announced his approaching end. "Gasping and raising his hand to his heart, he turned with a touching smile to that daughter who ever followed him like a latter-day Antigone, and said, '*C'est l'orage qui mene au port*.' On the 17th of August, 1850, being seventy-two years of age, he expired in the arms of his beloved daughter. Chile and Argentina have raised him statues; Peru has decreed a monument to his memory. The Argentine nation, at last one and united as he had ever desired, has brought back his sacred remains and celebrated his apotheosis. To-day his tomb may be seen in the metropolitan cathedral, bearing witness for Argentina to his just distinction as the greatest of all her men of action."

[Pg 115]

CHAPTER VII

THE ERA OF CIVIL WARS

For half a century, from 1812 to 1862, the story of Argentina is one of almost continual civil wars, of disturbances, and armed revolutions affecting every part of the Republic. But through the confused records of this half-century there runs the thread of a steady tendency and purpose. The nation was instinctively seeking to establish an equilibrium between its centripetal and centrifugal forces, between the spirit of local autonomy and the necessity for union. At the same time, the irrepressible conflict between military and civil principles of government was fought out. Argentina emerged strong and united, while the provinces retained the right of local self-government, and the military classes were relegated to their proper subordinate position as servants of the civil and industrial interests of the community. When studied in detail the story of the civil wars is confusing and tedious: it is my purpose to omit all that does not bear on the final rational and beneficent result.

At the outset of the revolution against Spain, the oligarchy of liberals who ruled Buenos Aires assumed the [Pg 116] sovereignty of the whole Viceroyalty. They regarded themselves as successors to the power of the Viceroy himself, and attempted to rule the outlying provinces with no more regard for the latter's interests than if they had been delegates of an absolute monarch. Though the people of the city of Buenos Aires often quarrelled as to what individual should exercise the supreme power, they were united in insisting that the capital should continue to enjoy the privileges and exclusive commercial rights with which the Spanish system had endowed it. Hardly had the revolution begun when the districts in the neighbourhood of Buenos Aires showed symptoms of revolt against the central authorities. The cities of Santa Fé, Concepcion, and Corrientes, each with its dependent territory, aspired to the status of independent provinces. Military chieftains, called "caudillos," organised the gauchos, who were excellent cavalry ready-made to their hands, and defied the Buenos Aires oligarchy. José Artigas, a fierce chieftain of the plains on the Lower Uruguay, gathered about him a considerable army from among the gauchos east of the Paraná, and did more than the Buenos Aireans themselves to shut up the Spaniards in the fortress of Montevideo. He refused to accept the concessions offered by the Buenos Aires oligarchy, and a desperate civil war broke out. Buenos Aires successively lost Uruguay, Entre Rios, Corrientes, and Santa Fé. The fighting was bloody and these districts were all terribly devastated. Cordoba and the Andean provinces also refused to recognise the validity of [Pg 117] orders emanating from Buenos Aires. By the year 1818 all the provinces were practically independent of Buenos Aires, though the latter abated not a jot of her pretensions to hegemony, and continued to send troops against the various caudillos. Her armies obeyed their own generals rather than the orders of the central government. In desperation the oligarchy finally peremptorily ordered San Martin and Belgrano to bring down their armies from the western and northern frontiers and suppress the independent chiefs. San Martin refused to obey, but the imaginative, warm-hearted Belgrano was not made of the same sterling stuff. He managed to lead the army of the north as far as the province of Cordoba, but at Arequito the troops, at the instigation of ambitious officers, revolted and scattered. Many joined the caudillos, and on the 1st of February the provincials completely overthrew the Buenos Aires militia in the decisive battle of Cepeda.

This ended for a time the capital's pretensions to hegemony. Decentralisation went on apace. Cuyo dissolved into the three provinces of Mendoza, San Luiz, and San Juan; the old intendencia of Salta became four new provinces,—Santiago del Estero, Tucuman, Catamarca, and Salta,—to which a fifth was added when the city of Jujuy erected itself into a separate jurisdiction in 1834. From the Cordoba of colonial times Rioja split off, while the intendencia of Buenos Aires had been divided into four great provinces, Santa Fé, Corrientes, Entre Rios, and Buenos Aires, besides the independent nation of Uruguay. Each of these provinces [Pg 118] practically corresponded with the leading city and its dependent territory, and the Cabildo of each municipality was the basis of new local government.

This process was spontaneous, and the provinces then formed have ever since been the units of the Argentine confederation. To many intelligent patriots of the time, however, decentralisation seemed to be only a sure sign of swiftly approaching anarchy. Power fell more and more into the hands of the military leaders, and war became almost the normal condition of the country. During the four years from 1820 to 1824, there was no material change in the position of the contending forces. The provinces much desired to make a confederation of which Buenos Aires should be an equal member, but the latter refused and only waited for an opportunity in order to renew her pretensions to hegemony.

Two opposing tendencies were, however, at work which soon created two parties within the walls of Buenos Aires itself. Commercial interests had suffered so severely in the civil wars, and communications were so uncertain and so burdened with arbitrary exactions by the provincials, that the property-holding classes began to press hard upon the office-holders of the oligarchy with demands for an accommodation and some sort of a union with the provinces. This was the beginning of the federalist party, which naturally found efficient support among the cattle-herding inhabitants on the great pampas of the province of Buenos Aires. [Pg 119]

On the other hand, the unitarians were becoming more compact, more determined, and more definite in their purposes. Rivadavia, the greatest constructive statesman of the era, undertook the reform of the laws and the administration. He created the University of Buenos Aires; founded hospitals and asylums; introduced ecclesiastical and military reform; bettered the land laws, and infused into the legislation a modern spirit. The improved tone of political thought tended to stimulate a more general and rational discussion of a *modus vivendi* with the provinces. The federalists favoured the establishment of a system like that of the United States, while the unitarians clung to the idea of a nation organised more after the model of the French Republic.

In 1825 the provinces were represented at a general constituent congress which assembled in Buenos Aires. After much discussion the unitarians, with Rivadavia at their head, finally obtained control. In 1826 he was elected executive chief of the federation. This election, however, did not make him president in fact. Recognition from the Cabildos and the caudillos was practically of greater importance than the vote of a congress of delegates who were unable to insure the acquiescence of their constituencies. Rivadavia's favourite plan of placing the city of Buenos Aires directly under the control of the central government excited bitter opposition among the federalists of Buenos Aires. Under their leader, Manuel Dorrego, they protested vehemently against the dismemberment of their home province. [Pg 120]

Meanwhile the crazy fabric was subjected to the strain of a serious foreign war. In 1825 the country districts of Uruguay rose against their Brazilian rulers. The Argentines went wild with joy when they heard of the victory which the gauchos won over the imperial forces at Sarandi. Congress promptly decreed that

Uruguay had reunited herself to the confederation. The Emperor's answer was a declaration of war and a blockade of Buenos Aires. The fighting Irish sailor, Admiral William Brown, again came to the front, and his daring seamanship rendered the Brazilian blockade ineffective. He destroyed a large division of their fleet at the battle of Juncal, while fast Baltimore clippers, commanded by English and Yankee privateer captains, swept Brazilian commerce from the seas. Late in 1826 an Argentine army of eight thousand men was assembled for the invasion of Rio Grande do Sul. Alvear, now returned from exile, was entrusted with its command, and on the 20th of February, 1827, the Brazilians were overwhelmingly defeated at Ituzaingo, far within their own boundary. The Argentines were not able to follow up their victory, and shortly returned to Uruguayan territory, but the Emperor was never again able to undertake an aggressive campaign. Negotiations for peace were begun, and Rivadavia's envoy signed a treaty by which Uruguay was to remain a part of the empire of Brazil. A storm of indignation broke forth at Buenos Aires, and Rivadavia had to disavow his minister and continue the war. The blow to his prestige was, however, mortal; the federalists had, indeed, [Pg 121] never ceased to make war against him; and the unitarian constitution which Congress had adopted at his dictation was rejected unanimously by the provinces. He resigned, and Dorrego, chief of the unitarians, succeeded him as nominal executive chief of the confederation. In reality, however, the Republic was divided into five quasi-independent military states. Dorrego ruled in Buenos Aires, Lopez in Santa Fé, Ibarra in Santiago, Bustos in Cordoba, and Quiroga in Cuyo.

Many of the officers of the army which had been victorious at Ituzaingo were dissatisfied with the triumph of Dorrego at Buenos Aires. They belonged to the unitarian party, and they were anxious themselves to usurp the places of the various caudillos. The first division that reached Buenos Aires after the signing of the preliminary peace with Brazil raised the standard of rebellion in the city itself. General Lavalle declared himself Governor, while Dorrego fled to the interior, only to be pursued, captured, and shot, without the form of trial, by Lavalle's personal order. This began the fiercest and bloodiest civil war which ever desolated the Argentine. The gauchos of the southern provinces rose *en masse* to fight the unitarian regulars, while the generals of the latter began a series of campaigns against all the federalist provincial governments and caudillos. General Paz advanced on Cordoba to give battle to Bustos, while Lavalle's forces invaded Santa Fé. Rosas, the chief of southern Buenos Aires, had rallied the federalists of that province. He himself joined Lopez, the caudillo of Santa Fé, while he left behind a considerable force of his gauchos to threaten the city [Pg 122] from the south. Lavalle sent some of his best regiments against the latter body, but to his surprise his veterans were completely cut to pieces by the fierce riders of the plains. He himself had to retreat to Buenos Aires, while Rosas and Lopez defeated him under the very walls of the city.

These victories made the Buenos Aires federalist leader, Juan Manuel Rosas, the chief figure in Argentine affairs. Thenceforth, for more than twenty years, he was the absolute dictator and tyrant of Buenos Aires. The most bitterly hated man in Argentine history, probably no other leader had as profound an influence in preparing the Argentine nation for the consolidation which was so shortly to follow his own fall from power. His personal characteristics and his public career are equally interesting. The scion of a wealthy Buenos Aires family, from his childhood he devoted himself to cattle-raising on the vast family estates of the southern pampas. He became the model and idol of the gauchos. By the time he was twenty-five, he was the acknowledged king of the southern pampas, with a thousand hard-riding, half-savage horsemen obeying his orders. In 1820 he and his regiment were chief factors in the revolution that placed General Rodriguez in power at Buenos Aires. Through the more peaceful years that followed, his power grew until he was the acknowledged head of the country people of Buenos Aires province and their champion against the city. He had been fairly well educated, his information was wide, and his intellectual abilities were of a high order. But [Pg 123] he thoroughly identified his tastes and prejudices with those of his rude followers, and in politics he was fiercely unitarian. The victories of 1829 over Lavalle placed him in supreme power at Buenos Aires and made him the nominal head of the whole Argentine.

His real power was, however, far from extending over the whole territory. General Paz with his veterans of the Brazilian war had expelled Bustos from Cordoba and firmly established himself as ruler of that province. Quiroga, the redoubtable caudillo of the Cuyo province, gathered his swarms of fierce gauchos from the western pampas in the slopes of the Andes, and descended to the very walls of Cordoba, there to be twice defeated with awful slaughter by General Paz. The latter followed up his victories by establishing unitarian governments in the north-western provinces. In Cuyo he was not so successful, and Quiroga managed to sustain himself. Rosas came to the rescue of the despairing federalists with the whole force of Buenos Aires. In that province all opposition to him had been crushed and he was able to send a strong army against Cordoba which surprised and captured General Paz himself. This misfortune demoralised the unitarians. The federalists and the terrible Quiroga again triumphed in most of the western provinces. It is estimated that more than twenty-three thousand unitarians fell in battle. Part of Paz's army retired to Tucuman and were there surrounded by an overwhelming force under Quiroga. Though their position was hopeless they did not [Pg 124] offer to surrender, nor would quarter have been given them had they asked it. In these internecine conflicts, the beaten side usually fought it out to the last man, selling their lives as dearly as possible. Five hundred prisoners taken at Tucuman were shot in cold blood, and only a few small bands escaped to Bolivia.

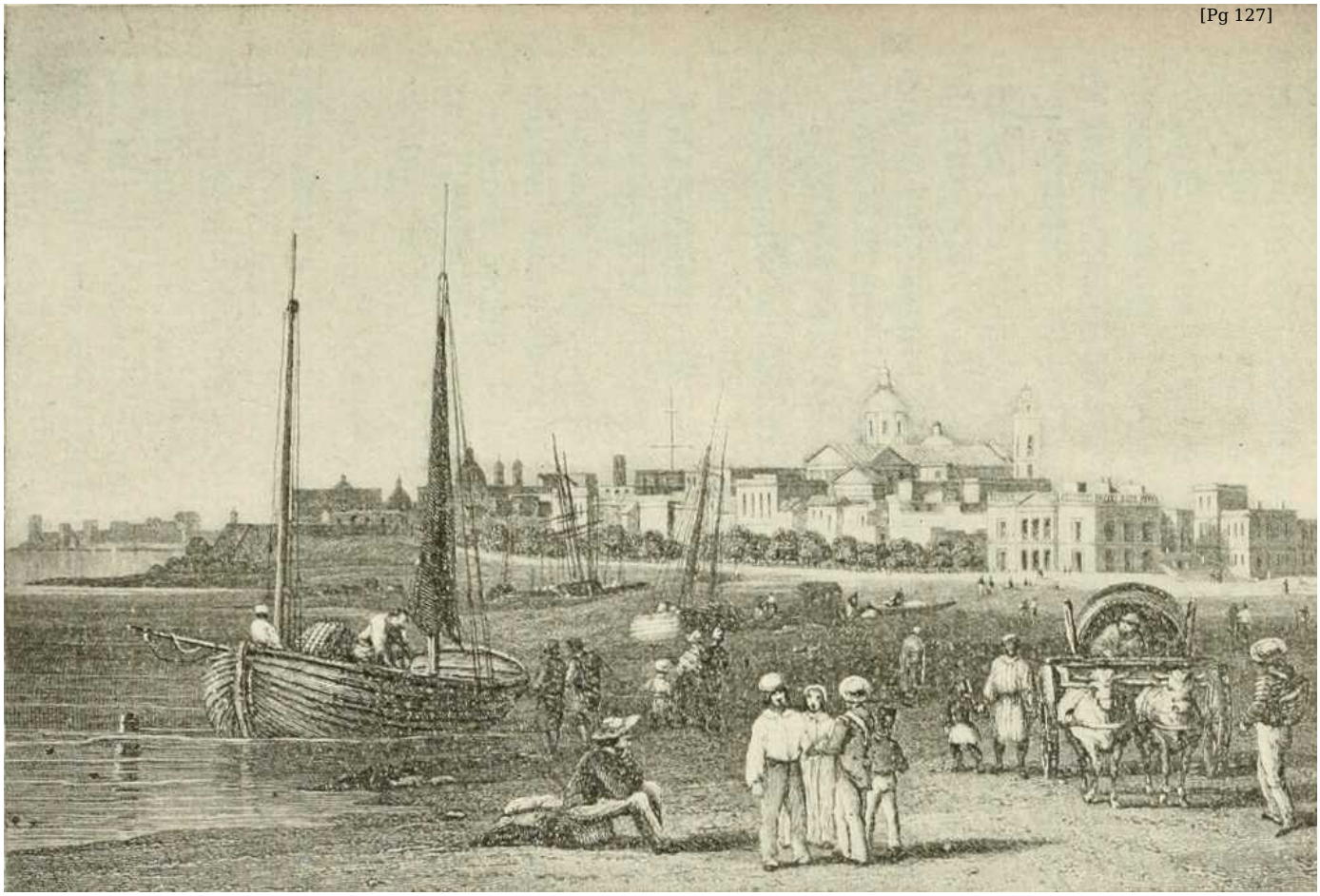
Rosas filled the offices in the provinces with his partisans, while the obsequious authorities of the capital conferred upon him the high-sounding title, "Restorer of the Laws." He made a feint or two of resigning the governorship, and in fact left it in other hands while he led an army against the Indians of the South. He soon returned with the prestige of having extended white domination far beyond its former boundaries. After much show of reluctance, in 1835 he accepted the title of Governor and Captain-General, and a special statute expressly confided to him the whole "sum of the public power."

The thousands of murders, betrayals, and treasons of the long civil wars had sapped the foundations of good faith in human kindness. The unitarians were mere outlaws, their property was constantly subject to confiscation, and their lives were never safe. Rosas himself, least of all, could confide in the faithfulness of his partisans. Things had come to such a pass that no one could rule except by force. Whoever was in power was sure to be hated by the majority and plotted against by many, though he might have been raised to command by the acclamation of the whole population. Rosas was a product of the conditions that surrounded him. [Pg 125] Belgrano, Rivadavia, and every one who had tried to establish a civil government had failed. The forces of militarism and federalism had been too strong for them. From among the ambitious military chieftains the strongest and fittest survived. Rosas understood the conditions under which he held power and took the measures his experience had taught him would be most effective in preserving it. He undertook to forestall revolt by creating a reign of terror; he replaced the blue and white of Buenos Aires by red—the colour of his own faction; the wearing of a scrap of blue was considered proof of treason. A club of desperadoes, called the Massorca, was formed of men sworn to do his bidding, even though it might be to murder their own relatives. No one suspected of disaffection was safe for a day. Sometimes a warning was given so that the victim might

flee, leaving his property to be confiscated; sometimes he was dragged from his bed and stabbed. The charge of deliberate bloodthirstiness against Rosas is, however, hardly borne out by the facts. For political reasons he did not hesitate to kill, and to kill cruelly, but he did not kill for the mere sake of killing.

He was passionately jealous of foreign interference. Early in his reign he quarrelled with the government of France over questions in regard to the domicile and obligations of foreign residents. The French fleet, assisted later by that of Great Britain, blockaded Buenos Aires. But Rosas defied their combined power; although in this very year (1835) he was menaced by a formidable invasion from the banished unitarians. In [Pg 126] Uruguay the "colorados" occupied Montevideo and had formed a close alliance with the Argentine exiles. Montevideo was the centre of resistance to Rosas and from its walls went out expeditions to end the revolts which continually broke forth. In 1842 the allied unitarians and colorados suffered a great defeat from Rosas's right arm in the field, General Urquiza, and thenceforth Oribe, chief of the Uruguayan "blancos" besieged the colorados in Montevideo and controlled the country districts. This apparently ended all hope of expelling Rosas from power. The emigration of the intelligent and high-spirited youth of Buenos Aires to Montevideo and Chile increased. Among these exiles and martyrs to their devotion to constitutional government were many Argentines who shortly rose to the top in politics and whose abilities gave a great impulse to the intellectual movement. Among them were Mitre, Vicente Lopez, Sarmiento, Valera, and Echeverria, who share the honour of establishing civil government in Buenos Aires, and who aided Urquiza in preventing South America from becoming a military empire, and in uniting the Argentine province into a stable nation.

[Pg 127]



BUENOS AIRES IN 1845.
[From a steel engraving.]

The longer the tyrant reigned, the less men remembered their own factional divisions. Practically the whole civil population of the capital was ready to support a rebellion. Rosas, however, was to fall, not by a revolution in Buenos Aires, but because his system was inconsistent with the local autonomy of the provinces. He put his partisans into power as military governors, but no bond was strong enough to keep them faithful to his [Pg 128] interests. As soon as they were well established in their satrapies, they became jealous of their own prerogatives and of the rights of their people. Rosas ceased to be a real federalist when he made Buenos Aires the centre of his power. He lived there, he raised most of his revenue there, and the city's interests became in a sense synonymous with his own. He excluded foreigners from the provinces, he forbade direct communication between the banks of the Paraná and Uruguay and the outside world. Everything was required to be trans-shipped at Buenos Aires so that it might be subject to duty.

The chief lieutenant of Rosas was General Urquiza, whom he had appointed governor of Entre Rios. The latter's generalship overcame the unitarian rebellions in that province and repelled the invasions from Uruguay. Under his wise and moderate rule the province flourished and recovered from the devastations of the previous civil wars. Its fertile plains were covered with magnificent herds of cattle and horses, which fed and mounted an admirable cavalry. Urquiza himself was the greatest rancher in the province and could raise an army from his own estates. Entrenched between the vast-moving floods of the Uruguay and Paraguay, he was practically safe from attack, and his relations with his neighbours in Corrientes, Uruguay, Paraguay, and Brazil were those of warm friendship and alliance, as soon as he had declared against the tyrant, who, seated at the mouth of the Plate, cut off the countries above from free access to the sea. Though Urquiza was a [Pg 129] caudillo he had no such ambition for supreme power as plagued Rosas. He was even-tempered, of simple tastes, and careless of military glory.

In 1846 the rupture between him and Rosas came, and thenceforth he devoted himself to the overthrow of the tyrant. Three times his attacks failed; but, in 1851, he arranged an alliance with Brazil and with the

colorado faction in Uruguay. The war was opened by Urquiza's crossing the Uruguay and, in conjunction with a Brazilian army, suddenly falling upon the blancos, who, in alliance with Rosas, were besieging Montevideo. Most of the defeated forces joined his army, and accompanied by his Brazilian and Uruguayan allies he recrossed the Uruguay and moved over the Entre Rios plains to a point on the Paraná just at the head of the delta. The Brazilian fleet penetrated up the river to protect his crossing, and on the 24th of December the entire force of twenty-four thousand men, the largest which up to that time had ever assembled in South America, was safely over and encamped on the dry pampas of Santa Fé. The road to Buenos Aires was open. Rosas could do nothing but wait there and trust all to the result of a single battle. On the 3rd of February he was crushingly defeated in the battle of Caseros, fought within a few miles of the city. Of the twenty thousand men he led into action half proved treacherous, and many of his principal officers betrayed him. He took refuge at the British Legation, and thence was sent on board a man-of-war which carried him into exile.

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CHAPTER VIII

CONSOLIDATION

After forty years of struggle no formula had been found which would satisfy the aspirations for local self-government and at the same time secure the external union so essential to the welfare of the whole country. The questions between the provinces and Buenos Aires, and between the different cities which were rivals in the race for national leadership, seemed to a superficial glance to be as far as ever from solution. There had, however, been a shifting of the material balance of power which was soon to change the situation. The provinces had suffered most severely from the long civil wars. Corrientes was well-nigh a desert, in Santa Fé the Indians roamed up to the gates of the capital town, and the Andean provinces were isolated and poor. The long peace under Rosas's rule had increased the wealth and population of Buenos Aires. The city lost hundreds of enthusiastic young liberals, but it gained thousands who fled from the disorders of the interior. Its population had doubled since his accession. Thirty thousand English, Irish, and Scotch had crowded in to [Pg 131] engage in sheep-raising, and the rural population of Buenos Aires province was nearly two hundred thousand. City and country together had doubled, while the rest of the confederation had only increased one-half. The capital province now contained twenty-seven per cent. of the total population, and the disproportion in wealth and percentage of foreigners was far greater. The number of sheep increased from two and a half million in 1830 to five times that number, and by 1850 there were eight million cattle and three million horses in the single province.

All over the country rational ideas about government had made progress. The people were thoroughly sickened of military rule. Civilisation, education, and general intelligence were spreading their beneficent influences; industry, commerce, and the pursuit of wealth were absorbing more of the national energies.

Urquiza, greatest of the caudillos, saw that without peace and union Entre Rios could not be insured prosperity. He had no sooner entered Buenos Aires than he took measures looking to the framing and adoption of a federal constitution. After his victory he was named provisional director of the confederation, but he showed no wish to play the rôle of a Rosas. All the governors met and agreed to the calling of a Constituent Congress, in which each province was to have an equal vote. As a further precaution against the predominance of Buenos Aires the session was to be held in Santa Fé. The provinces were anxious to form a strong federation and the only opposition came from Buenos Aires. Her statesmen did not realise that she was [Pg 132] bound to be the centre of the system and that the pull of her superior mass would, before many years, be sufficient to control the aberrations of the satellites. Though the governor of Buenos Aires had agreed on behalf of his province, and though Urquiza's military power was overwhelming, the legislature of that province refused its assent. It was clear that Buenos Aires and the other provinces would not be able to agree upon a basis of union. The ambitious cities of the interior each aspired to take the place of Buenos Aires as the capital, and to this humiliation the latter city would never submit unless after another civil war.

Urquiza determined not to use force, and retired to his ranch. As soon as he was out of sight, the city rose in arms against his nominees. The broad-minded Entre Rios chieftain sent back word that he had won the battle of Caseros for the sole purpose of giving Buenos Aires her liberty and that he would not now intervene to prevent her making the use of it she chose. He even disbanded his troops. However, when the Buenos Aireans marched an army to the attack of Santa Fé where the Constituent Congress, attended by delegates from all the other provinces, was holding its sessions, he again took the field. A counter-revolution broke out in the rural districts of the Buenos Aires province against the faction dominant in the city. Urquiza joined his forces to theirs and besieged the town. A land siege was useless without a blockade on the water side, and [Pg 133] Urquiza tried to establish one. He was unsuccessful because the commanders of his ships treacherously betrayed him, surrendering to the city party for a heavy bribe. He raised the siege and retired to the northern provinces.

Buenos Aires virtually declared her independence of the other provinces by this action, but the latter took no further steps to force her into their union. Urquiza and his followers had, however, accomplished more toward uniting the Argentine into a firmly knit nation than had been done in the previous forty years. The opposition of Buenos Aires helped convince the other provinces of the necessity of a union. With the mouth of the river in the hands of a hostile state more powerful than any one of them separately, the position of Entre Rios, Santa Fé, or any one of the others, would have been critical. Only by uniting could they hope to maintain themselves and avoid absorption in detail. Intelligent Argentines had long been convinced of the desirability of a firm and enduring union, and the present danger crystallised that conviction in men's minds. Back of all this was Urquiza's influence. At last a military chief had come to the possession of supreme power who was willing to aid his country in establishing a stable and free government, and whose purpose was not merely the gratification of his own love of power. Argentine writers are divided in their opinion of Urquiza's real abilities,

and many think that ignorance and irresolution, rather than a lofty patriotism, caused his moderation after his victory over Rosas. Intelligent foreigners, however, who saw the Plate for themselves during this period are [Pg 134] unanimous in praising his character, his dignified bearing, his liberality, and his capacities. Argentina had passed the stage when a military dictator was her natural chief. The day for constitutional government had arrived; Urquiza was a product of his time, and consciously or unconsciously embodied the changed political sentiments of his countrymen.

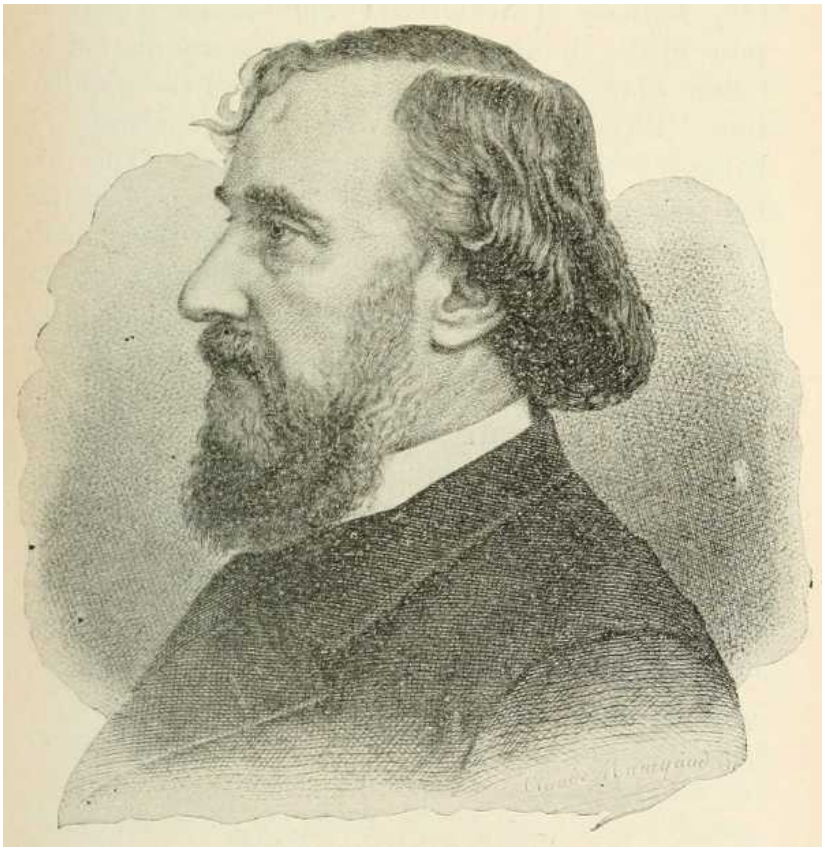
On the 1st of May, 1853, the Constituent Congress adopted a constitution substantially copied from that of the United States of North America—and that constitution, with a few amendments, has continued to be the fundamental law of the Argentine Republic. The navigation of the Paraná and the Uruguay was declared free to all the world, largely as a reward to Brazil for her assistance against Rosas, although she protested against the extension of that liberty to any nations except those who had territory on the banks. The city of Paraná, in the province of Entre Rios and on the eastern shore of the Paraná River, was made temporary capital of the Republic. The various provincial capitals had been unable to agree that any one of them should have the honour and profit of being the political metropolis, and the city of Buenos Aires was selected as the permanent capital, to become such as soon as the province of that name should enter the confederation. The delegates had a double purpose in making this selection. Buenos Aires was the natural commercial and political centre, and, all things considered, the most convenient location in the provinces. In the second place, [Pg 135] they desired to weaken the great province of Buenos Aires by cutting it in two, and to curb the city's political influence by placing it directly under the control of the federal government.

Urquiza was naturally selected as the first President, and was recognised by foreign nations. Buenos Aires protested, claiming still to be, for international purposes, the Argentine nation. She did not, however, formally declare her independence and seek for recognition as a new power. Buenos Aires, as well as the confederation, looked forward to the time when she would join the latter. Throughout Urquiza's six-year term, the provinces prospered amazingly. His administration of his province had guaranteed the security of property, and now as President he extended the blessings of peace to much of the rest of the confederation. The new bonds sat lightly on the outlying provinces of the Andean regions, but Urquiza did not stretch his constitutional authority to interfere with them, satisfied to let them learn by degrees that the right of local self-government guaranteed by the paper constitution would be respected in practice. The freedom of navigation caused unprecedented prosperity in the river provinces. The towns on the Paraná and Uruguay doubled in population during his six-years' service. Corrientes had been continually ravaged by the civil wars as lately as the last few years of Rosas's reign, but the assurance of peace was all that was needed to start the rebuilding of the houses and the restocking of the ranches. The impulse in population, wealth, and commerce [Pg 136] then given to the river provinces has never since lost its force. Foreign capital and immigration were invited and the rivers and harbours carefully surveyed. Rosario, in Santa Fé, was made a port of entry and began a growth that has made it second only to Buenos Aires itself.

In Buenos Aires events were gradually shaping themselves toward reuniting that province with the confederation. A liberal provincial constitution was adopted, and though the ruling bureaucracy preferred the *statu quo*, fearing that their own fall from power would follow any triumph of the provincials, they were unable to hold the city in check. It was too evident that the real interests of the city, and even her future commercial supremacy, were menaced by a continuance of the separation. In 1859 the situation became so strained that Buenos Aires marched an army to attack the federal government. Urquiza met it near the borders of Santa Fé and Buenos Aires, and administered a defeat. He advanced to the city and required his vanquished opponents to agree to accept the constitution of 1853, and to consent that Buenos Aires should become a member of the confederation. He yielded, however, to the wishes of many Buenos Aireans and consented in the interests of harmony, that the question of the dismembering of the city from the province and capitalising the former should remain open for future determination. The essential justice in all other respects of the constitution of 1853 had long been admitted even in Buenos Aires and there remained no [Pg 137] reason why the latter should not enter the confederation once and for all. On the 21st of October, 1860, General Bartolomé Mitre, Governor of Buenos Aires, swore to the constitution, saying: "This is the permanent organic law, the real expression of the perpetual union of the members of the Argentine family, so long separated by civil war and bloodshed."

Meanwhile, Urquiza's term had expired. Dr. Derqui, his successor, was suspected of designs against the autonomy of the provincial governments. The assassination of the Governor of San Juan and the succession of a member of an opposite faction, was made the occasion for Federal intervention in the affairs of that province. The government of Buenos Aires protested and it became evident that this untoward event was soon to disturb the peace of the newly formed confederation. The Federal Congress, under Derqui influence, refused to admit the members from Buenos Aires. Mitre marched out at the head of her forces and at the battle of Pavon, September 17, 1861, he overthrew the provincial forces. Buenos Aires remained mistress of the situation. The governments of certain provinces had been imposed on their people by the Derqui administration, or they were obnoxious to the triumphant Buenos Aires party. They were overthrown and Derqui was deposed. Happily for the Argentine, Mitre was a sincere patriot and, though young, was moderate and conciliatory. Made president of the republic as the representative of the victorious Buenos Aireans, he set about the final reorganisation of constitutional government in a spirit of unselfishness and with a foresight [Pg 138] and skill that greatly aided to save his country from the sterilising anarchy of civil war.

The accession of Mitre in 1862 marked the end of the period of uncertainty. The government of the Argentine Republic was now finally and definitely established and fixed, after fifty-two years of conflict. The constitution of 1853 was left unamended, except that Buenos Aires became the seat of federal government without being separated from its province or ceasing to be the provincial capital. The free international navigation of the rivers was not interfered with, and Buenos Aires abandoned her pretensions to special commercial privileges. She was thenceforward more and more the centre of gravitation and power for the whole republic, but her influence came from legitimate natural causes and was exercised within constitutional limits. The autonomy of the provinces was not interfered with, and it was no longer possible, even in the remotest districts, for a caudillo to rally at his call the gauchos, always ready for a raid, a campaign, or an invasion.



BARTOLOMÉ MITRE.
[From a steel engraving.]

Though the form of the federal government was fixed and its theoretical supremacy has never since been questioned, its real power at first was feeble. Urquiza was master in the mesopotamian provinces, and in case of need Mitre could count on little military help except from his own province. The only result of the battle of Pavon which was immediately apparent was the shifting of the centre of power from Urquiza's capital to Buenos Aires. Nevertheless, henceforth the tendency was constantly toward strengthening the bonds of union. Urquiza and the other provincial governors showed no disposition to attack the central authority, and in turn the latter was careful to avoid useless aggressions against them. The problem of reconciling provincial rights with the existence of an adequate federal government had at last been solved. The nation passed on to [Pg 140] a still more difficult question,—the smooth and satisfactory working of democratic representative institutions in the absence of an effective participation in public affairs on the part of the bulk of the population. Elections have not carried the prestige of being the expression of the majority will. The ruling classes have been anxious enough to obey the popular voice and to govern wisely, but people can only gradually be trained into the habit of expressing their will clearly and indisputably at regular elections. The insignificant disturbances to public order which have occurred since 1862 have been indications of dissatisfaction with the imperfect detail workings of the complicated system of ascertaining the popular wishes, or hasty protests against mistakes on the part of those in power. Never have they endangered the Federal constitution nor diverted the steady course of the nation's progress in the art of self-government.

CHAPTER IX

THE MODERN ARGENTINE

General Mitre's administration is memorable for the beginning of that tremendous industrial development which in thirty years made Argentina, in proportion to population, the greatest exporting country in the world. Foreign capital and immigration were chief factors in the transformation that within a few decades changed an isolated and industrially backward community into a nation possessing all the appliances and luxuries of the most advanced material civilisation.

In 1865 circumstances forced Mitre into the Paraguayan war. Lopez, the Paraguayan dictator, hated the Buenos Aireans quite as much as he did the Brazilians with whom he was constantly quarrelling, and he was only awaiting a favourable opportunity to vent his dislike on either or both. He counted on the coolness that naturally existed between Urquiza and Mitre to insure him the former's aid. In 1864 Brazil intervened in the affairs of Uruguay by assisting one of the parties in the civil war then raging. Lopez regarded the action of Brazil as endangering the balance of power in the Plate regions. In retaliation he seized the Brazilian province [Pg 142] of Matto Grosso, which lay along the Paraguay north of his own territory. Mitre wished to remain neutral, although he had no sympathy with the brutal despot, and had an understanding about Brazil's action in Uruguay which safeguarded the interests of Argentina. Lopez, however, insolently demanded free passage across Argentine territory for the troops which he wished to send against Brazil and Uruguay. Mitre's refusal was followed by a Paraguayan invasion, and national honour required that this violation of territory be resented. Brazil and the Flores faction in Uruguay welcomed the alliance of Argentina. The Paraguayan invasion was repulsed by their combined forces, and the allies advanced up the Paraná against Lopez in his own dominions. It was natural that Mitre should be commander-in-chief of the allied armies, although Brazil furnished the bulk of the troops and bore the brunt of the expense. Urquiza disappointed Lopez in refusing to revolt against Buenos Aires, and although he took no great personal interest in the war he co-operated in many ways with Mitre.

The enormous expenditures of the Brazilian government furnished a splendid cash market for Argentine stock and produce, and the resulting profits compensated for the pecuniary sacrifices involved. In two years' fighting both the Argentine and the Brazilian armies suffered tremendous losses on the field and in the cholera hospitals. After the great repulse at Curupayty in 1867 the number of Argentine troops was largely [Pg 143] reduced. When the Brazilian fleet finally forced the passage of the river, opening the way to Asuncion, Mitre resigned the command into the hands of the Brazilian general Caxias, and the last two years of the war were carried on principally by Brazilian troops. By the peace of 1870 Argentina's title to certain valuable territory was quieted, and she gained an important commercial advantage by the opening of Paraguay to her trade. Her commercial and industrial leadership in the Plate valley has never since been endangered. Politically also the indirect results were gratifying. The tremendous sacrifices in men and money had sickened the Brazilian government and people of foreign complications. Thereafter, the emperor pursued a policy of non-interference, which has left to his Spanish neighbours a free hand among themselves. With the withdrawal of the Brazilian troops from Paraguay, the balance of political power began slowly to pass from Rio to Buenos Aires.

Sarmiento, the "schoolmaster president," succeeded Mitre in 1868. His election is said to have been the freest and most peaceful ever held in the republic and to have represented as nearly as any the will of the electors. The development of population, wealth, and industry continued in increasing geometrical proportion. During forty-five years before 1857 the population had only a little more than doubled; during the forty-five years since that date, the increase has been four hundred and fifty per cent. The yearly increment holds fairly steady at four per cent., which is as large as that of any country in the world. In 1869 the city of Buenos Aires [Pg 144] had one hundred and eighty thousand people, and in 1902 it contained eight hundred and fifty thousand. Immigration had begun to pour in at the rate of twenty thousand per annum, and had rapidly increased to over a hundred thousand, when the great crisis of 1890 temporarily interrupted the flow. The years from 1868 to 1872 were prosperous over much of the civilised world, but nowhere more so than in Argentina. Sarmiento's administration was, however, characterised by the beginning of that policy of governmental and commercial extravagance which has so deeply mortgaged the future of Argentina, and has repeatedly hampered the legitimate development of this marvellously fertile region. In the ten years prior to 1872 foreign commerce doubled, but the foreign debt increased fivefold.

The last of the caudillos, Lopez Jordan of Entre Rios, revolted in 1870 against Urquiza, who was still governor of that province. The redoubtable old patriot was captured by the rebels and assassinated. In 1901 a monument was erected to his memory in the city of Paraná, his old capital, and the day of the unveiling was a national festival in all the republic. The Federal government avenged his death and suppressed the insurrection after an obstinate, expensive, and bloody little war. Sarmiento's administration was, however, not popular, and the news that he had virtually determined to name his successor created much dissatisfaction. Mitre headed the opposition in the city, while in the provinces some of the discontented went [Pg 145] so far as to take up arms. Julio Roca, then a young colonel, defeated them at Santa Rosa, and Sarmiento was able to hand over the reins of government to Dr. Avellaneda without any further serious opposition.

A commercial crisis was beginning when the new President took office in 1874. He initiated a policy of retrenchment, under which the government managed to pay its obligations and weather the storm. General Roca was made Minister of War and came into further prominence as the conqueror of the Indians, who had hitherto prevented white men from settling on the vast and valuable southern pampas. In 1854, after the fall of Rosas, the Indians recovered most of the territory from which he had driven them twenty years before. Later, the frontier was advanced very slowly, but in 1877 Alsina, one of the most successful governors Buenos Aires ever had, undertook a vigorous campaign. In the following year General Roca threw the power of the Federal government into this vastly important enterprise. He carried the frontier south to the Rio Negro and west to the Andes, attacking the Indians in their fortresses—a policy which insured permanent white domination. The ultimate consequences of opening up to [Pg 146] civilised settlement the immense territories comprised in Roca's conquests cannot yet properly be estimated. The vast region of Patagonia, that was marked on the maps in our boyhood as an unclaimed and uninhabitable arctic waste, has since been added to Argentina as an indirect result of Roca's campaign of 1878. Buenos Aires put in a claim for the whole of the territory conquered from the Indians, but the Federal statesmen refused to allow one province to become well-nigh as large as all the rest together. By a compromise her area was increased to sixty-three thousand square miles, while most of the new acquisition was divided into territories under the direct administration of the Federal government.

JULIO ROCA.

As the time for the presidential election of 1880 approached, political matters began to look ugly. It was evident that Avellaneda intended to choose his successor. Through the provincial governors, the police, the army, the employees on the public works, and the officials of all kinds he had easy control of the election machinery. Even the most scrupulous President often cannot prevent the exercise of coercion in his name and without his knowledge. The opposition in South America usually refrain from voting: indeed, it is considered almost indelicate for outsiders to interfere in a matter so strictly official as an election. The privilege of voting is not so highly prized and so jealously guarded as in the United States and the northern countries of Europe. [Pg 147]

Avellaneda and his adherents had fixed upon General Roca as the next President. The principal opposing candidate was Dr. Tejedor, governor of Buenos Aires, who was supported by Mitre's party and also by many of the other Buenos Aires party, the "autonomists." The contest was really between Buenos Aires and the provinces. General Roca was strong with the army and with the country, but so tremendously had Buenos Aires grown that the result appeared doubtful. Her population, city and province, had in 1880 reached six hundred and fifty thousand,—more than a quarter of the total in the whole Confederation. The next three provinces put together did not equal her numbers and lagged still farther behind in wealth and ability to concentrate their forces.

Radical counsels prevailed in Buenos Aires. Roca's opponents, seeing that they were at a hopeless disadvantage with the election machinery in Avellaneda's hands, determined to use violence. In June, 1880, the partisans of Tejedor rose against the Federal government. The police and militia of the city joined them and paraded the streets, while the alarm flew to the country, and the troops of the line began to concentrate outside the city. Presently the President and his Cabinet fled for safety to the Federal camp. For a few weeks there was some skirmishing and much negotiating, and in one encounter near the south end of the city a thousand Buenos Aireans were killed. Finally, the two sides came to an agreement by which the Roca party retained substantially all that they had been contending for. The General succeeded to the Presidency without [Pg 148] further opposition, and the city of Buenos Aires was detached from the province. The federalisation of the great city was the last step in the process of adaptation that had been going on ever since the expulsion of the Spaniards. Political equilibrium between the provinces and Buenos Aires had been reached. Thenceforth the latter's direct predominance was to be purely intellectual, commercial, and social. For the privilege of being capital of the republic, the city exchanged her provincial autonomy. Buenos Aires province, as formerly constituted, was the greatest menace to a peaceful federal union. In an assembly where the rights and influence of all the provinces were supposed to be equal, the magnitude of Buenos Aires was a constant occasion for the jealousy of her smaller sisters and for aggressions on her own part. Deprived of the city, the remainder of the province was not powerful enough to be dangerous. Now that it is federalised, the city itself proves to be the strongest tie binding together the different parts of the Confederation.

The greatest of all the waves of material prosperity reached its culmination during Roca's first administration. Business fairly boomed; foreign commerce increased seventy-five per cent. from 1875 to 1885; the exports of hides, cattle, wool, and wheat swelled from year to year; the railroad mileage tripled in ten years; the revenues mounted sixty per cent. in five years; the use of the post-office, that excellent measure of education, wealth, and higher national energies, tripled. All danger of disturbances serious [Pg 149] enough to affect property rights had long since passed; the provincial governors worked harmoniously with the Federal authorities. A part of Roca's system was to rest his power as chief executive on the co-operation of the governors; the members of Congress also bore somewhat the same relation to the President. As a rule, a majority in Congress supported his measures.

In spite of present prosperity, dangers had been inherited from past administrations. There were weak spots in the political and financial structure that had grown too rapidly to be altogether well built. The people still lacked the hard and continued training in business that older nations have had, and the national temperament tended toward a reckless optimism. European money lenders stood ready to stimulate this tendency by offering easy credit facilities in return for careless promises of exaggerated interest rates. The medium of exchange was a vastly inflated and fluctuating paper currency. From the beginning Argentine rulers had resorted to note issues to tide over their pecuniary difficulties. When Rosas assumed power in 1829 the paper dollar was worth fifteen cents, and by 1846 he had driven it down to four cents. In 1866, Mitre's administration had established a new arbitrary par at twenty-five paper dollars for one gold dollar. Sarmiento's extravagances made suspension necessary and sent gold to a premium. In 1883 President Roca remodelled the currency, issuing new notes convertible into gold, and exchanging them for the old paper at the rate of twenty-five for one. But his effort to contract and steady the circulating medium excited protests [Pg 150] from a community that was growing rich in the rapid inflation of values. Foreign money was being loaned to all sorts of Argentine enterprises on a scale that, considering the small population of the country, has never been precedented anywhere. Railroads, ranches, commercial houses, banks, land schemes, building enterprises, were capitalised for the asking. The provincial governments borrowed money recklessly, while interest was guaranteed on new railroads, and charters granted to all sorts of speculative enterprises. The nation undertook to supply itself in a single decade with the drainage works, the docks, the public buildings, the parks, the railroads, that older countries have needed a generation to provide. So much capital was being fixed that the attempt at specie resumption cramped the speculative world. Within two years it was given up, and issues of paper money resumed.

General Roca retired from office in 1886, and was succeeded by his brother-in-law, Juarez Celman. The four years during which the latter remained in office are memorable for reckless private and public borrowing. The healthy activity of General Roca's administration gave place to a mad fever of speculation. Congress passed a national banking act, and under its provisions banks of issue were established in nearly every province. The paper circulation almost quadrupled and the premium on gold doubled. The Federal government followed the example set by the provinces and municipalities, and burdened the country with an [Pg 151] indebtedness which has mortgaged the future of the country for years to come. Between 1885 and 1891 the foreign debt was increased nearly threefold.

GATEWAY OF THE CEMETERY AT BUENOS AIRES.
[From a lithograph.]

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During 1887 and 1888 few apprehensions of the inevitable result of the inflation seem to have been entertained. Up to the very day of the crash of 1889 the government cheerfully continued to borrow, to plan magnificent public improvements, and to build expensive railways. The public speculated confidently in the mortgage scrip issued through the provincial mortgage banks. Early in 1889 the government began to have difficulty in meeting some of the enormous obligations which it had undertaken. Conservative people became apprehensive; the independent press raised a warning voice. A ministerial crisis was followed by a panic in the Exchange. The new Secretary of the Treasury, in an effort to prevent further depreciation of the currency, diverted the redemption fund held by the government for bank issues. The currency dropped with sickening rapidity; the bubble companies collapsed; the public realised that many of the banks were unable to meet their obligations.

At this crisis public alarm and indignation found a vent in the formation of a revolutionary society, called the Civic Union, which was pledged to overthrow President Celman. On July 26, 1890, disturbances began and there was a little fighting in the streets. Police and troops, however, put no spirit into their efforts to suppress the rioters. The President's best friends urged him to resign, and Congress passed a formal memorial to that effect. There was nothing for him to do but to obey the manifest wish of the people; he handed in his resignation and the Vice-President, Dr. Carlos Pellegrini, peacefully succeeded him.

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The situation went from bad to worse; in 1891 the currency dropped to twenty-three cents on the dollar, the banks failed, and the laws for collection of debts were suspended for two months. The most which Dr. Pellegrini could hope to do was to hold things together until the general election should be held fifteen months later. No human wisdom could devise measures that would give immediate prosperity, and the public would be satisfied with nothing less. Dr. Pellegrini had to wait until later years for a proper appreciation of his labours. The other two great national figures were General Roca and General Mitre. The first had the prestige of his strong and successful administration; he enjoyed the confidence of the army, and he was the head of the great Nationalist party which was especially powerful in the provinces. General Mitre, the most eminent citizen of Buenos Aires, and in a way the living embodiment of the previous forty years of national history, had inevitably been selected as chief of the Civic Union. He had therefore led the movement through which the public opinion of the capital had overthrown Celman.

Mitre and Roca had co-operated in securing a peaceful transfer of the government from Celman to Pellegrini. Roca was inclined to favour Mitre for the presidency, but it soon became evident that the latter could not control the more radical members of the Civic Union, and that his candidacy would not reconcile all parties. February 19, 1891, an attempt to assassinate Roca was perpetrated in the streets of Buenos Aires. The spirit of mutiny grew alarmingly, and a state of siege was proclaimed; the Civic Union split into warring camps; trouble broke out in Cordoba, and successful revolutions overthrew the legal state governments in Catamarca and Santiago del Estero. Mitre and Roca formally withdrew from active political life in the hope that this might placate the dissident politicians.

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The candidate fixed upon by the wing of Nationals who adhered to Roca, and the moderates of the Civic Union led by Mitre, was Doctor Luiz Saenz Peña, ex-Justice of the Supreme Court. The Pellegrini government gave him its earnest support, and charges were made by the Radicals that their votes would be forcibly suppressed in the election of October, 1891. They determined to anticipate violence with violence, but, on the eve of the election in October, 1891, their leaders were imprisoned and a state of siege declared. Saenz Peña was elected, but the Radicals began to intrigue to obtain control of the provincial governments, which would enable them to force his resignation or his compliance with their wishes. Serious trouble broke out early in 1892 in the province of Corrientes, with which the Buenos Aires radicals openly sympathised. The new President quickly cut loose from the Roca wing of the Nationalist party and allied himself closely with the moderate Civic Unionists, now usually called "Mitristas." The President's own son, who had been a candidate against him, headed the faction of the Nationalist party that had renounced Roca's leadership. Revolutionary movements against the governors who belonged to the Roca faction began in several provinces. In February there were armed protests in Santa Fé against a new wheat tax; a revolt broke out in Catamarca in April; by

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July the Saenz Peña administration was in the gravest difficulties. San Luiz and Santa Fé rebelled, and in August Salta and Tucuman followed. It was manifest that the President was not strong enough to hold down the selfish factions who saw in the general dissatisfaction and financial distress only an opportunity to get into office by force of arms.

Congress remained neutral until it became evident that no accommodation could be reached between the President and his opponents, and that the latter would press on to overthrowing the government and probably precipitate a serious civil war. In this crisis, however, the majority agreed to laws which authorised armed Federal intervention in the troubles in San Luiz and Santa Fé. But in September the national troops themselves showed symptoms of mutiny and by this time most of the provinces were convulsed by revolutionary movements which the central government was manifestly not strong enough to suppress or control.

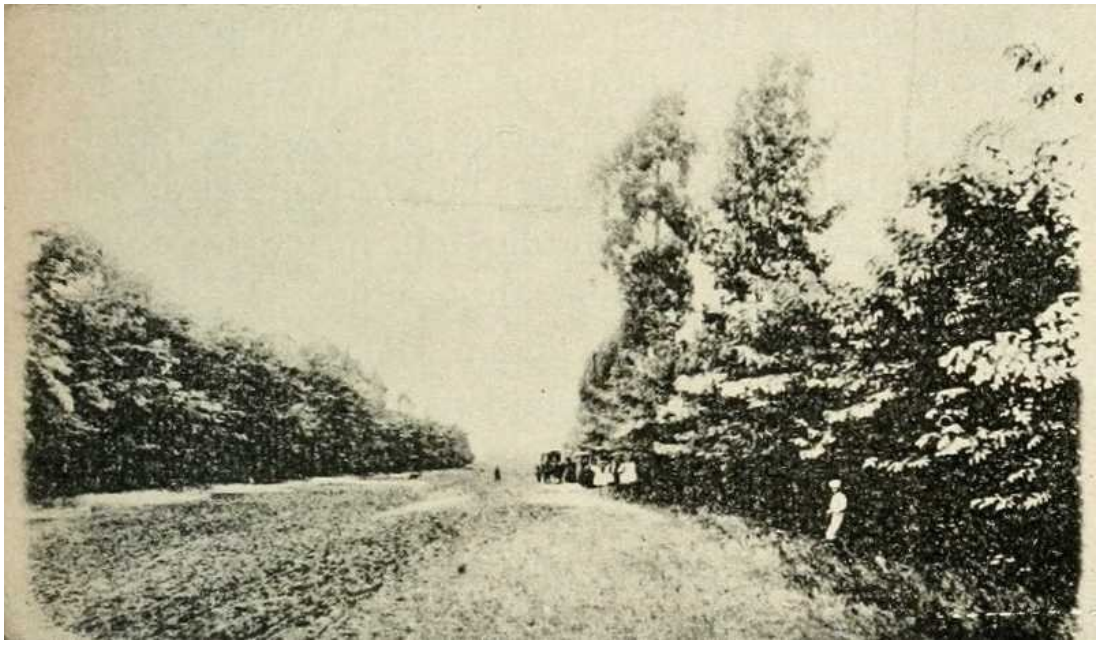
On September 25th, General Roca took command of the army; the most dangerous radical leaders in Buenos Aires were thrown into prison; and on October 1st he captured Rosario, the second city of the [Pg 156] Republic, and the chief place in Santa Fé, which for months had been in the hands of revolutionists. This was a beginning of the end of the troubles that menaced public order. Six million dollars had been expended by the government in fruitless marchings to and fro of troops, but no serious harm had been done. The scene of the contest between the ambitious factions was transferred to Congress, the Cabinet, and the Press. Throughout 1893 and 1894 the President struggled with his factional and financial difficulties, and gradually lost control of Congress and prestige in the country.

Meanwhile, commercial liquidation was proceeding normally and, as always, painfully. The great Provincial Mortgage Bank, through the agency of which a vast amount of the land scrip had been issued in the Celman days, was granted a moratorium for five years. Other actual bankruptcies were legally admitted and enforced. The mortgage scrip payable in gold was replaced by currency obligations. The government had proved unequal to the task of balancing its own receipts and expenses. Taxes were increased until rebellion seemed imminent, but expenditures still outran them. The deficits mounted in spite of the efforts toward economy and the returning prosperity of the business world. The boundary dispute with Chile had assumed a threatening aspect; war seemed imminent, and the military and naval estimates were largely increased. In January, 1895, President Saenz Peña called an extra session of Congress to vote supplies for the expected war with Chile and to consider the financial proposals of the government. Congress demanded that political grievances should be [Pg 157] redressed. The President had been persecuting the army officers who had been implicated in the revolutionary disturbances, and a vast majority of Congress insisted that a complete amnesty be granted to all political offenders. When the President refused, the Cabinet resigned in a body and Congress and the opposition brought every pressure to bear. It was soon evident that Congress must win, and on January 22, 1895, the President resigned.

The Vice-President, Doctor Uriburu, succeeded for the unexpired period of three years, during which little progress was made toward a settlement of the nation's financial difficulties. Symptoms of renewed extravagance appeared. In 1897, the issuance of $10,000,000 of mortgage scrip was authorised, and the city of Buenos Aires received permission to borrow $5,000,000. Work on the great docks of Buenos Aires, costing $35,000,000, was pushed to completion, and in February the paper dollars dropped back to 33 cents, while the deficit for the year was over $20,000,000.

In July, 1897, General Roca was nominated for the Presidency by the Convention of the National party, with Dr. Pellegrini in the chair. There was no real opposition to his election. Again and again during a quarter of a century he had proved himself able to cope with the most difficult situations which had arisen in Argentine affairs. In 1890, his firmness and adroitness had saved the country from the agony of a useless political upheaval after the failure of the Celman administration. During the anxious months that followed the panic, [Pg 158] his generosity had secured a co-operation of the moderates of Buenos Aires with his own immediate followers in holding back the Radicals and revolutionists in check. During the critical year of 1892, the outbreaks against the Saenz Peña administration increased in violence until it seemed as if the country would be convulsed with a serious civil war, but when Roca stepped in the tide of disorganisation turned, and his firm hand re-established the authority of the Federal government. His prestige and his personality enabled him to count upon an obedience from the chiefs of the provincial factions which was of inestimable value. He possessed those rare and indispensable qualities which make a man a centre around which other men can rally. He had built up the one really national party in the country and was faithful to his friends and his adherents, but sufficiently broad-minded to combine with other parties when the interests of the whole country demanded it.

General Roca entered upon his second presidential term in the beginning of 1898. One of his first acts was to intervene in Buenos Aires province and put an end to a deadlock between the governor and the Provincial Assembly. The boundary dispute with Chile, a question which, in spite of the earnest desire of both governments for peace, might at any time precipitate a ruinous war, was submitted for settlement by arbitration. W. J. Buchanan, the United States Minister at Buenos Aires, named as arbitrator for the northern frontier, quickly announced a decision which was promptly accepted by both parties. The more complicated [Pg 159] southern frontier could not so easily be prepared for submission; a serious misunderstanding arose, and both countries felt compelled to spend large sums for armaments which they knew they could ill afford. Happily, a decision was at last rendered in 1902. No question now remains open which is likely to involve the external peace of Argentina.



A RIVER ROAD IN ARGENTINA.
[From a lithograph.]

Internal peace has not been menaced during General Roca's term. The commercial situation of the country has vastly improved. Immigration, which had largely ceased after 1890, has again risen to over a hundred thousand a year. Wheat exports rose from 4,000,000 bushels in 1897 to 61,000,000 in 1900. The total exports in 1899 were $185,000,000, twice as great per capita as the record export of the United States. There have [Pg 160] been no issues of paper money, and the value of the currency has risen to forty cents. The government has established a new artificial par at a little more than this sum, and has begun accumulating a gold reserve. A resumption of specie payments is soon expected.

Nevertheless the chief difficulties and preoccupations of the Roca administration have been with financial questions. A deficit of $70,000,000 had accumulated in the few years before 1898, and the interest on the immense public debt makes an equilibrium in the budget almost impossible. Many of the provincial governments have defaulted, and the national government has had to carry their burdens in addition to its own, to satisfy clamorous foreign creditors. In 1901 it was proposed to unify the debt, refunding the whole at a lower rate of interest, and specifically pledging certain sources of public income. This plan had the approval of the government, but the national pride was touched by the latter feature. The populace could not bear the idea of giving a sort of mortgage on the country. The passage of the bill by Congress was met with so many demonstrations of popular disapproval that it was abandoned. This change of front was accompanied by the formation of an alliance between the followers of General Mitre and those of General Roca.

The industrial impetus already acquired by the Argentine Republic is sufficient to carry it over all obstacles, and it seems assured that there will be a rapid settlement of the whole of this immense and fertile plain. Here [Pg 161] nature has done everything to make communication easy, and a temperate climate insures crops suited to modern European civilisation. Two grave perils have so far been encountered—namely, a tendency toward political disintegration and an abuse of the taxing power. The former is now remote, for since the railways began to concentrate wealth and influence at Buenos Aires, and to destroy the prestige and political power of the provincial capitals, the national structure built by the patriots of 1853 has stood firmer each year.

The Argentine has had a bitter lesson of the evils of governmental extravagance, and still groans under the burden of a debt which seems disproportionately heavy, but the growth of population and wealth will soon overtake it, and the very difficulties of meeting interest are the cause of an economy in administration, of which the good effects will be felt long after the debt itself has been reduced to a reasonable per capita. A nation is in the process of formation in the Plate valley whose material greatness is certain, and whose moral and intellectual characteristics will have the widest influence on the rest of South America.

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PARAGUAY

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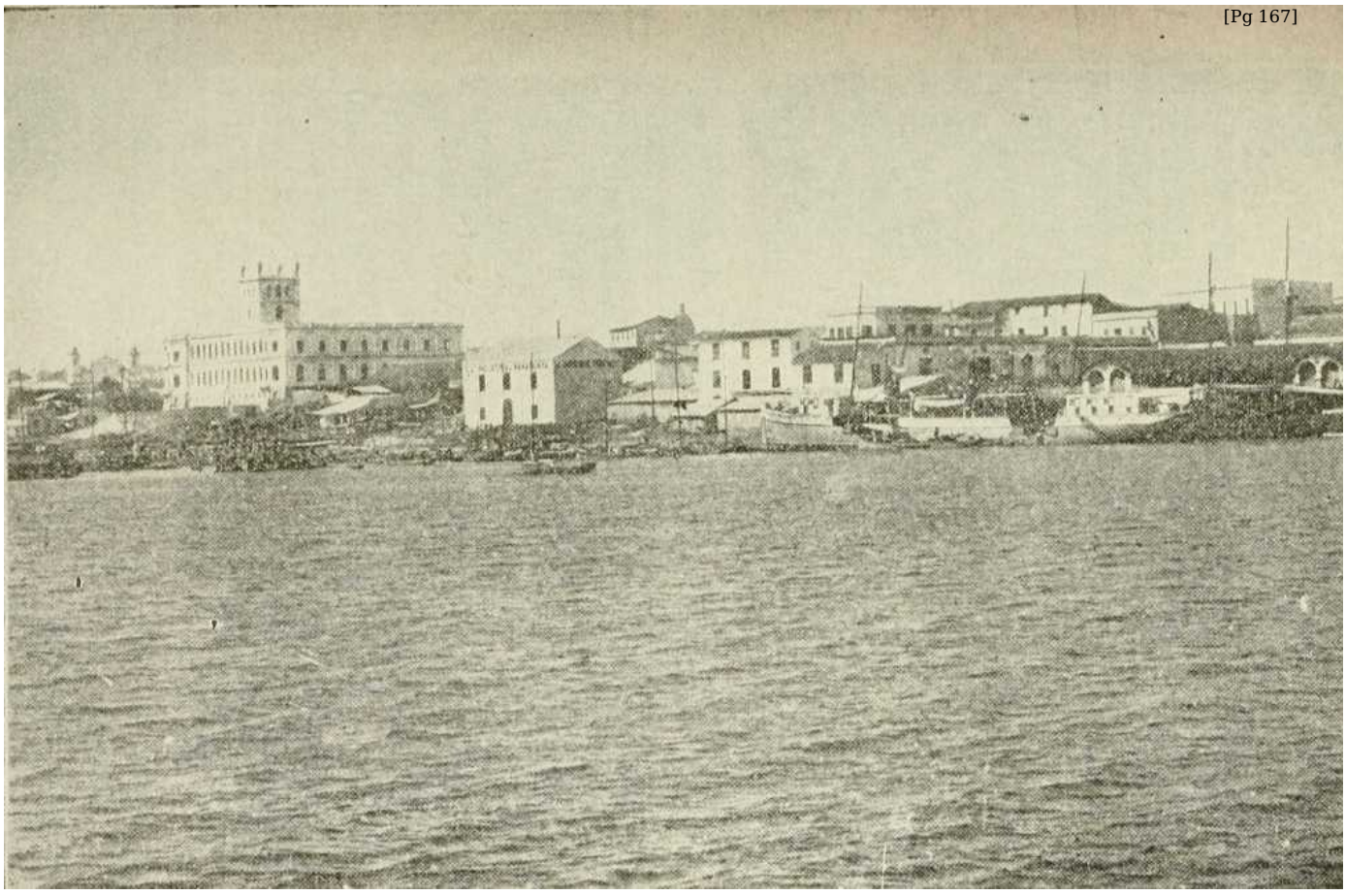
CHAPTER I

PARAGUAY UNTIL 1632

The beginnings of the settlements in Paraguay have been sketched in the introductory chapter on the discoveries and conquest. In 1526, Cabot, searching to find a route to the gold and silver mines of the centre of the continent, penetrated as far as the site of the present city of Asuncion. He had already, in the exploration of the Upper Paraná, skirted the southern and eastern boundary of what has since become the country of Paraguay. Ten years later the exhausted and discouraged remnants of Mendoza's great expedition sought rest and refuge among the peaceful agricultural tribes of this region. Under Domingos Irala, these six hundred surviving Spanish adventurers founded Asuncion in 1536, the first settlement of the valley of the Plate. They reduced the Indians to a mild slavery, compelling them to build houses, perform menial services, and cultivate the soil. The country was divided into great tracts called "encomiendas," which, with the Indians that inhabited them, were distributed among the settlers. Few women had been able to follow Mendoza's [Pg 166] expedition, so the Spaniards of Asuncion took wives from among the Indians. Subsequent immigration was small, and the proportion of Spanish blood has always been inconsiderable, compared with the number of aborigines. The children of the marriages between the Spanish conquerors and Indian women were proud of their white descent. The superior strain of blood easily dominated, and the mixed Paraguayan Creoles became Spaniards to all intents and purposes. Spaniards and Creoles, however, learned the Indian language; Guarany rather than Spanish became, and has remained, the most usual method of communication.

The Spaniards of Asuncion were turbulent and disinclined to submit to authority. They paid scant respect to the adelantados, whom the Castilian king sent out one after another as feudal proprietors. Until his death Irala was the most influential man in the colony, but his power rested on his own energy and capacity, and on the fear and respect in which he was held by his companions, more than on the royal commission that finally could not be withheld from him.

[Pg 167]



ASUNCION.

Across the river from Asuncion stretched away to the west the vast and swampy plains of the great Chaco. It was inhabited by wandering tribes of Indians whom the Spaniards could not subdue. They fled before the expeditions like scared wild beasts, only to turn and mercilessly massacre every man when a chance was offered for ambush or surprise. To the east of the Paraguay River the country was dry, rolling, and extremely [Pg 168] fertile. Though covered with magnificent forests it was easily penetrable all the way across to the Paraná. Its inhabitants were the docile Guaranies, who knew something of agriculture and in whose villages considerable stores of food were to be found. The population was dense for savages, but they had no political or military organisation. Divided into small tribes which did not co-operate, they rendered little respect or obedience to their chiefs. Under these conditions Spanish authority rapidly spread over central and southern Paraguay. Before Irala died, in 1557, the settlers had reached the Paraná on the western boundary and founded settlements nearly as far north as the Grand Cataract.

Shortly afterwards, the Creoles of Asuncion began their expeditions to the South. By 1580 they controlled the Paraná River from its confluence with the Paraguay to the ocean, had established Santa Fé and Buenos Aires on its right bank, and opened up the southern pampa. The pastoral provinces on the Lower Paraná were slowly peopled. A large proportion of the energetic Paraguayan Creoles preferred the semi-nomadic life of the plains to indolence among their Indian slaves in the tropical forests of Paraguay. The two regions were distinct in climate, habits of life, social and industrial organisation. They became separated in interests and soon were to be divided politically. Though, until 1619, the whole province continued to bear the name of Paraguay, the usual residence of the governor was Buenos Aires. Asuncion was often forced to be content [Pg 169] with a lieutenant-governor, and was fast relegated to the position of a neglected and isolated district.

In the days of the Spanish conquest, Franciscan monks were the priests who most often accompanied the expeditions, and they took the most prominent part in the earliest establishment of religion. The members of this Order, however, with a few notable exceptions, took no special interest in the evangelisation of the aborigines. On the contrary, they were as fierce as the soldiers themselves in their cruelties to the poor Indians. The shouts of a Franciscan monk set on Pizarro's ruffians to the slaughter of the Incas that surrounded Atahualpa. Those that came to Paraguay preferred to live in the towns, and their conduct toward the Indians differed little from that of the lay Spaniards. It was the genius of Ignatius Loyola that conceived and perfected a machine able to carry Christianity and civilisation to these remote and inaccessible peoples and regions. Within a few years after its foundation, the Society of Jesus turned its attention to the evangelisation of South America; in 1550 the Jesuit Fathers began their work in Brazil. Their successes and failures in that country had little relation with their work in Spanish South America. It is curious, however, that their most successful early work in Brazil should have been done in São Paulo, on the extreme eastern border of the wide plateau which drains to the west into the Paraná. For a decade or two after 1550, they laboured hard to gather the Indians of that region into villages, to teach them Christianity, and protect them [Pg 170] against the tyrannies and exactions of the Portuguese settlers. The contest was unequal; the Jesuits were not long able to prevent the enslavement of their proselytes. The Paulistas destroyed the Jesuit missions in their neighbourhood and became the most expert in Indian warfare and the most terrible foes of the Jesuit system of all the colonists of South America. Their determined opposition was the most potent cause in preventing the subjection of South America to a theocratic system of government.

About 1586 the Jesuit Fathers entered Paraguay for the purpose of beginning the evangelisation of the Indians of the Plate valley. They established a school in Asuncion and pushed out on foot into the remoter districts. Their success was phenomenal. They spared no pains to learn the language of the savages so that they might teach them in their own tongue. They approached them with kindness and benevolence showing in every gesture. They availed themselves of the Indians' love of bright colours and showy processions. They went unarmed and alone, offering useful and attractive presents, conforming to savage customs and prejudices, and imposing on the vivid savage imagination with the pomp of Catholic worship. They taught their savage pupils how to cultivate the ground to get greater results, how to save themselves unnecessary labour, and how to live comfortably. They persuaded them to gather into towns, where they built comfortable houses and tight warehouses, while the men cultivated the soil and the women spun and wove cotton. [Pg 171]

The Jesuits came almost immediately into conflict with the interests of the Spanish colonists. They were welcomed at first, because they were expected to lend themselves to the enslavement of the Indians. When their real purposes were discovered feeling against them rose high. The Creoles clearly saw that it was going to be far more difficult to extend their power over the Indians gathered together in villages under Jesuit protection than over unorganised and friendless bands of unconverted savages.

Before 1610 the number of Jesuits that had come to Paraguay was very small. Among the first was the Father named Thomas Fields, a Scotchman. As a matter of fact, the Jesuits were recruited from all the nations of Europe and under their military system had to go wherever they might be sent. English, Irish, and German names, as well as Spanish, are to be found in the lists of Jesuits who laboured in Paraguay.

In 1608 Philip III. of Spain attended to the complaints that came to him through the powerful chiefs of the Order of the indifference and opposition shown by the settlers and colonial authorities, and gave his royal and official sanction to the Jesuit conversion of the Indians along the Upper Paraná. By this time the Fathers had penetrated across to the Paraná and had followed up that stream far north of the Grand Cataract in latitude 24°, which marks the northern boundary of Paraguay proper. It is hard to understand how they overcame the difficulties of travelling. To this day it is well-nigh impossible to reach the Grand Cataract, and years pass [Pg 172] without that wonder of nature's being seen by the eyes of civilised man. No part of the world, outside the Arctic regions, is less accessible than the Paraná above the Grand Cataract. Yet these heroic priests made that region the principal theatre of their operations in the early years of the seventeenth century. The territory is now all Brazilian,—the boundaries of that republic extend on the east bank of the Paraná south nearly to the twenty-sixth degree and on the west bank to the twenty-fourth. The rivers Paranapanema and Ivahy are great tributaries coming down from the east between the twenty-second and twenty-third degrees, and draining a vast extent of the plateau that extends to the Brazilian coast mountains between Curitiba and São Paulo, and on their banks the Jesuits established their principal missions.

In those days there were no clearly defined boundaries between the Portuguese and Spanish dominions. From 1580 to 1640 the king of Spain was also monarch of Portugal. The Jesuits held his royal letters patent for the conversion of the Indians of the province of Guayrá—the name which this remote region bore. They had no reason to anticipate that they would be accused of being invaders of Portuguese territory, or that they would be interfered with by any Portuguese subjects of the Spanish Crown. The nearest Portuguese settlement was at São Paulo, from which Guayrá could be reached only by the long and tedious descent of the Tieté River to its confluence with the Paraná, and thence down that river to the Ivahy. Months would be [Pg 173] necessary to make such a journey, great difficulties encountered with waterfalls and rapids, and great privations from want of food in the vast uninhabited regions on the route.

The first Jesuits to arrive after the granting of formal authorisation by the Spanish king were two Italians. They left Asuncion October 10, 1609, and it took them five months of incessant travelling to reach the Paranapanema. The work already done there by the earlier Fathers had borne some fruit. The Indians were prepared for the coming of the new missionaries and readily gathered into the towns which they founded in rapid succession. For the first few years all went well, and within a very short time they claimed to have at least forty thousand souls under their guidance. In 1614 there were 119 Jesuits in Paraguay and Guayrá, and the work of evangelising and reducing to obedience the whole Guarany population of the Paraná valley went on apace. For twenty years these Guayrá missions spread and prospered, while to the east and south the Jesuits acquired more and more influence with the Indians in Paraguay proper, and more and more hemmed in the Creoles of Asuncion.

In 1629 a thunderbolt burst upon Guayrá out of a clear sky. The Portuguese from São Paulo appeared before the Mission of San Antonio and destroyed it utterly, burning the church and houses and driving off the Indians as slaves. Other missions shortly suffered the same fate, and within the short space of three years the towns had been sacked, most of the inhabitants of the region carried off or killed, and the remnants had fled [Pg 174] down the river under the leadership of the Fathers. The Paulistas were animated by motives, some good, some bad. Primarily they wished to capture slaves. They hated the Jesuits and had themselves suffered from the latter's system of segregating the aborigines. Only a few decades before, their fathers had destroyed the Jesuit missions near São Paulo, and they were determined not to permit themselves to be hemmed in and crowded out by Indians ruled and protected by Jesuits. They believed in the doctrine of "Brazil for the White Brazilians," and they regarded the Jesuits and their neophytes as natural enemies and fair prey. The sentiment of nationality also animated them. As descendants of Portuguese they hated the Spaniards and their rule. Their allegiance to the Spanish dynasty that had usurped the crown of Portugal sat lightly. The Jesuits came by way of Asuncion, their communications were with the Spanish authorities, and most of them were Spaniards. The Paulistas, as Portuguese, viewed with alarm a rapid spread of Spanish ecclesiastics up the Paraná valley, which threatened soon to reach their own neighbourhood. Avarice, love of adventure, race pride, patriotism, hatred of priestly domination, all co-operated to push them on to undertaking these memorable expeditions.

The great extension of the Jesuits over the northern and eastern regions of the Paraná valley occurred during the period when Hernandarias was the dominant figure of the Plate. Creole though he was, this [Pg 175] remarkable man was a friend to the Indian and to the missionary work of the Jesuits. His aid and encouragement in 1609 were essential to the latter's success, for he might easily have nullified the effect of the royal permission to evangelise Guayrá, a formal document that would have been of little value against the delays and excuses of an unwilling governor aided by the jealous people. After his first term as governor at Buenos Aires, the Spanish government determined to put a stop to the more flagrant of the abuses practised against the savages and created the office of "Protector of the Indians." Hernandarias was named to fill it, and carried out his instructions in a moderate spirit. He understood the country and the situation of the colony well, and did not undertake to abolish Indian slavery. In that tropical climate the whites will not labour in the fields so long as there are Indians who can be forced to work, and the Spaniards still regarded the Indian as little better than an animal.

On the other hand, Hernandarias was too intelligent not to see that there must be restraints on the cruelties and exactions of the Creoles if the Indians of Paraguay were to be saved from the extermination that had been the fate of the Haytians a century before. The outcome was, that though a new code of laws was promulgated by the impracticable Spanish king, which forbade any further enslavement of the aborigines, its provisions were largely disregarded. At the same time, however, the Indians acquired a legal status, and their condition was gradually improved until it became not much worse than that of the contemporaneous European [Pg 176] peasantry. The Jesuits were guaranteed against interference and allowed to go out into the remoter wilderness and give to the yet unslaved inhabitants the invaluable protection of membership in their missions.

In 1619 the natural and commercial division between Paraguay proper and the rest of the province was officially recognised. The region between the Paraguay and the Paraná rivers was made a separate province, directly dependent upon the Viceroy at Lima and the Audiencia at Charcas in Bolivia. It included officially the Jesuit missions south-east of the Paraná as well as the present territory of Paraguay.

When the Paulistas began their terrible attacks on the Guayrá missions in 1629, the governor of Paraguay refused to send any assistance to the Jesuits. The latter charged him with a corrupt understanding with the invaders, by which he was to share in the profits of the slaves sold. The Order had agreed with the Spanish government not to put any arms into the hands of the Indians, so the latter were defenceless against the Paulistas, who attacked musket in hand. The Creoles and Spaniards in Asuncion resented more and more the presence and power of the Jesuits, and viewed with ill-concealed satisfaction the misfortunes that now overwhelmed the priests. The governor, in declining to send help, was only carrying out the wishes of the people around him. Had the number of whites in Paraguay not been so very small the Jesuits might have been expelled as they were in São Paulo.

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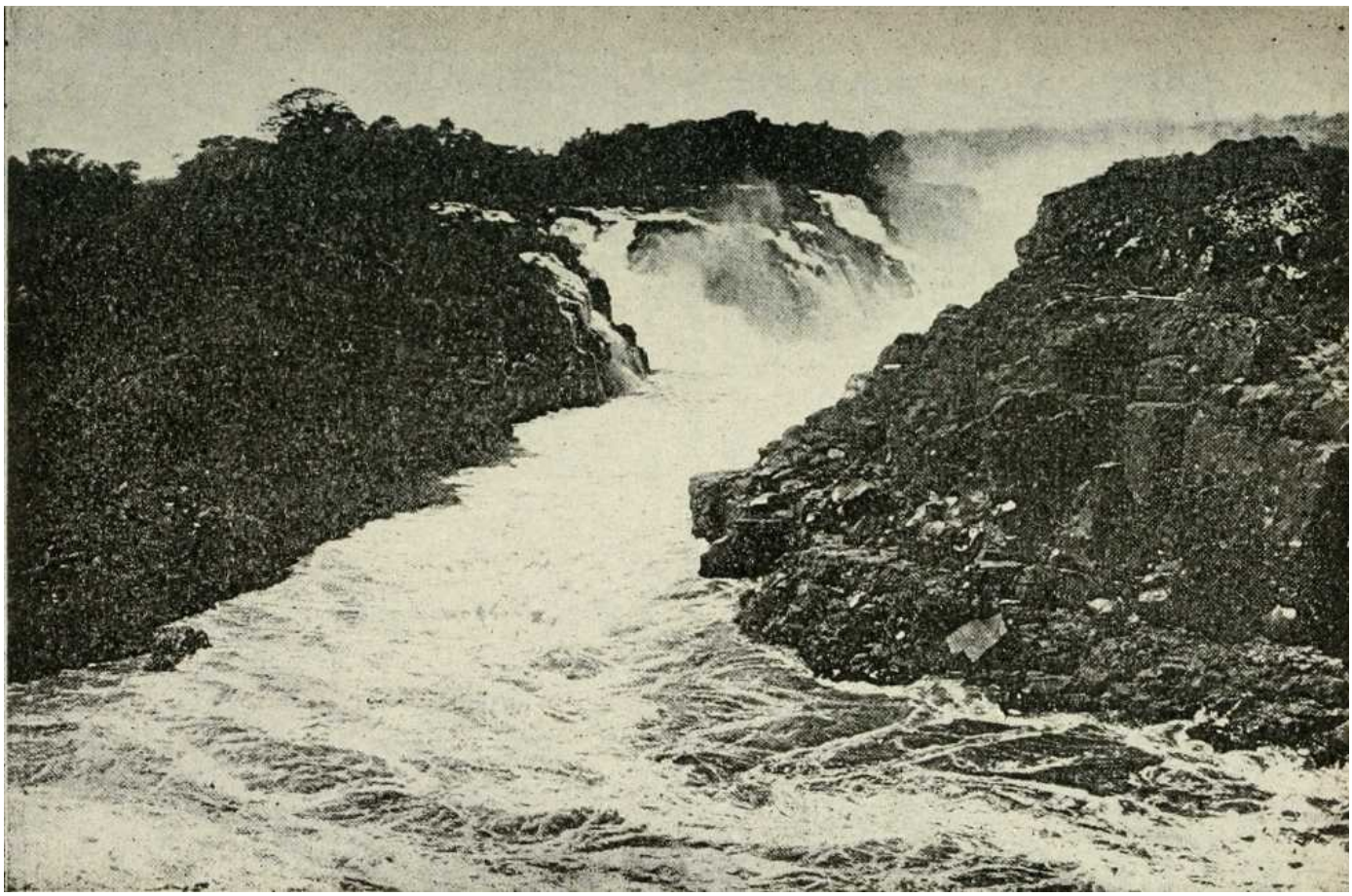
CHAPTER II

THE JESUIT REPUBLIC AND COLONIAL PARAGUAY

We have no accounts of the Jesuit missions in Guayrá, or of the tragedy of their destruction, except those that were written by the Fathers themselves. These are filled with manifest exaggerations and marred by omissions which we have few means of correcting. Nevertheless, the bold outlines of a story that for bravery, pathos, and devotion rivals any ever told are clear and indisputable. Within such a short period as twenty years the Jesuits had not succeeded in training the Guayrá Indians to any very high degree of civilisation. They complain that the Indians were still prone to return to the worship of their devils. Nevertheless, the massive walls of churches which have survived the devastation wrought by three centuries of tropical rains bear witness that the Jesuits had gathered together a multitude of people and had taught them a measure of skilled labour.

Of the completeness of the victory of the Paulistas there is no doubt. Within three years, tens of thousands of Indians were carried off to São Paulo, and hardly a town was left standing in the province of Guayrá. [Pg 178] Father Montoya, chief Jesuit, has left an account of the Hegira which he led down the river. Though he is silent as to the part he took himself, it is hard to read his pages and not give him a place among the world's great heroes. Twelve thousand Indians of every sex and age assembled on the Paranapanema with the few belongings which they had been able to bring from the homes that they were forced to abandon. The Paulistas

were daily expected to return, and the only hope of escape was to float down the river and get beyond the Grand Cataract of the Paraná. The journey to the beginning of the falls was made without any great losses; there the difficulties began. Ninety miles of falls and rapids intervene between navigable water above and below the Grand Cataract. Across the river valley extends a mountain chain with slopes rugged and covered with dense vegetation. The river divides into various channels, and the sides of the gorges are clothed in cane-brakes and tangled forests through which a path had to be cut with machetes. These poor Jesuits and their thousands of scared, patient Indians had no boats awaiting them at the foot of the falls, so they had to continue their dreary passage through the gorges and cane-brakes, where wild Indians lay in ambush with poisoned arrows, until at last a place was reached where canoes could be built. Still they struggled on, the indomitable Jesuits taking every precaution. Though out of immediate danger from the Paulistas when they had passed the cataract, the Spaniards on the right bank below were hardly less to be feared. They were [Pg 179] waiting on the shore of the Paraná for news of the fugitives in order to pounce on them and make a rich haul of slaves. The provisions were exhausted, but the Jesuits dared not apply for help to the Creoles. Fever broke out and, sick and starving, the devoted Jesuits and their uncomplaining followers worked away on their boats and rafts. At last they got them ready, and, slipping past the Spanish settlements in the night, they finally reached some small Jesuit missions near the mouth of the Iguassú, five hundred miles from their starting-point.



GUAYRÁ FALLS. [Pg 180]

The Jesuits resolved to evacuate Guayrá completely and to build up their power anew in the country between the Paraná and the Uruguay. Within the next few years they had occupied the country that is now the Argentine Territory of the missions. This tract lay directly across the Paraná, from that part of Paraguay proper in which the Jesuits were most powerful, to the other side of the Uruguay, where was a fertile territory which proved an excellent field for the extension of the settlement. Before many years these missions stretched in a broad band from the centre of Paraguay three hundred miles to the south-east; they dominated southern Paraguay and half the present Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul with the country that lies between, while their towns lined both banks of the Upper Uruguay and the Middle Paraná, cutting off the Creoles from extending their settlements up either of these great rivers.

Now that the priests had concentrated their forces so near, the alarm of the Creoles became acute. The [Pg 181] Jesuits managed to obtain the dismissal of the governor who had refused to send them aid when they were attacked by the Paulistas and were driven from Guayrá, but his successor also became a partisan of the Creoles as soon as he reached Asuncion. He visited the missions near the river Paraná and ordered that they be secularised on the ground that these regions had already been subjected by Spanish arms before its occupation by the priests. But the Jesuits were good lawyers and had powerful friends at every Court, so the governor was forced to reverse his action.

The next governor helped to make the Jesuits secure from Paulista interference below the Grand Cataract, by defeating an important expedition which had reached the new missions. The Paulistas did not confine their aggressions to the missions, but alarmed the Spanish Creoles themselves by penetrating west of the Paraná into Paraguay proper. Even Asuncion did not feel safe for a time. The Jesuits had now begun to arm and drill the Indians. Though the Paulistas made expeditions from time to time, and the Spanish and Jesuit frontier settlements were frequently aroused by the news of a bloody raid and of the rapid depredations of a band of these dreaded marauders, there was never again such wholesale destruction as had taken place in Guayrá. The frontiers of the Spanish and Portuguese peoples on the Paraná remain to this day substantially as they were fixed by the Paulista expeditions of 1630 to 1640. [Pg 182]

In their conflict with the Jesuits, the Creoles shortly received a valuable reinforcement in Bishop Cardenas, a very able and energetic prelate, and a man gifted as a ruler and statesman. Born in the city of Charcas, on

the Bolivian plateau, he was a Creole of the Creoles. He became a great missionary and evangelist throughout Upper Peru and Tucuman, acquiring wonderful fame and popularity by his eloquence. In spite of the fact that he was a Creole, he was immensely popular among the Indians, and seems to have been a natural leader of both branches of the native population. He bitterly hated the Jesuits. As a member of the rival Franciscan Order, his professional jealousy was aroused by their success, and his Creole prejudices were outraged by their efforts to prevent the extension of white power among the aborigines.

By sheer force of ability and eloquence, he rose into great prominence in southern Spanish America, and was rewarded for his successful labours in Tucuman by being appointed Bishop of Paraguay. There the Creoles accepted him as their leader, and he soon became the dominant figure in the community. He quarrelled repeatedly with the governor, but such was his force of character, and the skill with which he took advantage of the superstitious reverence for his apostolic office, that he invariably achieved his ends. Once the governor, at the head of a file of soldiers, presented himself at the bishop's door to arrest a fugitive whom the bishop had undertaken to protect. When the door was opened there stood the dauntless priest in full [Pg 183] canonicals, defying the governor to cross his threshold. He excommunicated the governor and every soldier who had dared take part in this affront to his dignity, and, like Hildebrand, was only appeased when the governor had begged for pardon on his knees.

When the governor died, Bishop Cardenas succeeded *ad interim*. His popularity and prestige were unbounded, and his audacity and courage unprecedented. Uniting in himself the religious, civil, and popular power, he controlled the forces of the community more completely than any one who had preceded him. His great work was the humiliation and destruction of the Jesuits. He hampered their insidious spread on the hither side of the Paraná, and attempted the secularisation of many of their missions. In 1649 he took the audacious step of issuing a decree expelling all the members of the Society of Jesus, and he actually drove the Fathers from their churches and schools in Asuncion itself. The Jesuits appealed to the Viceroy, and a governor was sent out to depose him.

Twenty years had now elapsed since the Jesuits had armed the Mission Indians and organised them into an efficient militia. An army was, therefore, ready to the new governor's hand. The Creoles of western Paraguay were riotous and tumultuous, but in that tropical climate they had lost much of the military capacity of their Spanish ancestors. The number of people of Spanish descent was small and while the secular Indians made admirable soldiers when disciplined and well led, they had never been organised by the Creoles for serious [Pg 184] warfare. The military system of the Jesuits immediately proved its superiority. Aided by the prestige of his Viceregal commission, the new governor at the head of the Jesuit army quickly overcame the hastily gathered levies of the Bishop.

For the next one hundred and twenty years the Jesuits maintained their system in south-eastern Paraguay and the regions on both banks of the Paraná and the Upper Uruguay. Until 1728 their territory was nominally under the jurisdiction of the governor of Asuncion. Really, however, it was an independent republic ruled by a superior whose capital was at Candelaria, and who was actually responsible to no one except his General at Rome and the authorities at Madrid. In the secular part of Paraguay, the formerly turbulent and secular Creoles sank more and more into the indifference characteristic of the Indians who surrounded them. Early in the eighteenth century a governor named Antequera, whom the Viceregal authorities attempted to depose, was forcibly maintained for a time by the Paraguayan Creoles—probably the earliest instance of an important movement toward independence which occurred in South America. The Paraguayans only yielded when a compromise was offered. The old ferocity which the original conquerors had felt against the Indians gave place gradually to kindlier sentiments. From slaves the Indians rose into serfs and then into peasants, living on good terms with the proprietors of their lands, and not more oppressed by Spanish officials than the [Pg 185] whites themselves. Secular Paraguay, shut in on the west by the impenetrable Chaco with its hordes of dreaded wild Indians, and on the east by the Jesuit territory, could not expand. Indeed the impulse toward conquest and exploration which so distinguished the Paraguayan Creoles in the latter part of the sixteenth century, had completely died out as early as the middle of the seventeenth century.

In 1728, the Jesuit republic was formally detached from the jurisdiction of Paraguay and placed under that of the government of Buenos Aires. The missions were all situated on or near the banks of the Upper Paraná and Uruguay, and their line of communication with the outside world ran directly to Buenos Aires. They had few commercial relations with Asuncion and it was inconvenient to maintain even a shadow of political relation with that capital. The Jesuit missions prospered, although, curiously enough, their population remained stationary. South and east of the Paraná, the country which they occupied was mostly an open, rolling plain admirably suited for pasturage. Herding cattle was the chief employment of the Indians and the chief source of the exports. However, in the forests north-west of the Paraná, agriculture was more practised, and the principal exports thence were the matte tea and timber. In the pastoral country the Jesuits did not expand farther. They had already gathered most of the Indians who inhabited that region into their missions, and the natural increase of population did not justify any new settlements. But in the wooded country across [Pg 186] the Paraná a few tribes of Guaranies had hitherto escaped subjection to either Creoles or Jesuits, and farther to the west, in the great Chaco, there were many tribes of savage and intractable Indians. In both these directions the Jesuits kept up their missionary efforts. In Paraguay, they were successful and converted many tribes of the northern part of that country, but in the Chaco they could make little progress.

In 1769 the king of Spain issued his famous decree banishing the Jesuits from all his dominions. It was feared that in the centre of their power on the Upper Paraná they might offer resistance. They commanded a population of more than two hundred thousand Indians, fairly well armed and disciplined and absolutely devoted to them; nevertheless, they submitted quietly. Spanish officials replaced the Jesuits in control of the civil and commercial interests of the mission towns, and priests of other Orders were sent up to continue spiritual instruction. The Spanish officials were, however, not successful in holding the Indians together. Their exactions and cruelties drove the Indians to despair, and within a very few years emigration began. The seven missions to the east of the Uruguay had been traded by Spain to Portugal in 1750, and most of their inhabitants had then been killed or driven across the Uruguay. The most populous missions lay between the Uruguay and the Paraná, in the territory that to-day forms the upper part of Corrientes, and the Missions Territory. A large proportion of their inhabitants fled down the Uruguay into Entre Rios and Uruguay proper. [Pg 187] Those on the west side of the Paraná largely remained or removed only far enough to coalesce with the secular Indians of Paraguay; some of the outlying and more remote missions were abandoned altogether, and Paraguay then assumed its present extent.

The population was fairly homogeneous, and its vast majority was composed of descendants of the aborigines, with comparatively few Spaniards and Creoles of mixed blood forming the upper strata of society. The country felt few of the quickening and disturbing influences which were already animating the regions at

the mouth of the river toward the end of the eighteenth century. Little effort was necessary to get a subsistence from the teeming soil, and, content with their luscious oranges, their matte, and their unlimited tobacco, the Paraguayans led an idyllic existence. They had little sympathy with the turbulent, active-minded population which was crowding into Buenos Aires and making it a commercial, political, and intellectual focus. Agricultural in their habits, they disliked the hard-riding gauchos of the southern plains hardly less than the turbulent Indians of the Chaco. In the movements that preceded the revolution of 1810 they took no part.

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CHAPTER III

FRANCIA'S REIGN

On the 25th of May, 1810, a revolutionary movement in Buenos Aires overthrew the Spanish Viceroy. Its leaders were young Creole liberals, natives of Buenos Aires, and a junta was formed from their number which undertook the supreme direction of affairs. Prompt measures were taken to overthrow the Spanish provincial authorities and to secure the co-operation and obedience of all the subdivisions of the Viceroyalty. Manuel Belgrano, one of the enthusiastic leaders of the movement, was sent up the river to take possession of Entre Rios and Corrientes for the junta, and to attack the Spanish governor of Paraguay. He was accompanied by only a few hundred troops, but he counted on the sympathy and help of the people among whom he was going.

In Entre Rios and Corrientes, which were mere administrative divisions of the province of Buenos Aires, he encountered no difficulty. The gauchos, who formed almost the whole population, hated outside control and cared little who claimed to be supreme at Buenos Aires. Belgrano marched through the centre of these districts and reached the Paraná at the old Jesuit capital of Candelaria. Once across the river he found a different atmosphere. The home-loving Indian population regarded Belgrano's band as invaders and responded promptly to the call of the Spanish governor, old Velasco, to take up arms and repel the aggression. The Paraguayans hated the Buenos Aireans with an intensity born of ignorance and isolation, and a considerable force of militia assembled for the defence of Asuncion. Among its most popular leaders was a native Paraguayan named Yegros. Belgrano was not opposed until he approached within sixty miles of Asuncion, but on the 19th of January, 1811, the Paraguayans turned and crushed his little army. He retreated to the south and on March 9th was captured with his whole force.

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This repulse ended, once for all, the hope cherished by the Buenos Aires liberals of persuading or compelling the submission of Paraguay. The battle of the 19th of January, and the hostile attitude of the whole Paraguayan people, definitely assured Paraguay's independence from Buenos Aires. It soon became evident that independence from Spain had been secured as well. In contact with their Argentine prisoners, the more intelligent Paraguayan leaders were quickly convinced of the advantages which home rule would bring to Paraguay, and that they themselves ought to control the government until affairs in Spain should be settled. The governor had no Spanish troops nor any hope of receiving help, either from the distracted mother-country or from the governors of other parts of South America. Each of them had enough to do in taking care of himself. Velasco's secretary was an educated Buenos Airean, a liberal, and an autonomist. He plotted the overthrow of his chief in connection with a Paraguayan officer who was popular with the troops in Asuncion.

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Two months after Belgrano's surrender, a bloodless revolution occurred. The governor offered no resistance; he simply stepped to one side and became a private citizen, while the patriots took possession of the barracks and began casting about blindly for a solid basis for a new government. After a good deal of confusion the prominent citizens of the province were called together in a sort of rude Constituent Congress, and a junta was formed. General Yegros and Dr. Francia were the two most prominent and popular men in the country, and they were naturally and inevitably selected as chief members. Yegros had been the principal leader of the militia, and Francia was considered the most learned and able man in the community. He was a lawyer who had become a sort of demigod to the lower classes by his fearless advocacy of their rights, and inspired almost superstitious reverence by his reputation for learning and disinterestedness. He was selected as secretary, while Yegros, an ignorant soldier, became president of the junta. Francia's abilities and courage immediately made him the dominating figure. Jealousies arose and he stepped out for a while, but the weaker men who succeeded him could not control the situation. Two years later a popular assembly met which was ready to submit to his advice in everything. The junta was dismissed and he and Yegros were invested with supreme power under the title of Consuls. A year later he forced Yegros out and with general consent assumed the position of sole executive, and in 1816 he was formally declared supreme and perpetual dictator.

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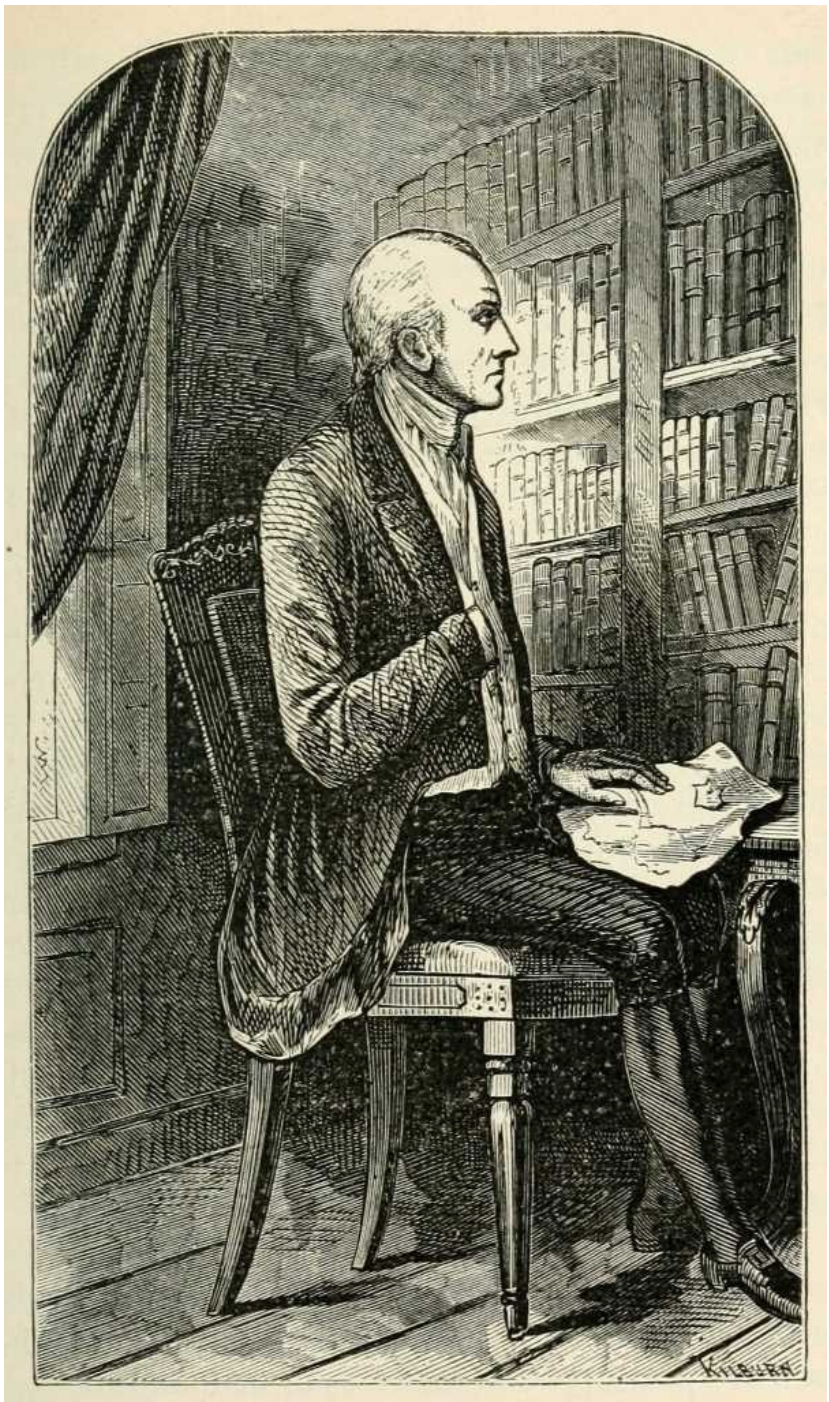
For the next twenty-five years he was the Government of Paraguay. History does not record another instance in which a single man so dominated and controlled a people. A solitary, mysterious figure, of whose thoughts, purposes, and real character little is known, the worst acts of his life were the most picturesque and alone have been recorded. Although the great Carlyle includes him among the heroes whose memory mankind should worship, the opinion of his detractors is likely to triumph. Francia will go down to history as a

bloody-minded, implacable despot, whose influence and purposes were wholly evil. After reading all that has been written about this singular character, my mind inclines more to the judgment of Carlyle. I feel that the vivid imagination of the great Scotchman has pierced the clouds which enshrouded the spirit of a great and lonely man and has seen the soul of Francia as he was. Cruel, suspicious, ruthless, and heartless as he undeniably became, his acts will not bear the interpretation that his purposes were selfish or that he was animated by mere vulgar ambition.

The population over which he ruled had for centuries been trained to obedience by the Jesuits and the Creole landowners. The Creoles were few and the Spaniards still fewer. Francia based his power upon the Indian population and not on the little aristocracy whose members boasted of white blood. Convinced that the Indians were not fit for self-government, he also believed that it would be disastrous to permit the white oligarchy to rule. He proposed to save Paraguay from the civil disturbances that distracted the rest of South America. He therefore absorbed all power in his own hands and ruthlessly repressed any indications of insubordination among those of Spanish blood. The Indians blindly obeyed him, and he relentlessly pursued the Creoles and the priests, seeming to regard them only as dangerous firebrands who might at any time start up a conflagration in the peaceful body politic, and not as citizens entitled to the protection of the State. [Pg 192]

He absorbed in his own person all the functions of government; he had no confidants and no assistants; he allowed no Paraguayan to approach him on terms of equality. When he died, a careful search failed to reveal any records of the immense amount of governmental business which he had transacted during thirty years. The orders for executions were simply messages signed by him and returned, to be destroyed as soon as they had been carried out. The longer he lived the more completely did he apply his system of absolutism, and the more confident he became that he alone could govern his people for his people's good. He adopted a policy of commercial isolation, and intercourse with the outside world was absolutely forbidden. Foreigners were not permitted to enter the country without a special permit, and once there were rarely allowed to leave. [Pg 193]



JOSÉ RODRIGUEZ GASPAR FRANCIA.
[From an old wood-cut.] [Pg 194]

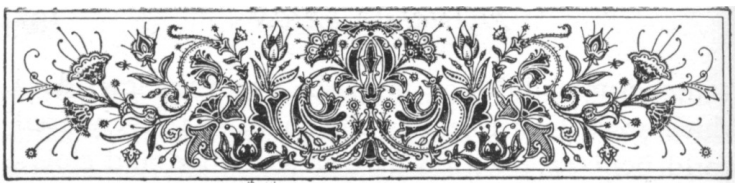
He neither sent nor received consuls nor ministers to foreign nations. Foreign vessels were excluded from the Paraguay River and allowed to visit only one port in the south-eastern corner of the country. He was the

sole foreign merchant. The communistic system inherited from the Jesuits was developed and extended to the secular parts of the country. The government owned two-thirds of the land and conducted great farms and ranches in various parts of the territory. If labour was needed in gathering crops, Francia had recourse to forced enlistment. Those Indian missions which remained free he brought gradually under his own control and followed the old Jesuit policy of compelling the wild Indians to work like other citizens. Dreading interference by Spain, Brazil, or Buenos Aires, he improved the military forces and began the organisation of the whole population into a militia. His policy, however, was peaceful, and the difficulty of getting arms up the river, past the forces of the Argentine warring factions, prevented his organising an army fit for offensive operations even if he had desired to have one.

As he grew older he became more solitary and ferocious. Always a gloomy and peculiar man, absorbed in his studies and making no account of the ordinary pleasures and interests of mankind, he had reached the age of fifty-five and assumed supreme power, without marrying. His public labours still further cut him off from [Pg 195] thoughts of family and friends; and, although it has been asserted that he married a young Frenchwoman when he was past seventy, nothing is known about her. It is certain that he left no children and died attended only by servants. His severities against the educated classes increased; he suffered from frequent fits of hypochondria; he ordered wholesale executions, and seven hundred political prisoners filled the jails when he died. His moroseness increased year by year. He feared assassination and occupied several houses, letting no one know where he was going to sleep from one night to another, and when walking the streets kept his guards at a distance before and behind him. Woe to the enemy or suspect who attracted his attention! Such was the terror inspired by this dreadful old man that the news that he was out would clear the streets. A white Paraguayan literally dared not utter his name; during his lifetime he was "El Supremo," and after he was dead for generations he was referred to simply as "El Defunto." For years when men spoke of him they looked behind them and crossed themselves, as if dreading that the mighty old man could send devils to spy upon them,—at least this is the story of Francia's enemies who have made it their business to hand his name down to execration. The real reason may have been that Francia's successors regarded defamation of "El Defunto" as an indication of unfriendliness to themselves.

Devil or saint, hypochondriac or hero, actuated by morbid vanity or by the purest altruism, there is no [Pg 196] difficulty in estimating the results of Francia's work and the extent of his abilities. That he had a will of iron and a capacity beyond the ordinary is proven by his life before he became dictator, as well as his successes afterwards. All authorities agree that he had acquired as a lawyer a remarkable ascendancy over the common people by his fearlessness in maintaining their causes before the courts and corrupt officials. He did not rise by any sycophant arts; indeed, he never veiled the contempt he felt for the party schemers and officials around him. When he had supreme power in his hands he used it for no selfish indulgences. His life was austere and abstemious; parsimonious for himself, he was lavish for the public. He would accept no present, and either returned those sent him, or sent back their value in money. Though he had been educated for the priesthood and had never been out of South America he had absorbed liberal religious principles from his reading. Nothing could have been more likely to offend the Catholic Indians, upon whose good will his power rested, than his refusal to attend mass, but he was honest enough with himself and with them not to simulate a sentiment which he did not feel. In his manners and life he was absolutely modest; he received any who chose to see him; if he was terrible it was to the wealthy and the powerful; the humblest Indian received a hearing and justice. During his reign Paraguay remained undisturbed, wrapped in a profound peace; the population rapidly increased, and though commerce and manufactures did not flourish, nor the new ideas [Pg 197] which were transforming the face of the civilised world penetrate within his barriers, food and clothing were plenty and cheap, and the Paraguayans prospered in their own humble fashion. Though they might not sell their delicious matte, there was no limitation on its domestic use, and although money was not plentiful and foreign goods were a rarity, a fat steer could be bought for a dollar, and want was unknown.

The old man lived until 1840 in the full possession of unquestioned supreme power, dying at the age of eighty-three years. His final illness lasted only a few days, and he went on attending to business to the very end. When asked to appoint a successor he refused, bitterly saying that there would be no lack of heirs. His legitimate and natural successor could only be that man who could raise himself through the mass by his force of character and prove himself capable of dominating the disorganising elements of Creole society.



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CHAPTER IV

THE REIGN OF THE ELDER LOPEZ

Once the breath was out of the old man's body, his secretary attempted to seize the government. He concealed Francia's death for several hours and issued orders in the dead man's name. But as soon as the news came out, the army officers, whose assistance was essential, refused to obey him. The poor secretary escaped a worse fate by hanging himself in prison, and the troops amused themselves setting up and pulling down would-be dictators. After several months of anarchy, it was determined to assemble a Congress in

imitation of the first Congress which had named Francia consul. A real representative government was, of course, impossible in Paraguay, but the Creoles, who naturally formed the bulk of the Congress, were desirous of insuring themselves against another dictatorship. They wanted a government where the offices would be passed around. However, an executive was necessary and the only executive they knew was an irresponsible one. The title borne by Yegros and Francia in the early days seemed a good one, and so it was [Pg 199] agreed that two consuls should be elected for a limited period, during which, however, they were to exercise very limited power.

Among the ambitious and turbulent deputies a directing spirit arose in the person of Carlos Antonio Lopez, a well-to-do rancher who had received a lawyer's education and had been careful to keep out of public view during Francia's reign. At this juncture he inevitably came to the front, because he was the most learned and far-sighted among his fellow Creoles. He was a man of great natural ability and shrewdness, highly intelligent, well read, agreeable and affable in his manners. Selected as one of the two Consuls by the Congress of 1841, he soon pushed his colleague to one side, and became dominant. In 1844 an obsequious Congress which had been summoned by him and whose members he virtually named, conferred upon him the title of President for the nominal term of ten years, which really was intended to be for life. It is, however, significant of the milder character of Lopez and the increased power of the office-holding class that he preferred the more republican title of President, held for a nominally limited period, to the semi-monarchical one of "El Supremo," borne by his terrible predecessor. As a matter of fact, Lopez succeeded to all the absolute power and prerogatives of Francia.

The new ruler was no such determined *doctrinaire* as Francia. He was rather a clever opportunist than a gloomy idealist. He adopted many liberal measures, such as the law providing that all negroes thereafter born [Pg 200] should be free, and he even attempted to frame a regular constitution. He abandoned the policy of isolation, so dear to Francia, and opened the country in 1845. He loved appreciation and especially wished the approbation of foreigners. Though cautious and reluctant to engage in outside complications, he was by nature and taste a diplomat, and he welcomed the opportunity to try his wits in wider competition than Paraguay afforded. In 1844, Rosas, the tyrant of Buenos Aires, was engaged in a contest with revolutionists in Corrientes. His ultimate purpose was manifestly to unite the whole Plate valley under his authority. Lopez shared the uneasiness of other neighbouring rulers at the growth of Rosas's power. The latter promulgated a decree forbidding the navigation of the Paraná to any but Argentine vessels. This decree was an attack on Paraguay's very plain and natural right to reach the ocean, and absolutely shut her off from the outside world. Lopez resented the aggression, and after many protests declared war against Buenos Aires in 1849. Nothing came of it, however, except to give his oldest son a chance to see actual service and to emphasise Lopez's enmity to Rosas and his policy. The way was prepared for his friendship with Urquiza, the great leader of the Argentine provincials, and for the opening of Paraguay to foreign commerce.

Permission was granted in 1845 for foreign ships to ascend the Paraguay as far as Asuncion, and foreigners were no longer forbidden to enter the country. On the contrary, Lopez evinced a marked desire for their [Pg 201] society and encouraged them to come and engage in trade. His manners were engaging and his courtesies untiring, unless his will was crossed or his suspicions aroused, when he could be very unreasonable and arbitrary.

The spirit of the Paraguayan Creoles had been so broken by the terrible proscriptions of Francia's reign that Lopez did not experience much difficulty in ruling them. His milder methods and the terror of a renewal of the cruelties of Francia's time succeeded in holding all demonstrations of lawlessness or rebellion in check. He was averse to shedding blood, and his subjects enjoyed substantial liberty in their goings and comings. Justice was well and regularly administered, and life and property were almost absolutely safe. Over every kind of affairs, however, he exercised a patriarchal supervision. One trustworthy traveller tells of being waited on at table in a remote part of Paraguay by a fine-appearing man whose face was very sad and who seemed very awkward in handling the dishes. On inquiry, it turned out that the waiter was the richest man in eastern Paraguay and had been condemned by the President to serve in a menial capacity as a punishment for insulting a woman. Lopez's ideas of freedom did not contemplate that his people might engage in politics or the discussion of any public affairs. During the civil war in Corrientes, Paraguayans were forbidden to speak of what was going on across the river. Sometimes farmers were required to cultivate a certain area in a certain crop. He maintained the government monopoly of yerba and completed Francia's work of [Pg 202] incorporating the free Indians.

An instance of his ready interest in foreigners was his connection with a young American, named Hopkins, who had been sent out in 1845 by the United States Government to investigate the advisability of recognising Paraguay, then accessible for the first time. This enterprising young man fired Lopez's imagination with his accounts of the material progress of the United States, and Lopez even lent him money to return and form a company for the purpose of introducing American goods and cigar manufacture into Paraguay. Hopkins, after several years, succeeded in interesting some American capitalists and came back and established his factory. At first Lopez was delighted, but he soon quarrelled with the Americans. The etiquette in Paraguay was that the President should remain seated with his hat on when he granted an audience, and the manners of the visitor were expected to be correspondingly humble. The Americans mortally offended him by forgetting themselves in his presence. The situation soon became intolerable and the company retired.

After the overthrow of Rosas in 1851 the Paraná was declared free for navigation to vessels of all nations by Argentine law and by treaties to which Brazil and Uruguay were parties, although Paraguay was not. Nevertheless, Lopez permitted ships to ascend freely to Asuncion. Lopez wished to concentrate all trade at Asuncion and opened no ports north of his capital. The upper course of the river belonged to Brazil, but the [Pg 203] boundary between Brazil and Paraguay had remained unsettled from colonial times. In his control of the Lower Paraguay, Lopez had a lever to force Brazil to terms. He steadfastly refused to permit ships to ascend into Brazil in spite of the latter's persistent efforts to procure the natural and necessary right of egress to the ocean by an international river. While this matter still remained unsettled, Lieutenant Page of the United States Navy appeared in the *Water Witch* at Asuncion on his survey of the Paraguay. Lopez was delighted, and extended every facility to the officer as far as the northern boundary of Paraguay. Page went on up to Brazil. Lopez was offended, for he feared that he would be at a disadvantage in his further negotiations with Brazil by having apparently granted to an American ship the permission which he had steadily refused to Brazilians. Unfortunately, just at this time occurred the quarrel with the American promoter, Hopkins. The American officer took his countryman's side, giving him refuge on board the *Water Witch*. This so enraged Lopez that he issued a decree prohibiting foreign war-vessels from entering Paraguayan waters, and one of his forts fired at the Lieutenant's vessel, killing a man. This outrage brought about Lopez's ears a naval expedition which compelled him to apologise and to agree to reimburse the Hopkins Company.

Brazil also sent a fleet up the Paraná to coerce Lopez into granting free transit along the Paraguay, but he cleverly held the Brazilians in parley until he had an opportunity to fortify the river. England's gunboats at [Pg 204] Buenos Aires virtually held the Paraguayan flagship, with Lopez's eldest son on board as hostage for a young British subject named Canstatt, who had been imprisoned and condemned to death for complicity in a conspiracy at Asuncion. Lopez was forced to release him and pay damages.

These humiliations changed his love for foreigners into a bitter hatred, and he began to prepare his country to resist their aggressions more effectively. From his youth he had trained his sons to succeed him. Francisco, the eldest, early evinced a taste for military affairs. When only eighteen years of age, he commanded the expedition of 1849 into the Argentine, and thenceforward continued to be his father's general-in-chief and minister-of-war and the active agent in improving Paraguay's military resources. The second son, Venancio, was commander of the garrison at Asuncion, and the third, Benigno, was Admiral. Though so rigid with his other subjects, he gave both his sons and daughters unlimited license and they grew up to regard themselves as members of a royal family. They enriched themselves at the public expense. The sons took as many mistresses as they pleased and gave free rein to all their cruel and bad instincts. The selfishness, obstinacy, unspeakable cruelty, and hard-heartedness of Francisco were soon to bring the guiltless Paraguayan people to the verge of extinction.

In 1854 Lopez had sent Francisco to Europe as ambassador. The young man spent eighteen months in the different Courts of Europe, and returned an expert in the vices of great capitals and enamoured of military [Pg 205] glory. After seeing the reviews of European armies, he became convinced that Paraguay could be made an efficient military power and that he himself might play a Napoleonic rôle in South America. His father, exasperated by the repeated humiliations put upon him by other countries, gave hearty support to his plans for the improvement of the Paraguayan army. In 1862, after a long and painful illness, the elder Lopez died. Francisco took possession of his effects and papers and produced a will naming himself Vice-President. Word sent to the military chiefs of the different towns insured the assembling of an obedient Congress at Asuncion, by which he was formally elected and proclaimed President and invested with all the absolute power wielded by his father and Francia.

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CHAPTER V

THE WAR

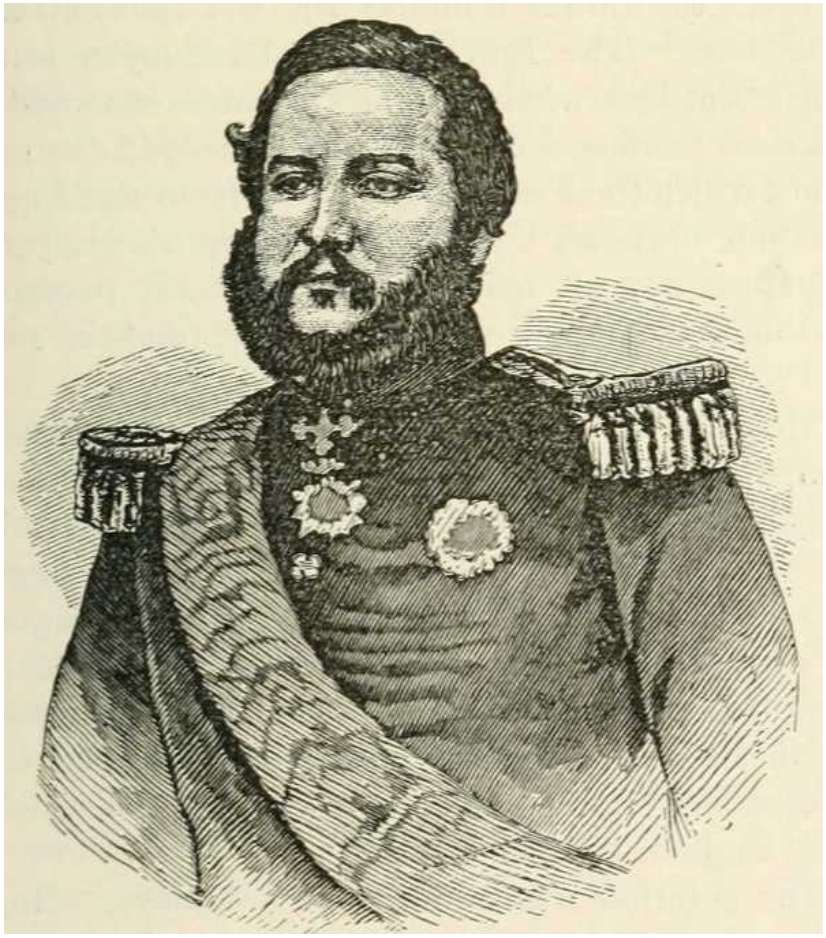
The new President was thirty-five years old, good-looking, careful of his appearance, fond of military finery, and strutted as he walked. He spoke French and Spanish fluently, but with his officers and men used only Guarany. He was an eloquent speaker and had the gift of inspiring his troops with confidence in himself and contempt for the enemy. He had a will of iron; his pride was intense; he was absolutely unscrupulous, and had no regard for the truth. He never showed any feeling of kindness to his most devoted subjects. He ordered his best friends to execution; he tortured his mother and sisters and murdered his brothers. The only natural affection he ever evinced was a fondness for Madame Lynch, a woman whom he had picked up in Paris, and for her children. He seems to have treated her well to the last, but his numerous other mistresses and their children he heartlessly abandoned. Though physically an arrant coward, no defeats could discourage him. He fought to the last against overwhelming odds and was able to retain his personal ascendancy over his [Pg 207] followers, even after he had been driven into the woods and all reasonable hope was lost.

He began his reign like a Mahometan sultan by ridding himself of his father's most trusted counsellors, imprisoning and executing the most intelligent and powerful citizens, and banishing his brothers. The military preparations which he had begun as his father's Minister of War were continued with increased vigour. The warlike Argentines and Uruguayans and the powerful empire of Brazil laughed at his pretensions to become a real factor in South American international affairs, but their laughter soon cost them dear. He was a monarch of a compact little state whose position behind rivers in the centre of the continent made it admirably defensible. Its eight hundred thousand inhabitants were obedient, brave, and physically vigorous. Accustomed for generations to regard their dictator as the greatest ruler in the world, knowing no duty except absolute compliance with his will, they never doubted that under his leadership they would be invincible. He knew that he could raise an army out of all proportion to the size of his country. The problem was how to arm it. With Buenos Aires commanding the only route of ingress from abroad it had been difficult for his father and himself to obtain war material from Europe. For years, however, they had been buying all that they could and had accumulated several hundred cannon, most of them antiquated cast-iron smooth-bores. They had fortified the point of Humaitá which admirably protected the Paraguay River from naval attacks, and had established [Pg 208] an arsenal at Asuncion.

Against Brazil Lopez had serious cause of complaint. The boundary question was still unsettled and his possession of the Lower Paraguay placed the great province of Matto Grosso at his mercy, while the existence of that province, geographically a mere northern extension of Paraguay, was a menace to his own safety. Against the Argentines his hatred was not so well founded, but none the less bitter.

The usual civil war was going on in Uruguay in 1863. The party which held the capital was out of favour at Rio and at Buenos Aires, and Brazil and Argentine were both inclined to support the pretensions of Florés, who led the revolutionists. Lopez thought that his own interests were concerned and asserted his right to be consulted as to Uruguayan affairs. A mighty shout of laughter went up from the Buenos Aires press at the pretensions of the cacique of an Indian tribe to the position of guardian of the equilibrium of South America. Brazil ignored his protests and calmly went on with her preparations to establish her protégé in Montevideo. In the beginning of 1864 Lopez began active preparations for war. His army already numbered twenty-eight thousand men, and by the end of August sixty-four thousand more had been enrolled and drilled. Although ill provided with artillery and horses, and although the infantry were mostly armed with old-fashioned flintlocks, no such formidable force had ever assembled in South America. The news of Lopez's preparations [Pg 209] exasperated and somewhat alarmed the people of Buenos Aires, though no one knew his exact intentions. Lopez had, in fact, determined to compel the Brazilian and Argentine governments to accept his wishes as to Uruguay or to risk all in the hazard of war. Perhaps hazy dreams of himself as emperor of a domain extending from the southern sources of the Amazon far down the Plate valley and over to the Atlantic coast passed through his brain. Possibly he foresaw clearly that Paraguay had come to the parting of the ways, and that she must either fight her way to the sea or reconcile herself to slow suffocation between the immense masses of Brazil and Argentina. In such a contest the only allies he could hope for would be revolutionary factions in Uruguay and Corrientes, and possibly the virtually independent ruler of Entre Rios. In case of a war with Brazil alone, the neutrality of Argentina might have been secured by careful management, but in the freer countries the feeling against him as a despot was strong, and the extension of his system would have been regarded as a menace to civilisation.

Late in 1864 the Brazilian forces marched into Uruguay and joined Florés. Lopez promptly retaliated by seizing a Brazilian steamer which was passing Asuncion on its way to Matto Grosso and followed up this aggression by an invasion of the latter province. His forces quickly reduced the towns on the banks of the Paraguay as far as steamers could penetrate. It was impossible to send reinforcements overland from Rio; [Pg 210] Brazil's counter-attack must be delivered from the south. The empire was unprepared, but its troops poured into Uruguay and Rio Grande as fast as they could be mobilised. The anti-Florés party were crushed by the siege and capture of Paysandu late in 1864. The Argentine government under Mitre proclaimed its neutrality. Lopez was flushed with his easy success in Matto Grosso. The forces he had on foot overwhelmingly outnumbered those of the Brazilians in Uruguay and Rio Grande. He wished to strike the latter before they could be re-enforced, overrun Rio Grande, and, as master of one of Brazil's most valuable provinces, dictate terms. To reach the Brazilians it was necessary to cross the Argentine province of Corrientes. He asked for permission to do so and Mitre refused. Notwithstanding the risk involved, he promptly decided to finish up both Argentine and Brazil at the same time. Sending his troops across the Paraná he virtually annexed Corrientes and declared war on Buenos Aires. Lopez destined twenty-five thousand men for the invasion of Corrientes and the conquest of the Lower Uruguay valley, but the difficulties of getting so large an army across the river and ready for an advance into a hostile country were unexpectedly great. The gauchos of Corrientes, trained for generations in civil wars, quickly assembled to oppose the Paraguayans. Meanwhile, a Brazilian fleet came up; and, on June 2, 1865, at Riachuelo, decisively defeated the Paraguayan naval forces. Lopez thereby lost all hope of commanding the river. The communications of his army in Corrientes might be [Pg 211] cut off at any time and an advance became impossible. The battle of Riachuelo threw Paraguay on the defensive and made Lopez's great plan of carrying the war to the Uruguay impracticable.



FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ.
[From a photograph taken in 1849.]

Nevertheless, Lopez did not recall the twelve thousand men he had sent across the missions to invade the valley of the Upper Uruguay and the state of Rio Grande. The Brazilians were taken unprepared, and early in [Pg 212]

August the Paraguayans had captured the chief Brazilian town in that region—Uruguayana. The failure of the Corrientes army to reach the Lower Uruguay left the route up that river free. The Brazilian and Uruguayan army, which had been victorious at Paysandú, marched up the west bank and defeated and destroyed the rear-guard which the Paraguayans had left on the Argentine side opposite Uruguayana. Lopez's army was therefore cut off from retreat. It was promptly surrounded, and on the 17th of September, 1865, had to surrender.

This put an end to Lopez's plan of an offensive campaign. Indignant at the invasion of her soil, Argentina had allied herself with Brazil against him. A secret treaty was signed between Brazil, Argentina, and Florés, now recognised as ruler of Uruguay, to prosecute the war to a finish, to depose Lopez from his throne, and to disarm the Paraguayan fortifications. Lopez withdrew his army from Corrientes and concentrated all his forces in the south-west angle of his own territory.

The position was admirable for defence. North of the Paraná and east of the Paraguay stretched a low, wooded country subject to overflow, and intersected by shallow, mud-bottomed lagoons, which were old abandoned beds of the rivers. The Paraguay protected his right flank and afforded him a direct and easy communication with Asuncion. Batteries on the point of Humaitá, which the Brazilian fleet did not dare to try to pass, insured this line of communication. West of the Paraguay the great Chaco, there impenetrable, [Pg 213] prevented a movement to get north of Humaitá on that side. To the east the swamps along the Paraná extended indefinitely, and an advance of the enemy in that direction would have had its communications cut by an army encamped near Humaitá. Humaitá was, therefore, the key to the situation, and the allies could not advance until they captured it or, by running the batteries with their fleet, destroyed Lopez's control of the Paraguay.

By March, 1866, the allies had concentrated a force of forty thousand men just south of the fork of the rivers. About twenty-five thousand were Brazilians, twelve thousand Argentines and three thousand Uruguayans. The Brazilian fleet, numbering eighteen steam gunboats carrying one hundred and twenty-five guns, lay near at hand ready to co-operate. Protected by the fire of the gunboats, the whole allied army had little difficulty in crossing the Paraná and establishing itself on Paraguayan soil. Lopez lost heavily in vain attempts to prevent this landing. On May 2nd, a force of Paraguayans surprised the allies a few miles north of the river and badly cut up the vanguard. The allies, however, continued advancing and took a strong position just south of a great lagoon. Here, on the 24th of May, they were attacked by the whole Paraguayan army of twenty-five thousand men, who fought with desperate valour, but at a hopeless disadvantage. A quarter of the Paraguayan soldiers were left dead on the field, and another quarter were badly wounded, while the loss of [Pg 214] the allies was half as great. The Paraguayan army was apparently destroyed, but the allies had suffered so severely, and the difficulties of transportation through the swamps were so great, that they did not make the sudden dash upon the trenches at Humaitá which might have ended the war. Lopez did his utmost to reorganise his army. Practically the whole male population was impressed into service. The river line of communication to Asuncion, and the strategic railroad thence up into the most fertile and populous interior of the country, enabled him comfortably to command all the resources of the country, both in men and provisions.

Humaitá had already been well fortified on the land side, and Lopez now threw up the trenches at the top of the bluff at Curupayty, the first high land on the Paraguay River north of the allied army and south of Humaitá, and connected it with the latter fortress. Lopez had the advantage of the services of a clever English civil engineer; and the fortifications, though rude, were soon made practically impregnable to assault. In spite of their defeats, the Paraguayans were as ready as ever to attack when Lopez commanded, or to stand up and be shot down to the last man. They were the most obedient soldiers imaginable; they never complained of an injustice and never questioned an order when given. Even if a soldier were flogged, he consoled himself by saying, "If my father did not flog me, who would?" Every one called his superior officer his "father," and Lopez was the "Great Father." Each officer was responsible with his life for the faithfulness and conduct of his men [Pg 215] and had orders to shoot any that wavered. Each soldier knew that the men who touched shoulders with him right and left were instructed to shoot him if he tried to desert or fly, and those two knew that the men beyond them would shoot them if they failed to kill the poor fellow in the centre of the five. This cruel system answered perfectly with the Paraguayans, and to the very end of the war they never refused to fight steadily against the most hopeless odds.

Meanwhile, the allies awaited reinforcements and supplies in the noisome swamps, dying meantime by thousands of fever. By the end of June, when the allies finally determined to assault the fortifications around Humaitá, Lopez had twenty thousand men on the ground. After some bloody and indecisive fighting in the swamps, General Mitre, the Commander-in-Chief, ordered a grand attack upon the entrenchments at Curupayty. On the 22nd of September, 1866, it began with the bombardment by the Brazilian ironclads. Eighteen thousand men in four columns advanced from the south, and threw themselves blindly against the fortifications. When they came to close quarters they were thrown into disorder by the terrible artillery fire from the Paraguayan trenches, which cross-enfiladed them in different directions. The enormous canisters discharged from the eight-inch guns point-blank, at a distance of two or three hundred yards, wrought fearful execution. The rifle fire of the allies was useless, and the Paraguayans simply waited behind their trenches until the Brazilians and Argentines were close at hand and then fired. The allies retired in good order, after [Pg 216] suffering a loss of one-third their number. The soldiers obediently kept rushing on to certain death until their officers, seeing that success was hopeless, told them that they might retreat. The courage of the Paraguayans had been proved in their unsuccessful assaults on the allies the year before, and now the Argentines and Brazilians showed even in this awful defeat what a stomach they, too, had for hand-to-hand fighting.

After the battle of Curupayty, nothing was attempted on either side for fourteen months. Both sides had had enough of attacking fortified positions. The Paraguayans lay in Humaitá and the allies occupied themselves with fortifying their camps. The imperial government made tremendous exertions to reinforce the army. The Argentines also did their best, but the efforts of both were hardly sufficient to make good the terrible ravages of the cholera, which by the beginning of May, 1867, had put thirteen thousand Brazilians in hospitals. It was not until July that the allies felt themselves again ready to take the offensive. A division marched up the Paraná with the purpose of outflanking Humaitá on the east, while cavalry raids were sent out to the north and rendered the outlying positions of the Paraguayans unsafe. Finally, in November, 1867, the Brazilian troops succeeded in getting over to the Paraguay River, north and in the rear of Lopez, and General Barreto captured and fortified a strong position on the bank fifteen miles north of Humaitá. This was fatal to the security and communications of Lopez. He made one more desperate and unsuccessful assault on the main [Pg 217] position of the allies, and then began to plan to retire toward Asuncion. At the same time the Brazilian ironclads passed the batteries at Curupayty, compelling Lopez to withdraw his troops up the river to Humaitá.

The war became virtually a siege of the latter place, which was constantly bombarded by the fleet from the front and by the army from the rear. The Brazilian position on the river to the north cut Lopez off from direct river communication with Asuncion, and he had to transport his supplies on a new road built in the Chaco swamps. He began preparations to evacuate Humaitá and retreat to the north. In January, 1868, Mitre definitely retired from the command of the allies and was succeeded by the Brazilian Marshal Caxias. A month later (February 18th) the Brazilian fleet of ironclads finally succeeded in running the batteries at Humaitá, and after throwing a few bombs at Asuncion, devoted themselves to the more useful task of cutting off the transports to Lopez's army.

PALM GROVES IN EL CHACO. [Pg 218]

Lopez's line of river communication was now completely at the enemies' mercy, and a large force could not be maintained at Humaitá. He transported his army to the right bank of the Paraguay, recrossing when he got beyond the Brazilian positions. The garrison of three thousand men which he left at Humaitá defended itself for six months. In the meantime, he had fortified a new position less than fifty miles from Asuncion and accessible across the country from his base of supplies in central Paraguay. On his right flank a river battery [Pg 219] was erected which again prevented the Brazilians from reaching the upper river. Opposite this point, however, the Chaco is penetrable, and Caxias landed a force on the west bank and, marching up, crossed the river in the rear of Lopez's position. The Brazilians closed in from the north and south on the few thousand Paraguayans, who were all that survived, and after several days of desperate fighting, December 27, 1868, the Brazilians carried Lopez's position and he fled for his life to the interior, followed by a thousand men.

Even after such a defeat he was indomitable and succeeded in gathering another small army which was pursued and destroyed in August, 1869. Lopez again escaped and took refuge in the wild and mountainous regions in the north of Paraguay. The Brazilian cavalry pursued him relentlessly, but it was not until March 1, 1870, that he was caught. In an attempt to escape he was speared by a common soldier.

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CHAPTER VI

PARAGUAY SINCE 1870

No modern nation has ever come so near to complete annihilation as Paraguay during her five years' war against the Triple Alliance. Out of two hundred and fifty thousand able-bodied men who were living in 1864, less than twenty-five thousand survived in 1870. Not less than two hundred and twenty-five thousand Paraguayan men—the fathers and bread-winners, the farmers and labourers—had perished in battle, by disease or exposure or starvation. One hundred thousand adult women had died of hardship and hunger, and there were less than ninety thousand children under fifteen in the country. The surviving women outnumbered the men five to one; the practice of polygamy naturally increased, and women were forced to become the labourers and bread-winners for the community.

The slaughter was greatest in proportion among the people of white blood. When Lopez was waiting in 1868 for the final attack of the Brazilians, he made use of the last months of his power to arrest, torture, and murder nearly every white man left in Paraguay, including his own brother, his brother-in-law, and the [Pg 221] generals who had served him best, and the friends who had enjoyed his most intimate confidence. Even women and foreigners did not escape the cold, deliberate bloodthirstiness of this demon. He had his own sister beaten with clubs and exposed her naked in the forest; had the wife of the brave general who was forced to surrender at Humaitá speared, and subjected two members of the American Legation to the most sickening tortures. The Minister himself barely escaped with his life.

When the Brazilians captured Asuncion in 1868 they installed a provisional triumvirate of Paraguayans, but the country was really under their military government until after the death of Lopez. A new constitution was proclaimed on November 25, 1870, but it was not until a year later that the provisional government was superseded by Salvador Jovellanos, the first President. The new President had no elements with which to establish a government,—neither money nor men. The country Paraguayans refused to recognise his authority and he was shut up in Asuncion. There were three so-called revolutions in 1872, which were suppressed by the Brazilian troops. The country really remained under a Brazilian protectorate for the first few years after the war, and the government was largely a convenience to make treaties and to try to place loans abroad. Toward the end of 1874 Jovellanos was succeeded by Gill, and by 1876 the country was finally enjoying peace and freedom from foreign control. The integrity of Paraguay and her continuance as an independent power [Pg 222] had been mutually guaranteed by Brazil and Argentina when they began the war against Lopez, and neither of them could afford to let the other take possession of her territory. So Paraguay was left substantially intact, although she was compelled to give up the territorial claims the Lopezes had so long made against Brazil and the Argentine. The latter even submitted to arbitration her right to a portion of the Chaco north of the Pilocomayo. President Hayes was the arbitrator and he decided in favour of Paraguay in 1878. In the treaty of peace Paraguay had agreed to bear the war expenses of the allies and these immense sums are still nominally due from her. As a matter of fact, she has not been able to pay anything thereon, and the matter of forgiving the debt is one frequently discussed in Brazil.

Population rapidly increased after peace was thoroughly established, and has more than doubled in the last thirty years. In the late eighties the influence of the Buenos Aires boom extended to Paraguay, and the government offered great inducements to attract immigration. The movement was not very successful, but it had the indirect effect of transferring great tracts of land from government to private ownership. Previously, two-thirds of the land belonged to the State. One of the colonies was composed of socialists from Australia who promptly split on their arrival over the question of total abstinence. Those who insisted on being allowed [Pg 223] to drink were obliged to leave. Subsequently, disagreements about doctrine and the application of the principles of socialism drove out others. The soil of Paraguay is marvellously fertile, but its isolation and the want of markets for the national products make it unattractive to European immigrants.

Happily Paraguay has not suffered from civil disorders during the slow process of national regeneration which has been going on since 1870. Most of the Presidents have served out their full four-years term, and the one or two changes which have occurred have not been accompanied by any bloodshed or interruption in administration. The chief difficulties of the government have been financial. Revenue is small and paper currency has been issued until it is at a discount of several hundred per cent. compared with its nominal value in gold; but since foreign commerce is inconsiderable and the population lives off the products of its own farms the results of inflation have not been so disastrous as they might have been in a commercial country.

The wave of twentieth-century progress and immigration may strike this Arcadian region at any moment, but up to the present time the body of the Paraguayans live much as their ancestors. Existence can be maintained with hardly an effort; the people can always get oranges in default of more nourishing food; the climate is lovely; the forests surrounding the peasant's cabin beautiful. Why should a Paraguayan work when he can live happily and comfortably without labour, merely to procure things which to him are superfluities? [Pg 224] It must be remembered that the bulk of the Paraguayan people are descended from the Indians which were found crowded into this garden spot three centuries ago by the Spaniards and the Jesuits. They have never lost their simple, submissive, stoical character, and the rule of the three dictators did not tend to change them. The modern improvements of which they saw most during the reign of Lopez were muskets and cannon, and they can hardly be blamed for preferring old-fashioned ways after their experience during the war. Though the nation was almost destroyed, the surviving remnants show the same characteristics which distinguished their ancestors. The new Paraguay, however, is not ruled by any bloody-minded despot, and the military possibilities of the people will never again be a menace to the liberties of the surrounding nations. Rather is the present ruling class disposed to welcome foreign influences and immigration, and this beautiful, fertile, and easily accessible country stands open to the world.

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URUGUAY

[Pg 226]

[Pg 227]

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The most fertile parts of the globe have always been fought for the most. Uruguay has been the Flanders of South America. Her admirable commercial position at the mouth of the river Plate has made her capital one of the great emporiums of the continent. On the track of the world's commerce, open to the currents of intellectual and industrial life which sweep from Europe into the luxuriant country of the southern half of South America or around to the Pacific, her people have always been in the vanguard of Spanish-American civilisation. Her productive, well-watered, and gently rolling plains are well adapted for agriculture and unsurpassed for pasturage. Here the Indians struggled hardest to maintain themselves and longest resisted the Spanish conquest. From colonial times, Argentines have crowded in from the west, Brazilians from the north, and Buenos Aireans and Europeans from the coast, until this favoured spot has become the most thickly populated country of South America.

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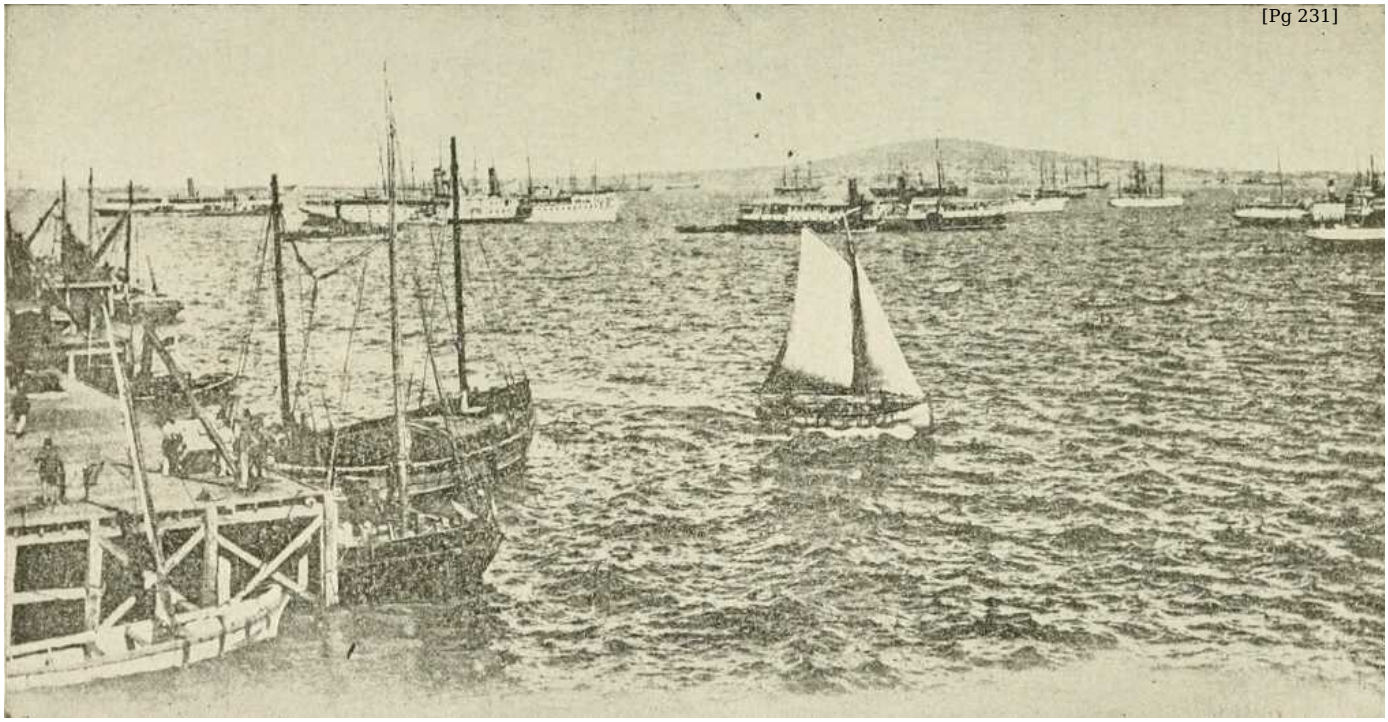
The very strategic and industrial desirability of this region, and the ease with which it can be invaded, have made it the scene of constant armed conflict. Uruguay has been the cockpit of the southern half of the continent, and its people have been fighting continually through the one hundred and fifty years during which the country has been inhabited. They fought for their independence against the Spaniards, then against the Buenos Aireans, then against the Brazilians, then against the Buenos Aireans again, and in the intervals they have fought pretty constantly among themselves. In colonial times Montevideo was Spain's chief fortress on this coast, and that city has always been the favourite refuge for the unsuccessful revolutionists and exiles from the neighbouring states. The blood of the bravest and most turbulent Argentines and Rio Grandenses has constantly mixed with its population. By habit, tradition, and inheritance the older generation of Uruguayans in both city and country are warlike.

Though the military spirit had been vastly stimulated by peculiar political and racial circumstances, in later times commercialism has been nourished by geographical situation and the fertility of the soil and by European immigration. The interplay of these contending forces has been producing a marked people—a vigorous, turbulent race whose energies have apparently been chiefly employed in war, but who have found time in the intervals of foreign and civil conflict to make their country one of the wealthiest and most industrially progressive countries in South America. They are like the Dutch in their turbulence and in their [Pg 229] eagerness to make money; and they are also like the Dutch in their determination to maintain at all hazards their separate national existence. Nevertheless, the origin of Uruguay was artificial. The reason for the country's separation from Buenos Aires was that Brazil regarded it as unsafe to permit Argentina to spread north of the Plate.

The territory of Uruguay is that irregular polygon which is bounded on the south by the Plate estuary; on the west by the Uruguay River; on the south-east by the Atlantic; and on the north-east by the artificial line which separates it from Brazil. Though the most favoured in soil, climate, and geographical position, it is the smallest country in South America, the area being only seventy-three thousand square miles. In prehistoric days, when a vast inland sea occupied what is now the Argentine pampa, Uruguay was the northern shore of the great strait which opened into the pampean sea. It is the southern extremity of the eastern continental uplift of South America. The last outlying ramparts of the Brazilian mountain system, greatly eroded and planed down into low-swelling masses little elevated above the sea, run south-west from Rio Grande into Uruguay, dipping into the Plate at the southern border. The north shore of the Plate estuary is bold, and not flat as is the opposite shore of Buenos Aires. There are, however, no mountains, properly so-called, in Uruguay, and nearly the whole surface is a succession of gently undulating plains and broad ridges intersected by countless streams, and covered, for the most part, with luxuriant pasture. The abundance of [Pg 230] wood and water is an immense advantage to settlers, whether pastoral or agricultural. The extreme south-western corner, near the mouth of the Uruguay River, is alluvial. On the Atlantic coast there are level, marshy plains, due to the slow secular rising of the land and consequent baring of the ocean's bed.

The country is easily penetrable in every part. There are no mountain ridges or dense forests to interrupt travel, and most of the rivers are easily fordable. On the west, the broad flood of the Uruguay River gives easy communication to the ocean, while it affords protection against sudden invasions from the Argentine province of Entre Rios. The low and sandy foreshore of the Atlantic has no harbours, but after rounding Cape Santa Maria and entering the estuary of the Plate, there are several bays which afford some shelter for shipping. Maldonado, Montevideo, and Colonia are the principal ports, but the extreme shallowness of the Plate prevents them from being classed as first-rate harbours for modern vessels. At Montevideo itself, large modern steamers must anchor several miles out.

[Pg 231]



HARBOUR AT MONTEVIDEO.

Possibly the present territory of Uruguay was reached by the Portuguese navigators who reconnoitred the coast of Brazil in the first few years of the sixteenth century, but they certainly made no settlements and left no clear record of their voyagings. In 1515, Juan Diaz de Solis, Grand Pilot of Spain, was sent out by Charles V. to reconnoitre the Brazilian coast in Spanish interests. He did not land on the shore of Brazil proper, but [Pg 232] kept on to the south until he reached Cape Santa Maria, which marks the northern side of the entrance to the river Plate. To his left hand stretched beyond the horizon a flood of yellow fresh water flowing gently over a shifting, sandy bottom nowhere more than a few fathoms below the surface. It was evident that he was out of the ocean and sailing up a river of such magnitude as had never been dreamed of before. He followed along the coast, skirting the whole southern boundary of what is now the republic of Uruguay and finally reached the head of the estuary. Directly from the north the Uruguay, a river five miles wide, clear and deep, seemed a continuation of the Plate, but from the west the numerous channels of the Paraná delta poured in an immense muddy discharge double the volume of the wider river. At the junction was an island which Solis named *Martin Garcia* after his pilot. He resolved to take possession of the country in the name of the Crown of Castile, and to explore the coast. He disembarked with nine companions on the Uruguayan shore: here the little party was unexpectedly attacked by Indians; Solis and all his men but one were killed, and the ships sailed back to Spain without their commander.

Three years later Ferdinand Magellan, on his epoch-making voyage around the world, visited the coast of Uruguay. On the 15th of January, 1520, he came in sight of a high hill overlooking a commodious bay. This he called Montevideo—a name which has been extended to the city which long after grew up on the other side of [Pg 233] the harbour. Magellan ascended the estuary, hoping that he might find a passage through to the Pacific Ocean, but after he had entered the Uruguay its clear water, rapid current, and want of tides convinced him that it was only an ordinary river and not a strait.

Spain determined to take possession of the Plate, and in 1526 sent out an expedition for that purpose under Diego Garcia. At the same time Sebastian Cabot was preparing another expedition, which was ordered to follow in Magellan's track and to make observations of longitude on the Atlantic coast of South America and in the East Indies. Spain and Portugal had already begun to dispute about the correct location of the line which they had agreed should divide the world into a Spanish and a Portuguese hemisphere, and which was believed to pass near the Plate. Garcia was delayed on the coast of Brazil, so Cabot reached the mouth of the estuary first. The latter had encountered bad weather and lost his best ship, and when he sighted the coast of Uruguay his men were discouraged. They remained in the mouth of the river for some time, and to their surprise a solitary Spaniard was encountered on the shore, who proved to be the only survivor of the party that had gone ashore with Solis ten years before.

Soon Cabot and his men heard tales of silver mines far up the river, and of the existence of a great civilised empire on its remote headwaters. Silver ornaments were shown which had come down hand to hand from Peru or Bolivia. Cabot determined to abandon his commission to the Moluccas, and to find the country [Pg 234] whence the silver came. Naturally, his first effort was directed up the broad channel of the Uruguay, but on ascending this river it was soon evident that the mines and civilised country he was seeking did not lie on its banks. Fifty miles up the river at San Salvador the Spaniards attempted to establish a little post which is sometimes referred to as the earliest settlement in Uruguay or Argentina. It was probably intended as a mere supply depot and point of refuge, conveniently near the sea to aid the up-river expedition. However, the warlike Indians of Uruguay soon left no trace of it. Cabot entered the Paraná, where he spent three years in an unsuccessful effort to reach Bolivia. He and Garcia sailed back to Spain without leaving even a settlement behind them, but they were thoroughly convinced that an adequate expedition could find the silver country.

The tribes who inhabited Uruguay were the fiercest Indians encountered by the conquerors of South America. For two centuries they succeeded in preventing the establishment of settlements in their territory and kept out Spanish intruders at the point of the sword. The Spaniards greatly coveted the north bank of the Plate and made effort after effort to get a foothold there, but these savages managed to maintain themselves for a hundred and fifty years in the very face of Buenos Aires. The river shore itself was the last accessible and fertile region to be subjected to the whites. A century elapsed after the foundation of Buenos Aires before Colonia was occupied by the Portuguese, and another fifty years went by before Montevideo had been settled [Pg 235] and fortified. Uruguay in pre-Spanish times, as well as since, was a meeting-ground for different peoples. One after another the Guarany tribes crowded into this favoured region from the north and west, and the old

inhabitants had to fight and conquer, or be thrust into the sea. The bravest, best armed, and best organised tribes survived in the harsh struggle. Of the Indians inhabiting Uruguay when the Spaniards discovered the Plate, the principal ones were the Charruas. They occupied a zone extending around from the Atlantic, along the Plate, and a short distance up the Uruguay. This strong and valiant race never submitted to the Spaniards, and when at last they were defeated and crowded back from the coast well on in the eighteenth century, they retired to the north and maintained their freedom for many years. They belonged to the great family of Tupi-Guaranies, who occupied most of eastern South America at the white man's advent, but they were more nomadic in their habits and had developed the art of war to greater perfection than the mother tribes of the more tropical parts of South America.

In their fights against the Spaniards, they sometimes gathered armies of several hundreds which fought with a rude sort of discipline, forming in column and attacking in mass with clubs after discharging their arrows and stones. Possibly they learned some of their tactics from the white men, but it is certain that before the invasion they had developed a tribal organisation which enabled them to bring far larger bodies into the [Pg 236] field than the tribes to the north, and that soon after the arrival of the whites they learned the military uses of the horse. Personal bravery and fortitude were the virtues most admired among the Charruas, and they chose their chiefs from those who had most distinguished themselves in battle. They did not practise cannibalism like their brother Guaranies on the Brazilian coast; they killed defective children at birth; they were moderate in their eating, lived in huts, and in winter covered themselves with the skins of animals. Altogether, they seem to have much resembled the more warlike tribes among the North American Indians and to have made the same effective resistance to the whites as did the Iroquois or Creeks. Such a fierce and indomitable people terrorised the Creoles, and settlement proceeded on lines of less resistance. The coast of Uruguay was long known as the abode of red demons who showed little mercy to the adventurous white who dared build a cabin on the shore, or ride the plains in chase of cattle. The forts established from time to time by the Spanish authorities in the early days were invariably starved out and abandoned, and the white man obtained a foothold only after the Portuguese and Spanish governments had fortified towns with walls, ditches, and artillery, which could be supplied with provisions from the water side, and after Entre Rios had been overrun by the gauchos.

Warned by the experiences of Solis and Cabot on the north shore, Mendoza, the first adelantado of the Plate, on his arrival in 1535, selected the south bank of the river as the site of the fortified port which he [Pg 237] proposed to establish at the mouth of the Paraná as a base for his projected expedition up the river. His effort failed completely; he abandoned Buenos Aires, and the remnants of his expedition fled to Paraguay and founded Asuncion. In 1573 Zarate, the third adelantado, made a serious effort to establish a post in Uruguay. He had three hundred and fifty well-armed Spanish soldiers, more than the number with which Pizarro had conquered the empire of Peru, but they were not enough to make any impression on the Charruas. A company of forty men hunting wood was set upon and massacred, and when the main body tried to avenge this defeat, it, too, was driven back and only escaped to the island of Martin Garcia after losing a hundred men. The survivors were rescued by Garay, the most expert and successful Indian fighter of the time.

This experienced and far-sighted officer wisely left the Charruas alone and devoted his efforts to the other side of the river, where, in 1580, he founded the city of Buenos Aires. Hernandarias, the Creole governor of Buenos Aires, who shares with Garay the honour of establishing the Spanish power in Argentina, and who had already defeated the Pampa Indians from the Great Chaco in the north to the Tandil Range in Buenos Aires province, attempted, in the early years of the seventeenth century, to subdue the Charruas. He disembarked at the head of five hundred men in the western part of Uruguay. Few details of the campaign which followed have been preserved, but it is certain that the Spanish force was destroyed and that Hernandarias himself [Pg 238] barely escaped with his life. Thenceforth, for more than a century, the Spaniards made no serious attempts to interfere with the Charruas; the coast of Uruguay was shunned by European ships, and the interior remained absolutely unknown.

It is probable, although not certain, that the Jesuits on the Upper Uruguay established some villages of peaceable Indians in the north-western corner of Uruguay proper, in the middle of the seventeenth century. A few Indians, it is certain, gathered under Jesuit control on an island in the Lower Uruguay, some fifty miles above Martin Garcia, about 1650. This was known as the Pueblo of Soriano, and is often referred to by Uruguayan historians as the first permanent settlement in their country. However, no real progress was made toward getting possession of Uruguay. The Charruas proved refractory to Jesuit influence, and only the milder Yaros and the tribes on the Brazilian border could be converted.

The horses and cattle which the Spaniards had introduced multiplied into hundreds of thousands and roamed undisturbed over the rolling, grassy plains of Uruguay, and occasionally parties of Creoles would land on the shore of the Plate and at the risk of their lives kill some steers and strip them of their hides. As time went on, the Indians became used to the white men and some trading sprang up, but for a full century after Buenos Aires had been in existence Uruguay remained unsettled by civilised man.

[Pg 239]

CHAPTER II

PORTUGUESE AGGRESSIONS AND THE SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY

In 1680 the governor of Rio de Janeiro sent some ships and a force of soldiers to the Plate, with orders to occupy a point on the north bank in the name of the king of Portugal. Spain claimed that her dominions extended as far up the coast as the southern border of the present state of São Paulo, and Portugal was equally stubborn in insisting that her rightful territory extended west and south as far as the mouth of the Uruguay. Neither country had made any settlements in the disputed region, and Portugal had determined to take advantage of the negligence of the Spanish government and be first in the field. To establish a post only

twenty miles from the capital of the Spanish possessions and more than a thousand miles south of the last Portuguese town seemed an audacious step, but its success would secure for Portugal the whole intermediate territory, as well as give her a port which would insure her merchants the command of the trade of the Plate valley. [Pg 240]

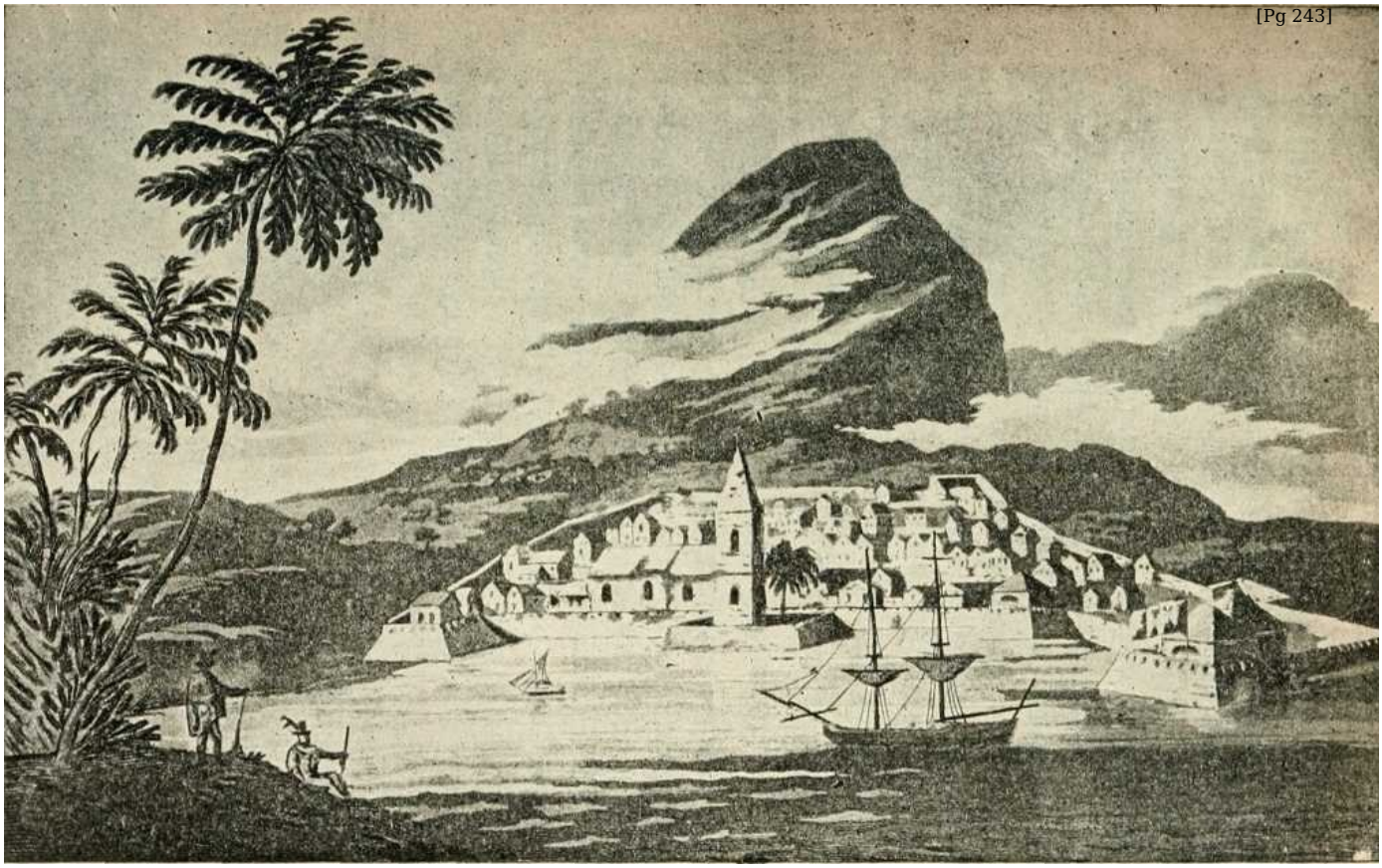
The Portuguese commander landed unopposed on the shore of the estuary directly opposite Buenos Aires, and immediately began to throw up walls, dig a ditch, and lay out a town called Colonia. When the news reached Buenos Aires, the indignant governor raised a force of two hundred and sixty Spaniards and three thousand Indians, crossed the river, and fell upon the little body of Portuguese in the midst of their delving and shovelling. The attack was at first repulsed, but superior numbers were soon effective. The enemy surrendered, and the Spaniards threw down the walls and destroyed the beginnings of the town. The Portuguese government protested, claiming that the governor's action was a wilful and inexcusable aggression against the forces of a friendly power operating in territory which had never been occupied by Spain. The Madrid government disavowed the act, and the Portuguese resumed possession of Colonia in 1683. They rebuilt its walls and made the place safe against the attacks of Indians. At once it became a centre for contraband traffic. The Spanish laws and colonial policy forbade vessels to land at Buenos Aires. In defiance of the prohibition, illegal trade had been carried on, but the lading of vessels lying in the Buenos Aires roads was conducted at great risk. Officials might order the seizure of the goods, and enormous bribes had to be paid to functionaries; often the governor was the smuggler's partner, but he was a partner who demanded an exorbitant share of the profit. In Colonia, however, merchandise could be safely stored and embarked at leisure, so the latter place rapidly absorbed the export trade and became an *entrepôt* for [Pg 241] imported goods destined for sale in the valley of the Plate and in Bolivia.

Spain had restored Colonia under protest and without prejudice, explicitly reiterating her own claim to exclusive proprietorship of the north bank of the Plate. The diplomatists agreed that the question of right should remain open for determination at some future day, but all Spanish subjects considered the existence of Colonia as a violation of Spanish soil, and whenever a war broke out in Europe between the mother countries, the Buenos Aireans were in the habit of promptly sending an expedition across the river to capture the Portuguese town. Three times was it wrenched from the Portuguese, and three times was it restored on the conclusion of peace.

In 1705, Spain and Portugal being engaged in war, the governor of Buenos Aires dislodged the Portuguese garrison from Colonia and the place remained in Spanish possession until after the conclusion of the Peace of Utrecht. Their eleven years' possession at last convinced the Spaniards that the settlement of the north bank was feasible. By 1708 the Charrua raids had so far lost their terrors that the Jesuit mission at Soriano was safely removed from the island in the Uruguay River to the mainland opposite. The trade in Uruguayan hides and horsehair increased, and private expeditions henceforth frequently crossed the estuary.

It had long been known that the best harbours on the Uruguayan coast were at Montevideo and Maldonado, [Pg 242] where partially sheltered bays, with water deep enough for the vessels of the eighteenth century, were overlooked by beautiful and defensible town sites. Montevideo is a hundred miles east of Colonia, and Maldonado another hundred miles farther on toward the Atlantic. The advisability of seizing and fortifying one or both of these places was frequently mooted in Buenos Aires, after the restoration of Colonia in 1716. Nothing, however, was done until 1723, when word came that the Portuguese had again anticipated the Spanish authorities and had occupied and begun to fortify Montevideo for themselves. The governor of Buenos Aires immediately sent an overwhelming force which compelled the Portuguese to retire. This time neither dilatory diplomacy nor official ineptitude prevented his doing the right thing to save Uruguay to the Spanish Crown, and the following year he finished the Portuguese walls at Montevideo, and in 1726 the ground plan of a town was laid out and a few families were brought from Buenos Aires and the Canary Islands. Within a few years there were a thousand people in the place, and it had been surrounded with walls and defended by artillery. Four years later, Maldonado was established. No serious trouble was experienced with the Indians at either place, and the Spaniards began to spread their ranches over the neighbouring south-eastern part of Uruguay.

[Pg 243]



MONTEVIDEO.
[From an old print.]

Almost simultaneously with this important event, the Creoles from Santa Fé province crossed over into the wide plains which lie between the Paraná and the Uruguay, and defeated the Charrua tribes who had kept the [Pg 244] Spanish out of that region for one hundred and fifty years. Soon the gauchos were in possession of Entre Rios as far as the Uruguay. The Charruas east of the Uruguay could not prevent the gauchos from making their way across the river to build their cabins and ride the plains after cattle. The settlement of western Uruguay began, but, except Colonia and Soriano, no towns were founded. The half-Indian gauchos lived a semi-nomadic life and needed and received little help from the authorities in their constant fights against the Indians.

Shortly after the foundation of Montevideo, a Portuguese expedition tried to recover the place, but it was found to be too strong to attack, and the party resolved to establish a town farther up the coast. Three hundred miles to the north-west is found the only opening into the great system of lagoons which stretches along the seaward side of Rio Grande do Sul, and at that strategic point the Portuguese, in 1735, built a fort and town.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, the situation between Spain and Portugal in the whole region between the Plate, the Uruguay, and the sea had become very strained. Colonia was completely isolated and the Spaniards controlled all the rest of Uruguay's western and southern water-front. The Portuguese settlements in the seaward half of Rio Grande were prospering and multiplying, soon to furnish thousands of gauchos, as ready as any who rode the Argentine pampas to sally forth for war or plunder. The territory [Pg 245] which the Jesuits had held for more than a century on the east bank of the Upper Uruguay lay directly back of these Portuguese settlements and was more easily accessible therefrom than from Montevideo. In 1750 Spain agreed to exchange the Seven Missions for Colonia. The Portuguese promptly took measures to secure the ceded territory, attacked the Indian villages, and massacred or drove off most of the inhabitants. The Jesuits vigorously protested, and outraged Spanish public opinion demanded the abrogation of the treaty, so a few years later the desolated territory was restored to Spanish possession and Colonia remained Portuguese.

In 1762 Spain and Portugal were again engaged in war, and the governor of Buenos Aires attacked Colonia with a force of twenty-seven hundred men and thirty-two ships. The fortifications were strong and the Portuguese offered a tenacious resistance. After a well-contested siege the place surrendered, only to be given back to Portugal the ensuing year. Meanwhile, troops had been sent up from Montevideo against Rio Grande and the Portuguese settlers driven back to the north-east corner of the state, only to rise again when the Spanish troops were gone and to begin a guerrilla warfare which never ceased until they had regained their towns.

The eighteenth century had entered on its last quarter before the Spanish home government took any real steps to drive the Portuguese out of Colonia and to reclaim the disputed territory as far north as São Paulo. The Atlantic slope of Spanish South America was erected into a Viceroyalty, and in 1777 the greatest fleet [Pg 246] and army ever sent by Spain to America reached Buenos Aires under command of the new Viceroy. The Portuguese had no forces able to cope with his army and fleet, and he carried all before him. The island of Santa Catharina in the north of the disputed territory was captured, Colonia was taken, and an army of four thousand men started on a triumphal march north-westward to sweep the Portuguese from the coast. The Spaniards were at the gates of Rio Grande when news came that peace had been declared. Orders from home compelled the Viceroy to stop his northward progress while the diplomats agreed on a division. The treaty of San Ildefonso in the main gave each country the territory its citizens actually occupied. The Seven Missions remained Spanish, and the Portuguese were deprived of the southern half of the great lagoon and of Colonia. Santa Catharina was restored, and the right of Portugal to the vast interior and to the regions of the Upper Paraná and Paraguay were confirmed. Rio Grande remained Portuguese and Uruguay was assured of being thenceforth and for ever Spanish in blood and speech.

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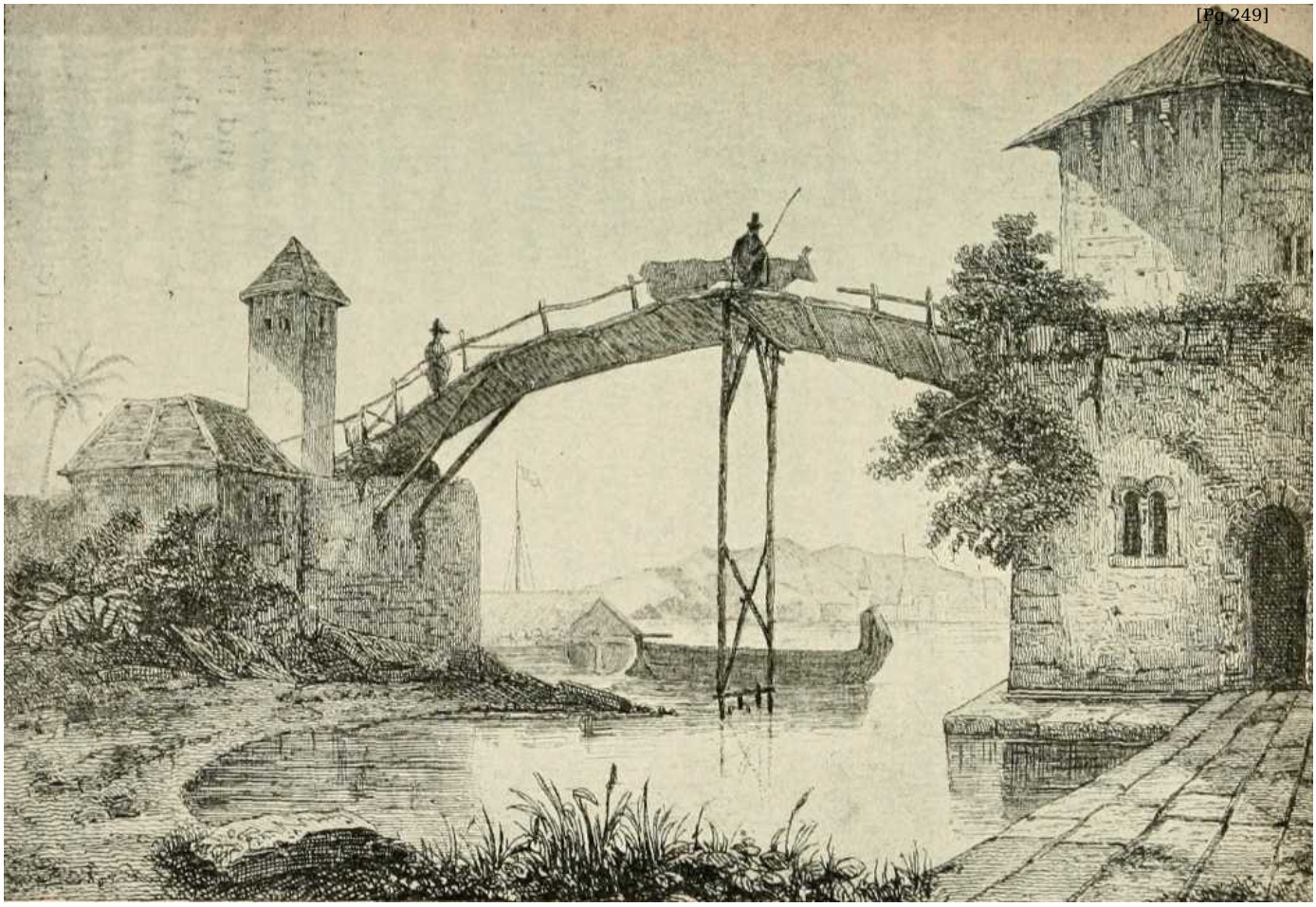
CHAPTER III

THE REVOLUTION

With the treaty of San Ildefonso, Uruguay began her real existence. Montevideo was made the greatest fortress on the Atlantic coast, commanded by its own military governor, strongly garrisoned and provisioned, and with over one hundred cannon mounted on its walls. The Charruas had long been driven back from the coast, and as soon as the danger of Portuguese interference was over settlements spread rapidly along the whole southern border. Prior to 1777 there were only five towns in Uruguay, but within the next five years the number tripled. By the year 1810 there were seventy-five hundred people living in the city of Montevideo, seventy-five hundred in its immediate district, and sixteen thousand in the outlying settlements. Outside of Montevideo, cattle-herding was the sole business, and the people were a hard-riding, meat-eating, bellicose race. Immediately to the north-east lived fifty thousand Rio Grandenses of Portuguese blood and speech, who, in like surroundings, had acquired the same pastoral and semi-nomadic habits as their Argentine and [Pg 248] Uruguayan neighbours, and who constantly made incursions over the Spanish border. The Uruguayan gauchos retaliated, and for nearly a century continuous partisan warfare went on, for these half-savage cattle-herders recked little of treaties or boundary lines. The Spanish guerrillas bore the name of *blandenques*, and in this school of arms the future generals of Uruguay's war of independence were trained. Most of the forays were only for the purpose of stealing cattle or burning cabins built in coveted regions; nevertheless, one of these expeditions changed the nationality of a territory larger than England. In 1801 the Rio Grandenses conquered the Seven Missions, thus doubling at a single stroke the area of their own state and reducing Uruguay to substantially its present dimensions.

As the seat of the largest Spanish garrison, Montevideo naturally became the centre of pro-Spanish feeling and influence in the Plate and the home of families who boasted distinguished Castilian descent and conservative principles. In the interior settlements Creole influences predominated, and the population was substantially homogeneous with that of the Argentine provinces on the other side of the Uruguay River. Between the aristocratic Montevideans and the gauchos of the country districts there was little sympathy.

[Pg 249]



BRIDGE AT MALDONADO.

In 1806, the English captured Buenos Aires, and many Spanish officials and officers fled to Montevideo for refuge. The garrison of Montevideo furnished troops and arms for the expedition which soon went across the [Pg 250] Plate and triumphantly recaptured Buenos Aires. Late that same year, British troops from the Cape of Good Hope seized Maldonado harbour in eastern Uruguay. As soon as re-enforcements arrived a movement was made against Montevideo. On the 14th of January, 1807, the city was besieged by sea and land. The attacking and defending forces were about equal in number, although the British regulars were far superior in discipline and effectiveness to their opponents, half of whom were militia. A sortie in force was completely defeated, with a loss of one thousand men, and after eight days of bombardment the British effected a breach in the wall and took the town by assault, the Spaniards losing half their force and the remainder scattering. A great fleet of merchant vessels had accompanied the British expedition, and as soon as the town surrendered their goods were landed, and the English traders took possession of the shops almost as completely as the British soldiers did of the fortifications. Uruguay was opened up to free trade, the gauchos were soon selling their hides and horsehair for higher prices than they had ever received, and buying clothes, tools, and the comforts and luxuries of civilised life at rates they had never dreamed possible.

A few months later the English attacked Buenos Aires, but were overwhelmingly defeated, and the British general found himself in such an awkward situation that, in order to obtain permission to withdraw his army, he had to agree to evacuate Montevideo. The convention was carried out and the British soldiers left the Plate [Pg 251] forever, but the British merchants remained behind. Although the English occupation of the city had lasted so short a time, it created an unwonted animation in Montevideo by the establishment of a great number of mercantile and industrial houses. From this time, Montevideo's commerce assumed greater proportions and it became a place of real commercial importance, as well as a military post. Both city and country had tasted the delights of commercial freedom, and material civilisation had received its first great impulse.

Elio, the Spanish military governor of Montevideo, suspected the loyalty of Liniers, the Frenchman, who, because he had led in the fighting against the English, had been created viceroy at Buenos Aires. Spanish affairs at home were in confusion and fast becoming worse confounded. The old king had abdicated in favour of his son; civil war had broken out on the Peninsula; the new king had been compelled by Napoleon to resign, and Joseph Bonaparte was proclaimed monarch of Spain. The Spanish nation refused to accept Joseph and a revolutionary government was set up in Seville. Elio, as a patriotic Spaniard, promptly swore allegiance to this junta, but the Viceroy and the Buenos Aires Creoles hesitated as to their course of action. The Montevidean governor and the Buenos Aires Viceroy quarrelled; the former accused the latter of unfaithfulness to Spain and disavowed his authority, and the latter retaliated by issuing a decree deposing Elio. On receiving news of this act, which was strictly legal under Spanish law, the Montevideo Cabildo met in [Pg 252] extraordinary session and appointed a junta, which was to be dependent solely and directly upon the authority of the banished legitimate king and in no way upon Buenos Aires so long as Liniers remained Viceroy. Thus early did Montevideo act independently of Buenos Aires.

Although the sentiment of loyalty was much stronger in Montevideo than in Buenos Aires, the English invasion was no sooner over than there became manifest something of the same profound division between Creoles and Spaniards. Three years, however, passed without disturbances; and even when the news of the overthrow of the new Spanish Viceroy by the populace of Buenos Aires on the 25th of May, 1810, reached Montevideo, the governor was able to prevent any revolutionary manifestations of sympathy. On the 12th of July a small part of the garrison rose in a mutiny, which was easily suppressed. In January, 1811, Elio returned to Montevideo with a commission as Viceroy and bringing considerable re-enforcements. He declared war on Creole revolutionists at Buenos Aires and imprisoned the Montevideans suspected of Creole sympathies and revolutionary ideas.

Among those who escaped to Buenos Aires was one destined to be the founder of Uruguayan nationality. This was José Artigas, then captain of guerrilla cavalry. Although born in Montevideo he had lived the life of a gaucho from boyhood, and since 1797 had been a leader of the gaucho bands who were continually fighting the Rio Grandenses. He happened to be in Colonia on the occasion of Elio's declaration of war against the [Pg 253] Creoles and at once fled to Buenos Aires. The junta there gave him a lieutenant-colonel's commission and some substantial help. The gauchos of the south-eastern part of Uruguay had meanwhile risen against the Spanish governor, and within a few weeks Artigas was back on Uruguayan soil at the head of a considerable force, while all around him bands of gauchos under other chiefs were preparing to resist the Spaniards. His bravery, energy, and good luck in the field, and his ruthless maintenance of discipline, gave him an ascendancy over all the others.

In April, 1811, Belgrano, the chief general of Buenos Aires, arrived with re-enforcements. Shortly after, a Spanish detachment, which had reached the western part of Uruguay, was captured, and the gaucho leaders advanced almost to the walls of Montevideo. A force of one thousand Spaniards started out to meet them and, on the 18th of May, met with complete defeat at the battle of Las Piedras. For this victory Artigas was promoted by the Buenos Aires Junta, and became the greatest military figure on the patriot side. With a considerable army of gauchos from both banks of the Uruguay and of patriots from Buenos Aires he began a siege of Montevideo.

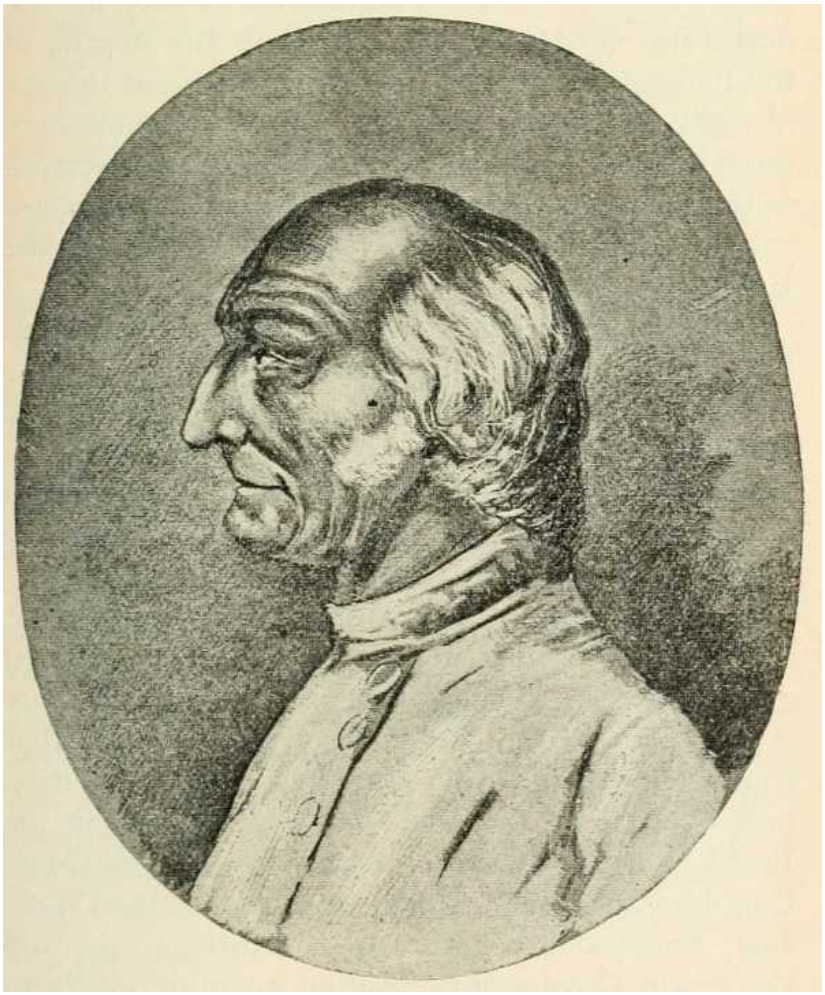
The siege, however, did not last long. The great expedition sent by the patriots to Bolivia was overwhelmingly defeated in the battle of Huaqui, and the Buenos Aires Junta, horribly alarmed for their own safety, ordered all the troops under their control to return and help defend that city. At the same time a [Pg 254] Portuguese army advanced from Brazil with the avowed purpose of saving Montevideo from being lost to Spain, but really to take possession of Uruguay for King John's own benefit. Artigas was compelled to retire to the Argentine, and Uruguayan historians say that on his long retreat to the Uruguay River he was accompanied by practically the whole rural population of the country. The semi-nomadic habits of the gauchos made such a migration easy, and they quickly found new homes on the opposite shore in Entre Rios, whence it would be easy to return as soon as the Portuguese troops retired.

Considerations of international politics and English pressure compelled King John to withdraw his troops from Uruguay in the middle of the year 1812, and the Buenos Aires government immediately began to assemble an army on the right bank of the Uruguay. Artigas was still encamped with his Uruguayan forces in the same neighbourhood, and although he held an Argentine commission he was virtually independent. The Argentine army, under the command of José Rondeau, who in colonial days had been captain of guerrillas alongside Artigas, advanced against Montevideo, and on the last day of 1812 won the bloody battle of Cerrito, in sight of the city, and shut the Spaniards up within its walls. Artigas followed and assisted in the siege, but he refused to unite his forces with those of Rondeau until his own claims should be recognised and his demands complied with. He assumed a dictatorship and sent delegates to Buenos Aires to advocate the [Pg 255] formation of a federal republic, of which Buenos Aires was to be simply one member. Buenos Aires refused to receive his delegates, and civil war broke out. Rondeau adhered to the Buenos Aires interest; and after a year of disputes, in the beginning of January, 1814, Artigas withdrew his own followers from Montevideo, leaving the partisans of Buenos Aires to continue the siege alone. In May the celebrated Irish admiral, William Brown, destroyed the Spanish fleet, which had hitherto dominated the Plate. Montevideo's communications with both land and sea were shut off, and the fortress shortly afterwards surrendered to General Carlos Alvear, the Argentine general who was then commanding the besieging forces.

Meanwhile, Artigas had retired to the west, and the gauchos, not only of western Uruguay, but also of Entre Rios, Corrientes, the Missions, and Santa Fé, rallied around his standard. Independent chiefs in these various provinces had been resisting the efforts of Buenos Aires to reduce them to obedience. Artigas was, in a way, recognised as their leader, but only as the greatest among equals. The conflict with the Buenos Aires party went on throughout the year 1814, and the federalists continually gained ground. In January, 1815, Fructuoso Rivera, one of the lieutenants of Artigas, defeated an Argentine force at the battle of Guayabos, and the Buenos Aires Junta was compelled to withdraw its troops from Montevideo.

This, however, did not amount to a separation of Uruguay from the Confederation. It only marked a triumph [Pg 256] of the provinces in their efforts to prevent Buenos Aires from establishing a centralised government. Artigas had his friends in Entre Rios, Corrientes, the Missions, and Santa Fé, and even as far as Cordoba; and Francia, dictator of Paraguay, was another of his allies in this struggle against Buenos Aires. However, he was nothing more than a military chief, without the capacity or even the desire of uniting these vast territories under a rational and stable government.

At the very height of his power he made the fatal mistake of embroiling himself with Brazil. In 1815 he invaded the territory of the Seven Missions, which the Rio Grandenses had conquered fourteen years before. The Portuguese king retaliated by sending a well-equipped army of several thousand men, and in October, 1816, the forces of Artigas were overwhelmed and driven with great slaughter from the disputed territory. Artigas made stupendous efforts to retrieve this loss, but the four thousand men which he assembled to resist the Portuguese army, which was now advancing upon Montevideo itself, were defeated and scattered in January, 1817. The Portuguese occupied Montevideo, and Artigas and his lieutenants, Rivera, Lavelleja, and Oribe, each of whom later became a great figure in the civil wars, retreated to the interior, where they maintained themselves for two years. After many defeats, Artigas himself lost the support of the chiefs of Entre Rios and Santa Fé. He was finally driven out of Uruguay and attempted to establish himself in the Argentine provinces, only to be completely overwhelmed by his rivals. On the 23rd of September, 1820, he [Pg 257] presented himself with forty men, all who remained faithful to him, at the Paraguayan town of Candelaria on the Paraná, begging hospitality of Francia. Francia granted him asylum, and this indomitable guerrilla chief, who for twenty-five years had kept the soil of Uruguay and of the Argentine mesopotamia soaked in blood, spent the rest of his life peacefully cultivating his garden in the depths of the Paraguayan forests. He died in 1850 at the age of eighty-six years; six years later his remains were brought from Paraguay to Montevideo and interred in the national pantheon. On the sarcophagus are engraved these words: "Artigas, Founder of the Uruguayan Nation."



GENERAL DON JOSÉ GERVASIO ARTIGAS.
[From an old wood-cut.]

[Pg 258]

Rivera was the last Uruguayan chief to lay down his arms before the Portuguese. When he surrendered, early in 1820, most of the other leaders had already given up and accepted service in the Portuguese army of occupation. In 1821, a Uruguayan Congress, selected for this purpose, declared the country incorporated with the Portuguese dominions under the name of the Cisplatine Province. For five years Montevideo and the country remained quiet under the Portuguese dominion, and Uruguay peacefully became a province of Brazil when that country declared her independence. The most celebrated chiefs of the civil war were officers in the Brazilian army, and few external signs of dissatisfaction were apparent. Underneath the surface, however, fermented a hatred of the foreign rule, and the proud Creoles only awaited an opportunity to revolt.

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CHAPTER IV

INDEPENDENCE AND CIVIL WAR

In the beginning of 1825 a group of patriots met in Buenos Aires and planned an invasion of Uruguayan territory. Word was sent to different chiefs in the country districts, and on the night of the 19th of April thirty-three adventurers, with Lavalleja at their head, landed on the shore of the river in the extreme south-western corner of the country. No sooner had they landed than the country rose; the troops sent from Montevideo to meet the band of revolutionists refused to fight, and, deserting the Brazilian banner, joined their compatriots. The revolutionists advanced east along the Negro and the Yi to Durazno, one hundred and thirty miles north of Montevideo, where they found Rivera, then general in the Brazilian service. He promptly deserted and was at once associated with Lavalleja in the command.

[Pg 260]

Lavalleja advanced to the south, calling the population to arms, while the northern detachments rose in response to Rivera. Only fifteen days after the thirty-three had crossed the Uruguay, the flag of the revolution was floating over the Cerrito Hill in front of Montevideo, and Brazilian power was virtually confined to the walls of that city and Colonia. The military chiefs formally declared Uruguay separated from Brazil, and proclaimed its reincorporation with the Argentine. The number of Brazilians then in Uruguay was small, and infantry could not be expected to do much fighting on the plains against gaucho cavalry led by such experienced guerrilla fighters as Rivera and Lavalleja. A division of Rio Grandense cavalry, under their own chiefs, Bento Manoel and Bento Goncalvez, met the Uruguayans at Sarandi. The two armies used substantially the same methods, charging into each other, sword in hand and carbine at shoulder. The Brazilians were caught in a disadvantageous position and suffered a complete and bloody overthrow.

The result of this battle was to insure to the revolutionists the continuation of their complete dominance in the country. Their cavalry bands roamed at will up to the very walls of Montevideo. Buenos Aires received the news with extravagant demonstrations of joy, and formal notice was given to Brazil that Uruguay would henceforth be recognised as an integral part of the Argentine Confederation. The emperor promptly responded with a declaration of war. His fleet blockaded Buenos Aires, while he poured re-enforcements into Montevideo and sent an army to invade northern Uruguay. Argentine troops likewise swarmed across the Uruguay River into the country, and the Brazilians could make little progress. On sea they were not more successful, and by the beginning of 1826 Admiral Brown was blockading Colonia and menacing the communications of Montevideo. [Pg 261]

In August, 1826, the famous Argentine general, Carlos Alvear, took command of the patriot forces. Jealousies and quarrels had meantime broken out between Lavalleja and Rivera. Alvear took the former's side and Rivera's partisans revolted. But the arrival of more re-enforcements for the Brazilians hushed up for the moment the intestine quarrels of the Spanish-Americans. Alvear determined to carry the war into Brazil, and early in January, 1827, succeeded in passing between the northern and southern Brazilian armies, and penetrated across the frontier to the north-east. He had sacked Bagé, the principal town of that region, before the Brazilian general, the Marquis of Barbacena, was able to concentrate his forces and start in pursuit. Alvear turned north toward the Missions, but he was in a hostile country where defeat meant total destruction. Though his army numbered eight thousand men he had cut himself off from his base, and an enemy in equal force was close at his heels. He resolved to turn and give battle, and on the 20th of February, 1827, his army met that of Barbacena in the decisive battle of Ituzaingo, which ended in the defeat of the Brazilians. Although Barbacena was able to withdraw his army without material loss, and Alvear retired at once to Uruguayan soil, the Brazilians were never afterwards able to undertake a vigorous offensive. The result of that battle insured that the north bank of the Plate should remain Spanish in blood, language, and government. [Pg 262]

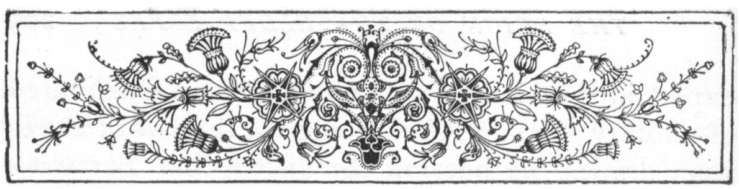
A few days before Ituzaingo, Admiral Brown had won the great naval fight of Juncal at the mouth of the river Uruguay, and thenceforth the Brazilian blockade of Buenos Aires was entirely ineffective. If it had not been for the civil disturbances in Argentina that paralysed the Buenos Aires government, the Brazilians might have been swept out of Montevideo at the point of the sword, and the Argentines might have undertaken the conquest of Rio Grande itself. Though considerable Argentine forces remained in Uruguay during 1827 and 1828, they put no vigour into their operations, and on their part the Brazilians were able to do little more than hold Montevideo. So hampered was Rivadavia, the president of Buenos Aires, by revolts, uprisings, and disorders throughout Argentina that he thought himself obliged to agree to abandon Uruguay. Public opinion in Argentina would not accept the treaty which he made; he was deposed, and a leader of the opposite party installed in power.

Rivera, operating on his own account, had undertaken a campaign against the western Rio Grande, but so bitter was factional feeling that his rival, Lavalleja, sent a force to pursue and fight him, while the new Buenos Aires government was induced to sign a treaty of peace largely because Rivera's success against the Brazilians might make him strong enough to be dangerous. Both Brazil and Argentina were tired of the tedious, expensive war, and both governments had preoccupations within their own territories. Through the intervention of the British Minister the terms were agreed upon. Brazil and Argentina both gave up their claims to Uruguay, the region was erected into an independent republic, and Brazil and Argentina pledged themselves to guarantee its independence during five years. [Pg 263]

At that time Argentina was convulsed by the struggle between the federalists and the unitarians, and the Uruguayans were also divided into two camps—the followers of Lavalleja and those of Rivera. Neither in Argentina nor in Uruguay were these divisions parties in any proper sense of that term. They were military factions, whose ambitious leaders seem to have been always willing to sacrifice the interests of the country at large to secure a partisan advantage. The Argentine troops who returned home from the war against Brazil promptly plunged their country into the bloodiest civil war known in her history, and Uruguay did not delay in following the example.

The first chief magistrate of independent Uruguay was José Rondeau, an Uruguayan who had become one of the greatest Argentine generals. However, Lavalleja and Rivera were the real factors in the situation, and Rondeau's efforts to conciliate both at the same time failed. The Constituent Assembly, which soon met and framed a paper constitution, was controlled by Lavalleja's partisans. Rondeau was deposed and Lavalleja assumed the reins of power. Rivera prepared to march on Montevideo and dispute the matter by arms, but the representatives of Argentina and Brazil intervened and a compromise was effected. Rivera got the best of the bargain, being given command of the army, and after the constitution had been declared (July 18, 1830), he became, as a matter of course, the first president of Uruguay. [Pg 264]

[Pg 265]



CHAPTER V

CIVIL WAR AND ARGENTINE INTERVENTION

Except for an expedition against the remnants of the once formidable Charrua Indians, the first two years of independence passed in peace. Since the expulsion of Artigas, the country had prospered and its population had risen nearly threefold within twenty-five years, in spite of the bloody fighting which occurred from 1811 to 1817 and from 1825 to 1828. The settlements had spread far back from the coast, and many of the principal interior towns date from this period.

In 1832 the civil wars began again. Lavalleja's partisans organised a conspiracy, and a certain Colonel Garzon took advantage of Rivera's absence from Montevideo to raise a mutiny in the garrison and to issue a pronunciamento deposing the president. The latter soon recovered the city, and after two years of intermittent fighting the Lavalleja party was overthrown for the moment and Rivera finished his term in peace.

Manuel Oribe, a chief of the anti-Rivera faction, succeeded to the presidency by a compromise agreement, [Pg 266] but the breach between the two factions had really grown wider and their mutual hatred became irrepressibly bitter. Oribe soon began to persecute his opponents. Meanwhile, the five years had expired during which Uruguayan independence had been guaranteed by the treaty between Argentina and Brazil. Argentina was free to solicit the reincorporation of Uruguay into the Confederation. Rosas, the head of the federalist party, had made himself master of Buenos Aires, and his authority was recognised in most of the Argentine provinces, although the unitarians continued their ineffectual revolts. The new Uruguayan president sympathised with the federalists, while his rival, Rivera, could count on the unitarians. The plan of Rosas was to establish Oribe firmly in Uruguay and through his aid to incorporate that country with Argentina, while the unitarians were desperately anxious that Rivera should triumph, knowing that Montevideo would be a base for the organisation of their own forces for invasions of Buenos Aires and central Argentina.

Thenceforward for many years Uruguay's history is inexplicably entwined with the story of the struggle between the two great Argentine factions. The little country became the storm-centre of South American politics and the chief battlefield of the contending forces. Now for the first time we encounter references to "blancos" and "colorados," which remain to this day the names of Uruguayan political parties. All the forces of the community lined up on either side and never have political parties fought more determinedly and [Pg 267] relentlessly. The divisions between them entered into all social and business relations, and even friendly intercourse between the members of the two factions was almost impossible. Men have often been more blanco or colorado than Uruguayan. The old conservative resident Spanish families were the basis of the blanco, or Oribe party, while the colorados, or partisans of Rivera, were the progressive faction. The latter attracted the Argentine refugees fleeing from the tyranny of Rosas, and could count upon the support of resident Europeans and upon the sympathy of foreign governments. Rosas in Argentina and the blancos in Uruguay represented the spirit of exclusivism and opposition to foreign influences.

After Oribe's accession to power Rivera hastened to raise a revolt in the western districts. He obtained help from the unitarians, and his invasion was accompanied by many Argentine generals who had distinguished themselves in the wars against Rosas. The Argentine dictator sent help to Oribe, but for two years the tide of battle set in favour of the colorados and unitarians. Rivera had obtained so decided an advantage by 1838 that Oribe abandoned Montevideo and embarked for Buenos Aires, followed by the chiefs of his party. The colorado chief, now in control of all Uruguay, celebrated a formal alliance with the province of Corrientes, then in revolt against Rosas, and war was declared against the latter. A large Argentine army, accompanied by many blancos, invaded Uruguay, but was decisively defeated at the battle of Cagancha, December 10, [Pg 268] 1839.

The interval of unquestioned colorado supremacy which followed was one of the most flourishing periods in the history of Uruguay. Large numbers of the intellectual élite of Buenos Aires swarmed across the river; Montevideo became the centre of arts and letters of Spanish America; the civil wars of the last few years had not been severe, and even during their continuance property had suffered little. Immigration from England, France, and Italy began on a large scale, and the population increased at the rate of four per cent. per annum. In the year 1840 nine hundred ocean-going ships entered the port of Montevideo, more than three thousand houses were erected, and twenty-seven great meat-curing establishments were in active operation. However, Rosas and the blancos were only awaiting a good opportunity to attack.

In 1841 Oribe, in command of one of Rosas's armies, defeated the Argentine unitarians under General Lavalle, and marched into Entre Rios to suppress the insurrection in that province. In January, 1842, Rivera took an army of three thousand men to the rescue of his unitarian allies. He crossed the river Uruguay and united his forces to those of General Paz, but after a year's desperate fighting on Argentine soil he and the unitarian general were overthrown and their armies completely destroyed in the battle of Arroya Grande. The way was open to Montevideo; the colorados and Argentine exiles shut themselves up in that city, and the so- [Pg 269] called nine-years' siege began. Rosas's power seemed overwhelming, and although Rivera and other colorado chiefs at the head of scattered bands managed to make some headway in the outlying departments, they were finally driven into Brazil, while the unhappy country was given up to pillage and slaughter. This *guerra grande* was the bloodiest, longest, and most stubborn war ever fought on Uruguayan soil.

Montevideo seemed doomed to an early surrender when an opportune intervention by France and England upset the plans of Rosas. He had embroiled himself with the ministers of those powers by refusing to give satisfaction for certain alleged injuries to foreign merchants and naval officers, and the dispute became so acrimonious that the European powers finally resorted to the most drastic coercive measures. A French, and later a British, fleet blockaded Buenos Aires and drove Rosas's vessels from the Plate. Under these circumstances it was impossible for him to land re-enforcements on the Uruguayan shore. In 1845 the European navies forced a passage at the head of the estuary into the Paraná and Uruguay, destroying the batteries which Rosas had erected there and opening up those rivers to foreign navigation. Thereafter, troops could be sent from Argentina into Uruguay only by a long détour to the north.

In spite of this hampering of his military operations, and the injury which the blockade caused to the commerce of Buenos Aires, the Argentine dictator stubbornly refused to yield an inch to foreign pressure. [Pg 270] France and England were finally tired out; they raised the blockade; Rosas regained his control of the Plate and the early capture of Montevideo seemed certain. Just at this time, however, General Urquiza, governor of Entre Rios, and Rosas's best lieutenant and most successful general, broke with his chief. Entre Rios became a virtually independent state, and Rosas's efforts to reduce it were unavailing. Urquiza's defection again rendered it impossible properly to reinforce Oribe's army. The colorados of the interior plucked up courage and during four years no material progress was made on either side. A tedious and exhausting partisan

warfare went on in the interior; guerrilla bands scoured the country in every direction; inhabitants of the same town were arrayed against each other, and surprises, treasons, and massacres were almost daily occurrences. One of the most successful leaders on the colorado side was the famous Giuseppe Garibaldi. The future liberator of Italy had made his début as a revolutionist in the insurrection which broke out in 1835 in the Brazilian province of Rio Grande. Later he crossed the Uruguayan border and fought against Rosas for several years.

Early in 1851 a grand combination to overthrow Rosas was made between Entre Rios, Corrientes, the unitarians, the colorados, and Brazil. The constant policy of the latter power had been to secure and maintain the independence of Uruguay, and she welcomed the opportunity to open up the Paraná and Uruguay, on whose headwaters she had great territories, inaccessible except along those rivers. Urquiza naturally became [Pg 271] the general-in-chief of the alliance. On the 18th of July he crossed the Uruguay, followed by a large army from his own provinces. A Brazilian army soon joined him and the colorados flocked to his standard. The Brazilian fleet came down the coast and controlled the estuary. An overwhelming force advanced on Montevideo and the blanco army found itself with a hostile city and fleet in front, a superior army behind, and deprived of the hope of receiving help from Buenos Aires. The officers hastened to make terms with Urquiza. Whole divisions deserted, and Oribe himself was obliged to surrender. Many of the soldiers who had been fighting in the blanco ranks joined Urquiza, and the latter, after a vain attempt to reconcile the Uruguayan factions among themselves, marched his army back through Uruguay and Entre Rios, crossed the Paraná, and, descending to Buenos Aires, defeated Rosas in the great battle of Monte Caseros.

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CHAPTER VI

COLORADOS AND BLANCOS

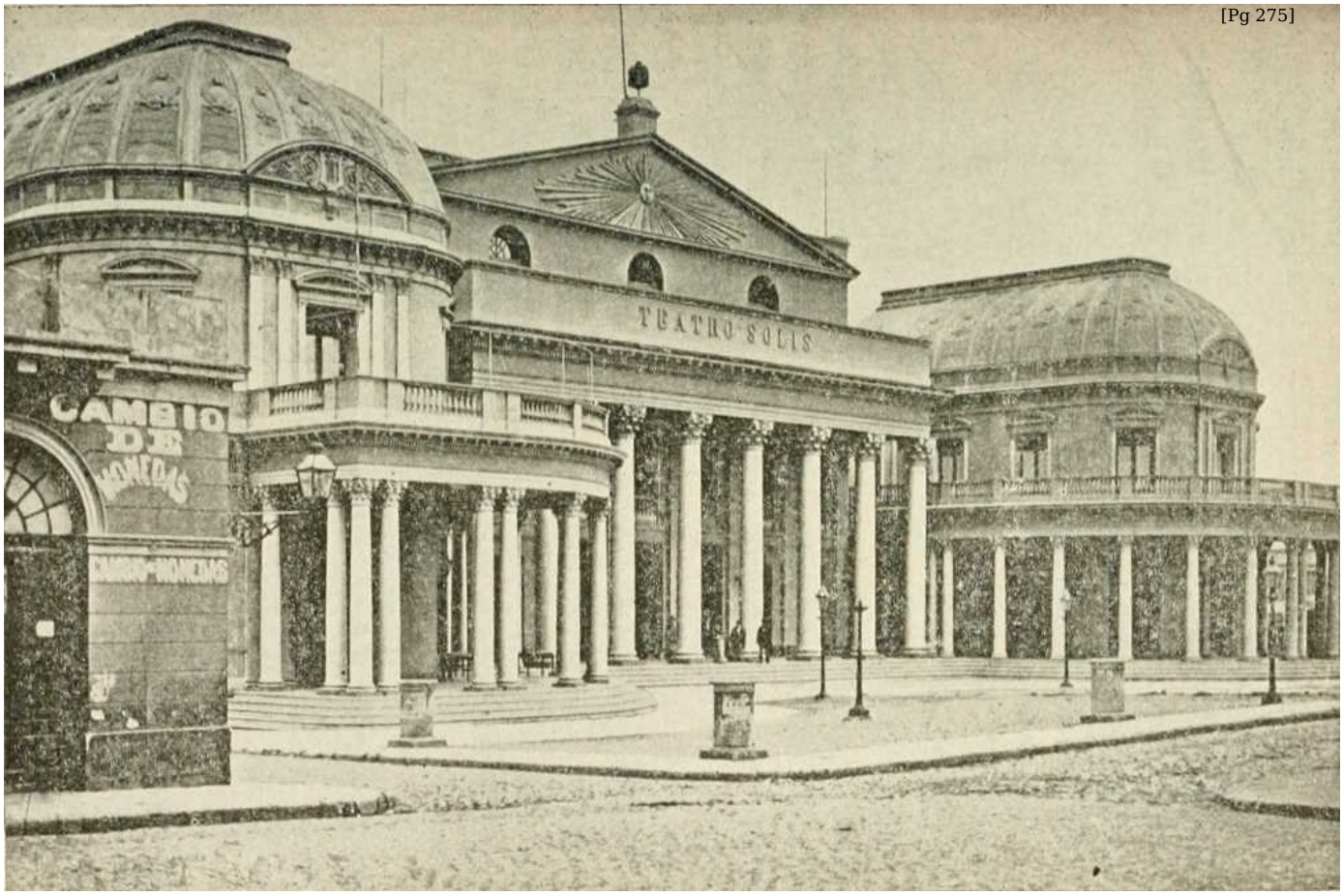
The overthrow of Rosas and Oribe marked the end of the effort to re-incorporate Uruguay with the Argentine Confederation. Uruguay was no longer in peril from foreign aggression, but she was far from being united. The blancos had apparently been completely crushed, but their wealth, prestige, and numbers still made them formidable. The seeds of division lay thickly in the soil of the national society and character, sure to spring up and bear many crops of wars and pronunciamentos.

For the moment, however, the fierce Uruguayan partisans had had enough of fighting. The colorados were dominant and the blancos disorganised and discouraged. It seemed likely that Uruguay would enjoy a prolonged peace. The wars which lasted almost continuously from 1843 to 1851 had interrupted immigration from Europe; unitarians had, however, crossed in multitudes from Buenos Aires and many of their families remained after the proclamation of peace. To this day Montevideo is full of families descended from Buenos Aires refugees; the same names constantly recur on both banks of the Plate, and the social ties uniting the [Pg 273] two cities are intimate. Uruguay's herds of cattle and sheep had suffered from the depredations of the armed marauding bands which had scoured the country districts for nine years, but man's cruel destructiveness could not injure the magnificent pasturage with which nature had endowed the nation, and animals quickly multiplied again by hundreds of thousands. In 1860 the cattle in Uruguay numbered more than five millions, the sheep two millions, and the horses nearly one million. The population increased at the almost incredible ratio of nine per cent. per annum after the overthrow of Oribe in 1851 until civil war again broke out in 1863.

During these years colorado chiefs occupied the presidency, sometimes succeeding one another, sometimes by pronunciamento, and sometimes by a form of election. General Venancio Flores, an able and ruthless officer, became the principal figure among the colorados. In 1853 he was a member of a triumvirate which forced the legal president to withdraw, and in 1854 he was himself raised to the presidency, only to be obliged to resign the following year. As is usual in South America, the dominant party split into factions, led by ambitious chiefs, and lost popularity. The blancos, as soon as they got into power, obtained control of the senate, and their prestige and wealth soon balanced the military force of their opponents. In 1860 they finally prevailed, and their leader, Berro, became constitutional president of the republic. [Pg 274]

The colorados, however, did not propose to submit. Massed upon the Argentine frontier, they held themselves ready to fall upon their successful opponents at the first opportunity. Flores had been exiled and joined the Argentine army, but in 1863 he obtained aid in Buenos Aires and disembarked upon the Uruguayan coast with a considerable force. His partisans rose and he obtained possession of a large portion of the country and set up a government of his own. For a year the contest went on with varying fortunes, and then this fight between blancos and colorados involved all the neighbouring nations and brought on the greatest war which has ever devastated South America and which resulted in the nearly complete destruction of the Paraguayan people.

[Pg 275]



THE SOLIS THEATRE.

The unitarians, then in power at Buenos Aires, naturally sympathised with the leader of their old colorado allies, and were inclined to aid Flores's attempt to regain control of Montevideo. Brazil favoured his pretensions even more actively. The Brazilians of Rio Grande owned most of the land and cattle just over the Uruguayan border, a third of all the rural properties in the republic being taxed to them, and complaints of extortion often came to the Rio government. The blanco president refused the satisfaction demanded, and Brazil determined to enforce the claims of her citizens. Flores was formally recognised as the legitimate ruler of the country, and a fleet and army were sent to his assistance. Lopez, dictator of Paraguay, thought Brazil's intervention in Uruguay dangerous to the international equilibrium of South America. He protested, and when [Pg 276] the Brazilian government persisted and sent its army over the border he began war. The Brazilians advanced to Montevideo and their fleet came down the coast. The city was blockaded by sea and besieged by land, while the main body of the allies advanced against the town of Paysandù on the Uruguay River, where the blancos had assembled in force. The place was taken by assault and given up to a horrible pillage, the recollection of which is still graven in the memory of Uruguayans. The blanco party never recovered from the slaughter. Those in Montevideo saved themselves by surrendering the town without resistance. Flores entered in triumph and the blanco leaders fled into exile.

Flores was under obligations to lead a division in the war against Paraguay, and he absented himself for that purpose for nearly two years, during which the country districts were somewhat disturbed. In 1867 he returned and restored order with a strong hand. This short lease of undisturbed power was employed in making many important improvements. Great public edifices were completed, the telegraph cable was laid to Buenos Aires, the building of railroads was begun, and a new civil code adopted. Immigration was resumed on a large scale and the country felt the economic impulse that was already transforming the whole Plate valley. Although the country rapidly prospered under the military administration of Flores, the feeling of the blancos remained intensely bitter, and on the 15th of February, 1868, the colorado president was assassinated in the [Pg 277] streets of Montevideo.

Flores's death was the signal for wholesale executions and for the outbreak of another long blanco insurrection. Although the growth of wealth and population had never been more rapid than at this very time, the country was not free from civil disturbance until 1872, when an armistice was signed. A year later troubles broke out again and the troops refused to march against the insurgents. To the bitterness of party feeling and the official corruption which diminished the revenue and hampered commerce was added the embarrassment of the financial difficulties which followed the great panic of 1873. The public debt had doubled in the ten years between 1860 and 1870 and now reached the enormous figure of over forty million dollars, nearly $150 for each inhabitant in the country. One president after another was unable to maintain himself in the face of the financial and political difficulties of the situation, but in 1876 General Lorenzo Latorre, an intelligent and determined colorado chief, became dictator. For economy's sake, he reduced the number of army officers, of whom there were over twelve hundred for two thousand privates. He rooted out the worst frauds in the customs service, and refunded the public debt, compelling the foreign creditors to accept six instead of twelve per cent. interest. At the same time he rigidly suppressed the disorders which had harassed the country since the murder of Flores. The bands of marauders, assassins, and bandits, who had exercised their nefarious occupations under cover of belonging to the insurrectionists, were relentlessly [Pg 278] pursued and brought to justice. For the first time in years a traveller could traverse the country from end to end without arms. Like Flores, Latorre often used brute force to secure peace and order, and the Uruguayans were too turbulent to submit long to such dictation. Countless conspiracies were formed which were bloodily suppressed, but public fear and dislike of Latorre grew continually more menacing. In 1880, tired out with constant anxieties and grieved over what he considered the ingratitude of his countrymen, Latorre resigned his office and went into exile.

His successor, Dr. Vidal, held the presidency for only two years, when he, too, was forced to resign. The next president, Maximo Santos, served his complete term of four full years, ending in 1886. Then Vidal managed to get back into power for a few months and was again replaced by Santos, who, in turn, was succeeded by Tajes, who governed the country until 1890. The ten years succeeding the resignation of Latorre were materially very prosperous. The sheep industry developed tremendously; the production of wheat was more than doubled; immigration ran up to nearly 20,000 a year; the population of the country reached 700,000, having increased from 400,000 in twelve years. Immigration had been so great that the number of the foreign-born almost equalled the natives, even when including in the latter those of foreign parentage. In the mixture of nationalities the foundations have been laid for a race of unusual vigour and of pure Caucasian descent. [Pg 279]

The bitterness of the old factional feeling largely died out during the disturbances which succeeded the murder of Flores. The blancos had suffered terrible losses in 1864, and the colorados had become far the more numerous party. During Latorre's dictatorship the distinctions between the two were almost lost, and the blanco party, by that name at least, ceased to be an active factor in politics. New factions, however, took their place, but the struggles for place and power lacked the conviction and ferocity of the old civil wars. The gaucho and Creole element, although still politically dominant, was diluted by the infiltration of a more industrially minded population. The people were not so exclusively pastoral and had ceased to be so military in their tastes. The foreign immigrants wanted peace,—a chance to sow their wheat and tend their sheep undisturbed,—and the gaucho, living on his horse, feeding on beef alone, and always ready to ride off to fight by the side of his favourite chief, ceased in many of the departments to be the dominant factor. Politics became largely a game played by the ruling Spanish-American caste and did not directly interfere with the material interests of the country, and rarely affected the maintenance of law and order.

The prosperity of the eighties had been accompanied by an enormous increase in governmental expenditures and debt. The economies so painfully enforced in Latorre's administration were abandoned. [Pg 280] Nearly as much money was spent in ten years as had been in the previous fifty years of the republic's existence. The debt more than doubled, and the deficit each year equalled fifty per cent. of the receipts. The Buenos Aires panic of 1890 brought on grave commercial difficulties; real estate dropped one-half; prices fell, and, as usual, the people blamed the government. Political disturbances began with an attempt at a blanco uprising in Montevideo in 1891. The clergy were active in fomenting dissatisfaction, but the trouble was suppressed for the time. Herrera y Obes, elected in 1890, served his term out, but the government was getting deeper and deeper into the financial mire, in spite of having cut down the rate of interest on the public debt fifty per cent. The murmurs of the public grew constantly more menacing against a taxation which had become so excessive that it almost threatened the destruction of industries.

When the election came on in 1894 the outgoing president found that he had not control of Congress, the body which elects the president. A deadlock ensued and the ballots were taken amid confusion and fears of intimidation. Ellaure, the president's candidate, dared not accept because of the threatening attitude of the opposition. Finally, Juan Idiarte Borda was declared elected, amid outcries and protests against dictation and terrorism. The new president pledged himself to reform the finances and pursue a conciliatory policy toward the different factions, but he was soon accused of extravagance and favouritism. The blancos had again become a formidable party after twenty years of eclipse, and they believed that they were being deprived of [Pg 281] their political rights by the colorado president. In 1896 he procured the election of a Congress completely under his control, and early in 1897, seeing no hope of a constitutional change, a blanco colonel named Lamas raised the standard of revolt, assembled a force in the western provinces, and gained a victory over the president's soldiers. He marched east and joined Aparicio Saraiva, a chief belonging to a family celebrated in the military annals of Brazil, who had brought a considerable force over the border. The rebels soon had possession of the eastern departments and menaced Montevideo, while Borda borrowed money right and left and armed and drilled regiment after regiment to prosecute the war against them. Nevertheless, the rebels maintained themselves and roamed the country at will. They would listen to no terms that did not include Borda's resignation, and it seemed as if the country was doomed to pass through another long and bloody civil war.

On August 25, 1897, President Borda was assassinated in the streets of Montevideo by a respectable grocer's clerk. The vice-president, Juan L. Cuestas, succeeded peacefully to the control of the government in Montevideo, and at once entered into negotiations with the leaders of the insurrectionists in the departments. Terms were quickly agreed upon. Cuestas conceded minority representation and electoral reform, and in a very short time the rebels had laid down their arms. The few months of war had cost Uruguay dear. Thirteen [Pg 282] million dollars had been spent by the government, the collection of the revenue had been interrupted, and internal transportation had been demoralised. Now, however, industry and commerce resumed their usual course, and, since President Cuestas's accession to power, the peace of the country has been undisturbed. Political manifestations have been confined to disputes in Congress and the press. They became so violent that in 1898 the president dissolved the chambers and declared himself dictator. He reorganised the army on a basis which insured that there would be no mutinies, and at the same time pursued a policy of administrative reform which has done much to bring order out of the financial confusion. The obligations of the government have been religiously performed, and Uruguay's currency is on a gold basis. In 1899 Cuestas was elected president according to the forms of the Constitution. He carried out the pledge he had given the blancos not to interfere with the elections, and in 1900 they made great gains and elected enough members to control the Senate. The political situation has, therefore, been somewhat strained, but there seems to be no danger that the congressional opposition will try to interfere with the executive functions of the president.

[Pg 283]

THE CATHEDRAL, MONTEVIDEO.

This gallant and pugnacious little people will continue to play a rôle in South American affairs out of all proportion to the size of their country. Uruguay seems certain to continue to be the political storm-centre of the Atlantic coast. Climate, soil, and geographical position insure a rapid increase in population and wealth, while its political independence must continue to be an object of constant solicitude on the part of its gigantic neighbours, Argentina and Brazil. Montevideo is a formidable trade rival to Buenos Aires, and must always be, as it has so often been in the past, the base for any attach at the heart of the Argentine Republic. To the north nothing but an artificial boundary separates Uruguay from Rio Grande do Sul, and the two regions are alike in everything except language. Should the Portuguese-Americans again evince those tendencies toward expansion which distinguished them in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Uruguay would be the natural point of attack, and if Brazil should ever divide into its component parts, as it came so near doing in 1822 and again in 1837, Rio Grande and Uruguay might find it necessary to coalesce, or possibly wars might ensue between them which would change the face of South America. A not improbable alternative would be the establishment of a power on the north bank of the Plate strong enough to hold its own, and which might play the same rôle in the interaction of Spanish and Portuguese Americans as did Flanders between the Teutons and Latins in Europe.

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BRAZIL

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CHAPTER I

PORTUGAL

The motherland of Brazil is Portugal. Profound as were the changes incident to transplanting a people to a virgin continent; notwithstanding Spanish dominion and Dutch conquests; large as were the admixtures of negro, Indian, and alien blood; in spite of independence and Republicanism; the language, customs, religion, and laws of Brazil are to-day substantially like those of Portugal.

The parallel between the United States and Britain is not closer. Brazil has diverged even less than her model. Her population may have a larger admixture of non-Portuguese blood than the North Americans have of non-British, but politically there was less opportunity for divergence, for Brazil was kept under much closer subordination. The discovery of Brazil coincided with the destruction of popular liberties in the mother-country. Thereafter, the Portuguese government was a centralised despotism, and its hand lay heavy on the Brazilian provinces. They were forbidden intercourse with the rest of the world; functionaries of every kind were continually imported; the provinces never dreamed of asserting any right to self-government; from the [Pg 288] beginning the system was centralising and stifling. The North American colonies of England were left to grow up by themselves; they were never under a colonial government properly so called; a revolt followed the first serious attempt to subject them to a real colonial régime. But the independence of Brazil came because liberties were finally granted, not because they were threatened to be taken away. The country remained under a tutelage, growing continually more rigorous, and which ceased only after the Portuguese monarch had fled from Lisbon and the colony had become greater than the mother-country.

OUTLINE MAP OF BRAZIL

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It is, therefore, in the little peninsular kingdom, during the centuries before Cabral caught sight of the South American coast, that we must look for the beginnings of Brazil. Rome gave to Portugal laws, language, religion, and architecture; the forests of Germany modified her political institutions; the Saracens gave her the arts, navigation, and material civilisation. Her happy geographical position near the Straits of Gibraltar made her the meeting-place for the Mohammedan and Christian religions—of Levantine civilisation with Teutonic barbarism and liberty. That position also enabled the qualities of daring and enterprise and the scientific knowledge acquired in centuries of long conflicts and intercourse with the Moors to be turned to immediate advantage when the Renaissance came. Portugal was the pioneer of Europe in discovery and colonisation, though Spain followed close after. Together they led in making Western European civilisation [Pg 289] dominant beyond seas. The nations who followed in their track have long since passed them, but Portugal had once the opportunity of spreading her influence and institutions over half the planet. In Brazil she mixed success with the failure that was her fate elsewhere. Brazil is to-day the nation which has inherited Roman civilisation in the least modified form, and is the country where the genuine Latin spirit has the best opportunity for growth and survival.

The study of Portugal takes on a new dignity and importance when we reflect that she has given language, institutions, and laws to half of South America and to a population that already outnumbers her own four to one. She is entitled to the interest of the world if only because she has placed her indelible imprint on a region which is as large as Europe and as fertile as Java, and which is destined within the next two centuries to support the largest population of any of the great political divisions of the globe.

In the twelfth century, the coalescence of a fragment of the kingdom of Leon with the Moorish territory near the mouth of the Tagus originated Portugal as a separate country. The race was very mixed. Its principal elements were the Leonese and the Mosarabes—the latter being the Christians of Moorish Portugal left undisturbed from Visigothic times by their tolerant Mohammedan conquerors. Each of these elements was, in its turn, of mixed origin. To the original Iberian population, which had occupied the Peninsula two thousand [Pg 290] years before the Christian era, had been successively added Phenicians, Greeks, Celts, Ligurians, Carthaginians, Latins,—and in Roman times,—officials, soldiers, and slaves from all over the empire, including many Jews. The long Roman dominion welded all these together into a homogeneous mass. Later, the Visigothic conquest added a large Teutonic contingent, which is especially evident in northern and Leonese Portugal. Still later, the Saracens intermarried in considerable numbers with the Mosarabes of southern Portugal. After the formation of the modern kingdom, another element was added in the French, Provençals, Flemings, and English who came in large numbers to aid in the final expulsion of the Moors. By the end of the fourteenth century, the Portuguese had become a distinct nation. Racial and religious tolerance were more advanced than in the rest of Europe; self-governing municipalities covered the greatest part of the country, each privileged within a definite territory. The nobles, prelates, and monastic and military orders were still privileged, and their property was not subject to tribute, but their power was not predominant. The king was chief of the army and the proprietor of a very considerable proportion of the land, but he was under constant pressure to grant it to the religious orders and to the nobles. The people were everywhere heavily taxed—in the municipalities and Crown lands by the king, and on the estates of the privileged orders for the benefit of their great proprietors. The nobles were under no enforceable obligation to perform military service. A great [Pg 291] general deliberative and representative assembly—the Cortes—had come into being when the monarchy was founded. It included representatives of the municipalities as well as nobles and clergy, and its importance and vitality are shown by the fact that from 1250 to 1376 it met twenty-five times. By the latter date, jurisprudence had become generalised and its administration had fallen into the hands of the Crown. The nation had developed out of local and class privilege a reasonably consistent and uniform administration. The municipalities were the basis of the governmental structure, and a rude but effective local self-government existed through their instrumentality. The norm for the centralisation and organisation had not been, as in nearly all the rest of Europe, the feudal system, but the surviving fragments of the Roman structure. To the municipalities was largely due the astonishing vigour shown by the Portuguese people in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The norm even survived the destruction of liberty, and its influence can be seen in every step of the subsequent development of Portugal and also of Brazil.

Portugal's heroic era began near the close of the fourteenth century. The great King John I., founder of the dynasty of Aviz, secured Portugal for ever from absorption by Spain when he won the battle of Aljubarrota in 1385. This was the signal for a rapid transformation of the character and policies of the Portuguese people. The thirst for war and adventure grew. The old Portugal—laborious, agricultural, home-loving, conservative— [Pg 292] was replaced by a new Portugal—adventurous, seafaring, eager, romantic, longing for conquest, glory, and wealth, its eyes straining over the sea, the embodiment of the spirit of the Renaissance on its material side. The meeting of the Levant and the Baltic, the East and the West, Mohammedans and Christianity, the arts and knowledge of the old races with the energy of the new, had at last produced its perfect work. In 1415 an army was sent into Africa, and Ceuta was conquered; and there began that marvellous series of voyages which not only transformed Portugal into an empire, but gave a new world to Europe and revolutionised the planet. Modern scientific navigation began with the sailors instructed in the school which was set up at Sagres by Prince Henry, King John's son. Until then, European nautical knowledge had been very meagre. The compass served only to indicate direction, not distance or position, and did not suffice for the systematic navigation of the open Atlantic. The Portuguese first made that possible by using astronomical observations and inventing the quadrant and the astrolabe.

This knowledge, once acquired, was promptly applied to the work of navigation. Madeira was discovered in 1418; the Canaries in 1427; the Azores in 1432. The first and last were colonised and rapidly became populous. To the West the explorers pushed no farther for the present, but to the south they reached Cape Blanco in 1441, Senegambia and Cape Verde in 1445, and the Cape Verde Islands in 1460. In 1469, they [Pg 293] turned into the Gulf of Guinea, and in 1471 were the first Europeans to cross the Equator. Their search, at first random, now became definite. They believed it was only necessary to keep on and they would round the southern extremity of Africa and reach Abyssinia and India by sea, a hope which became a certainty in 1487, when Bartholomew Diaz finally reached the Cape of Good Hope.

Meanwhile, a political revolution had been going on. The strong kings of the line of Aviz had won for the Crown a moral preponderance over the nobility and clergy. The latter resisted the royal encroachments, but the municipalities joined the monarchs in the struggle against them. The king who established centralised despotism—the Richelieu of Portugal—was John II., the third of the Aviz dynasty, and who reigned from 1481 to 1495. Under his rule, the whole military power was concentrated in the Crown; the nobility became a class living at Court; the king was the fountain of all honour and advancement; local officers were replaced by officials appointed by and responsible to the central government; piece by piece the independent functions of the municipalities were taken away.

Concentration of power in the hands of monarch and bureaucracy produced its inevitable effect. A short period of marvellous brilliancy in arms, statecraft, literature, and the arts was followed by sudden decay. The self-governing municipalities had nurtured a multitude of men whom small power and responsibility fitted for great things. The nation turned eagerly to the work of exploration and conquest and prosecuted it efficiently. [Pg 294]

Such a people would undertake conquest for their king, rather than colonisation on their own account; they would emigrate under military leadership and forms; their colonies would tolerate a close control by the mother country; they would seek to convert the aborigines and reduce them to slavery; private initiative would be stifled and overshadowed by that of the government; large proprietorship would be the rule; the colonies would be burdened with functionaries sent in successive swarms from home; taxation would be excessive; the best talent would go into the bureau and not concern itself with industrial matters; invention and originality would be discouraged; agriculture would not be diversified, nor manufactures thrive. To this day a few staple crops predominate in Brazil; small landownership is the exception, and the people show little aptitude for change when unfavourable circumstances make their crops unprofitable. Brazilian Creoles have little taste for manual pursuits, and not much more for commerce. Non-Portuguese immigration has supplied most of the labour; foreigners have always conducted most of the trade.

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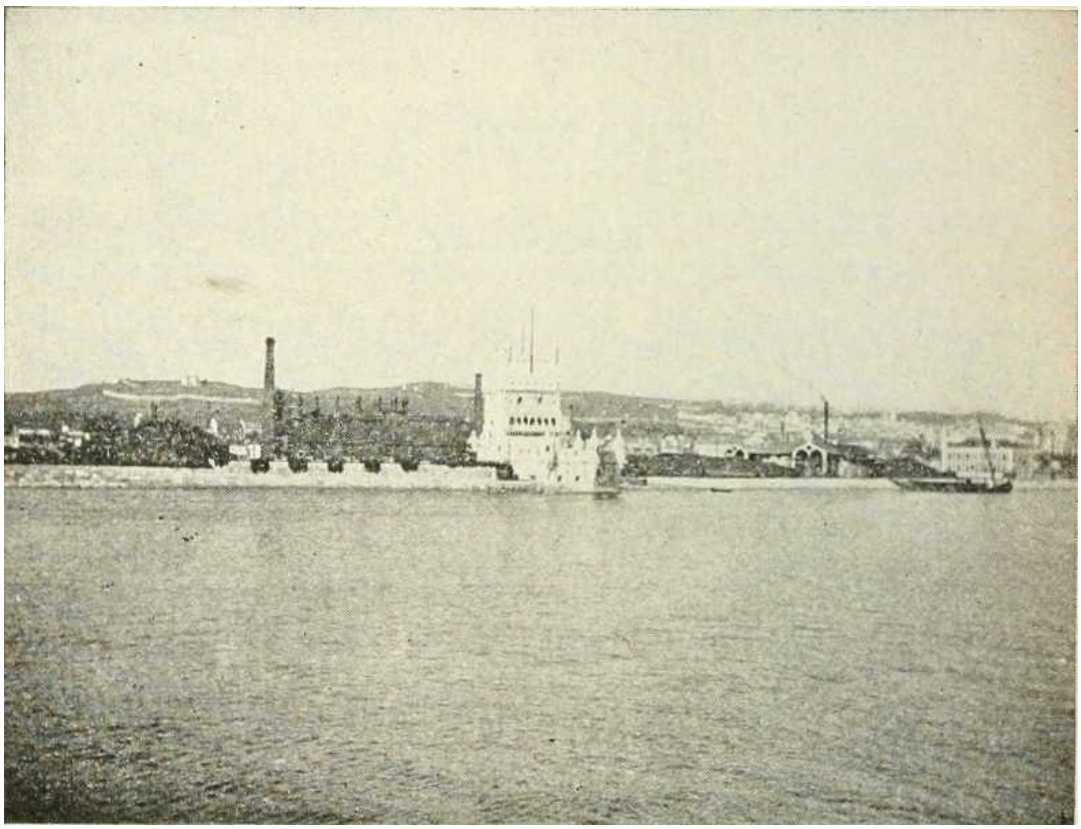
CHAPTER II

DISCOVERY

On the 9th of March, 1500, Pedro Alvarez Cabral, a Portuguese nobleman of illustrious birth, but not yet distinguished by any notable feats in war or seamanship, sailed from Lisbon for the East Indies. This expedition was sent out to continue the work begun by Vasco da Gama in the first all-sea voyage to India. It was an advance-guard for the larger armament that two years later founded the Portuguese empire on the coasts of India. Vasco da Gama himself wrote Cabral's sailing orders. The latter was instructed, after passing the Cape Verde Islands in 14° North, to sail directly south, as long as the wind was favourable. If forced to change his course, he was ordered to keep on the starboard tack, even though it led him south-west. When he reached the latitude of the Cape of Good Hope—34° South—he was to bear away to the east.

These sailing instructions have been the subject of much discussion. Many believe their sole purpose was to enable Cabral to avoid the Guinea calms, so annoying to sailing ships near the African coast. Others contend [Pg 296] that Da Gama had seen signs of land to the west on his own voyage, and that its discovery was a real, though secondary, object of the expedition. In any event the Brazilian coast is too near the natural route around Africa to have escaped encounter, and would infallibly have shortly been seen by some one else.



OLD TOWER AT LISBON WHENCE THE FLEET SAILED.

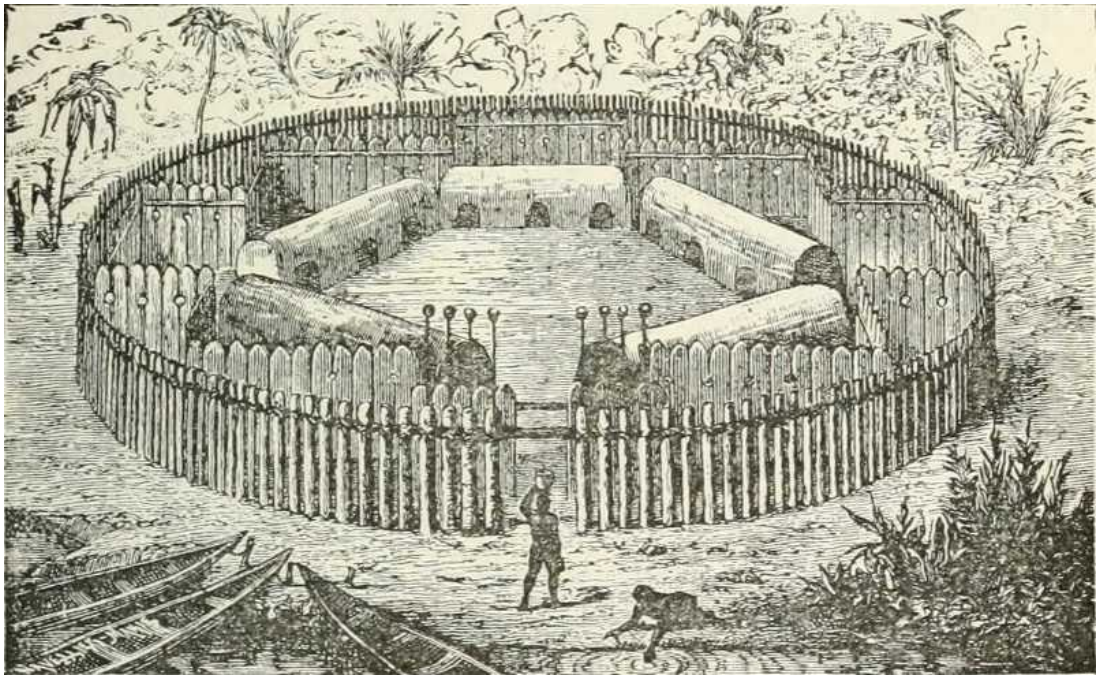
Forty-two days after leaving Lisbon, Cabral's fleet saw unmistakable signs of land, being then in latitude 17 degrees south and longitude 36 degrees west. From the Cape Verde Islands, just off the western point of Africa, he had made 2300 miles, and had come 500 miles to the west. The next day a mountain was sighted, which he called Paschoal, because it was Easter week. This mountain is in the southern part of the state of [Pg 297] Bahia, about four hundred miles north-east of Rio, and on a coast that to this day is sparsely inhabited and rarely visited. The following day the whole fleet came to an anchor a mile and a half from the shore, and just north of the dangerous Abrolhos reefs. This was the 23rd of April, Old Style, which corresponds with the 3rd of May in the Gregorian calendar. The date is a national holiday in Brazil, and the anniversary for the annual convening of Congress.

Because no quadrupeds or large rivers were seen, Cabral thought he had discovered an island and named it the "Island of the True Cross." The name has not survived except in poetry. He stopped ten days on the coast,

took formal possession, and sent expeditions on shore which entered into communication with the Indians, who were seen in considerable numbers. It is characteristic that the first question asked of the Indians was if they knew what gold and silver were. They were peaceable and friendly, and the old chronicle describes them as of a dark reddish complexion with good features, and muscular, well-shaped bodies. They wore no clothes, their lower lips and cheeks were perforated to carry great ornaments of white bone, and their hair was elaborately dressed and adorned with feathers.

These were fair specimens of the Tupi-Guaranies, the largest of the four great families into which the Brazilian aborigines have been classified. The others are the Caribs, the Arawaks, and the Botacudos. There [Pg 298] are also traces of tribes who inhabited the country remote centuries ago. In caves in Minas Geraes skeletons have been found remarkably like those of the earliest Europeans. The theory is that these Indians came from Europe by land in that remote geological epoch when Scandinavia was joined to Greenland. Later came Mongoloids, probably by way of the Behring Strait, who appear largely to have exterminated their European predecessors, and to have been the ancestors of the modern Indians.

When America was discovered, the four great families were spread in scattering and widely differing tribes over the whole of Brazil and the adjacent countries. Their state of culture varied from that of the most squalid tribes of Botacudos, who had not even reached the Stone Age, lived in brush shelters, slept in the ashes of their fires, practised promiscuous marriage, and had no idea of religion except a fear of malignant spirits; up to Arawaks, who were cleanly, had a well-defined tribal organisation, and built marvellous canoes, or Tupis, who cultivated the soil, built fair houses, used rude machinery for making mandioc flour, spun cotton, wove cloth, and were good potters. But the civilisation of the best of them was stationary. No Brazilian tribe ever got beyond the condition where the struggle to obtain food was its sole preoccupation. No civilisation like that of Mexico, Peru, or Yucatan ever existed. Disaggregation, failure, and obliteration were the rule. Organically unfitted to cope with their surroundings they never devised a method of getting a good and permanent food-supply. Defective nutrition sapped their powers to resist strains. Their muscular appearance was not [Pg 299] accompanied by corresponding endurance. Their European taskmasters could never understand why they died from the effects of exertion to which a white man would easily have been equal. The vast majority had no regular agriculture and lived on the spontaneous products of the forests and the streams. Land game is not abundant in the tropics, and they had developed only few good food plants. What they did procure was spoiled by bad preparation. Such a people had no chance of successfully resisting the Portuguese invaders, and their only hope of survival was in contact and admixture with the more vigorous white and black races.



A TUPI VILLAGE.

The Tupi-Guaranies occupied one-fourth of Brazil, all of Paraguay and Uruguay, and much of Bolivia and the [Pg 300] Argentine, and it is probable that the original seats of this family were in the central table-lands or in Paraguay. All Tupi Indians spoke dialects of one language, which the Jesuit missionaries soon reduced to grammatical and literary form, and which became a *lingua franca* that was understood from the Plate to the Amazon. Back of the coast Tupis were the Botacudos, the most degraded and intractable of Brazilian savages, remnants of whom still survive in their original seats in Espirito Santo, Minas, and São Paulo. The Caribs, with whom students of the history of the Caribbean Sea are familiar, originated in the plains of Goyaz and Matto Grosso and emigrated as far north as the Antilles. The Arawaks were most numerous in Guiana and on the Lower Amazon, but were also spread over central Brazil.

The Brazilian Indians did not survive the white man's coming to as large an extent as in Spanish-America. The pure Indian is found in Brazil only in regions where the white man has not thought it worth while to take possession, and the proportion of Indian blood is much smaller than in surrounding countries. In many localities, evidences of Indian descent are so rare as to be remarkable.

Cabral's voyage was the real discovery of Brazil, if we consider historical and political consequences. It was the first reported to Europe; and the Portuguese Crown immediately made formal claim to the territory. But, as a matter of fact, land which to-day is a part of Brazilian territory had been seen by Europeans before Cabral landed. In January, 1500, Vincente Yanez Pinzon, who had commanded the *Niña* on the first voyage of [Pg 301] Columbus, saw land in the neigbourhood of Cape St. Roque. Bound westward, he bore away to the west and north, following the prevailing winds and currents as far as the Orange Cape, the present extreme northern limits of Brazil. He was, therefore, the discoverer of the great estuary which forms the mouth of the Amazon. He named it the "Fresh-Water Sea," because the great river freshens the open ocean far out of sight of land, but he did not ascend, nor even see, the river proper. It is also claimed on good evidence that, six months before Pinzon, another Spanish navigator, Alonso de Ojeda, accompanied by Amerigo Vespucci, had made the

South American coast not far from Cape St. Roque; and that a month later still another, Diego de Lepe, did the same.

None of these Spanish voyages produced any results. They were not reported until after the news of Cabral's discovery had been solemnly promulgated to the Courts of Europe, and were soon forgotten. The honour of making Brazil known to Europe belongs to Cabral just as certainly as that of discovering America does to Columbus. The Spanish voyages are interesting to antiquarians, but neither they nor the Norwegian voyages of the eleventh century were followed up, or produced any permanent results.

The news reached Portugal in the fall of 1500, and no time was lost in sending out a small fleet to ascertain definitely the extent, value, and resources of the region. The Portuguese hoped to find a wealthy and civilised [Pg 302] population like that of India—rich and unwarlike nations, such as the Spaniards did encounter a few years later in Peru and Mexico. The exploring expedition was under the command of Amerigo Vespucci, the greatest technical navigator of the age. He shaped his course so as to keep to the windward and south of the redoubtable promontory of St. Roque, which the clumsy ships of that day could not weather in the teeth of the trade-winds and the equatorial current, and, turning to the south, made a systematic examination of the coast nearly as far as the river Plate, employing five months in the task. In naming the rivers, capes and harbours, he saved his inventive faculty and gratified the popular religious sentiment by calling each one by the name of the saint on whose anniversary it was reached. Most of these names have survived. For example, the São Francisco, the largest river between the Amazon and the Plate, is so called because Vespucci reached it on October 1, 1501, which date is sacred to St. Francis in the Roman calendar. Rio de Janeiro is so named because he saw the great bay, whose entrance is narrower than many rivers, on New Year's Day, 1501. He coasted along for two thousand miles, looking eagerly for gold, silver, spices, and civilised inhabitants. He was disappointed. The only thing found which seemed to have an immediate market value was brazil-wood—a dye-wood that had been used in Europe for centuries and was in great demand. Its colour was a bright red—hence its name, which means "wood the colour of fire." It was found in such abundance that the world's [Pg 303] supply has since been drawn from this coast, and among sailors and merchants the country soon became known as "the Country of Brazil-wood." The name almost immediately supplanted "Santa Cruz." Vespucci saw that the country was fertile and the climate pleasant. This was not enough to satisfy his greedy employers. A government whose coffers were beginning to overflow with the profits of the Indian spice-trade and the African mines was not inclined to pay much attention to a region without the precious metals, and inhabited only by naked savages. The reports of the abundance of brazil-wood, however, induced private adventurers to go and cut that valuable commodity. The government declared it a Portuguese monopoly, but the high price of the article made the trade so enormously profitable, that ships of other nationalities, especially French, could not be excluded.

The coast soon became well known, but the Portuguese government did not extend its explorations to the south. It was left to the Spaniards to find the passage into the Pacific Ocean and to explore the tributaries of the Plate. The southern extension of the continent became and remains Spanish. No exact records exist of the earliest Portuguese explorations of the northern coast from Cape St. Roque to the mouth of the Amazon. We only know that some Portuguese ships navigated those waters and that Spain never seriously disputed Portugal's title to that region.

For thirty years Brazil remained unsettled, though the fleets going to the East Indies often stopped in its [Pg 304] admirable harbours to refit and take water. Private adventurers came for brazil-wood and the French poached more and more frequently. Soon the latter began to establish little factories to which they returned year after year, and got on good terms with the aborigines. It became evident that Portugal must establish fortified, self-sustaining posts if she expected to retain the territory.

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CHAPTER III

DESCRIPTION

Cabral's discovery bequeathed to the Portuguese race one of the largest, most productive, and valuable political divisions of the globe. The area is 3,150,000 square miles—larger than the United States without Alaska, and surpassed only by the British, Russian, Chinese, and American empires. From north to south it extends 2600 miles, and east and west 2700. Lying across the equator and traversed by no very high mountain ranges, its climate is more uniform than any other equally large inhabited region, but its extent is so immense that there are very considerable variations.

Compact in form, with a continuous seacoast, unsurpassable harbours, and a great extension of navigable rivers, water communication between the different parts is easy and the danger of dismemberment by external attack a minimum. Occupying the central portion of South America it touches all the other countries of the continent except Chile, uniting them geographically, and to a large extent controlling land communication among them. It is nearer Europe and Africa than any other South American country, and is [Pg 306]

also on the direct route between the North Atlantic and both coasts of South America. Situated in latitudes where evaporation and precipitation are largest, where the trade-winds unfailingly bring moisture from the Atlantic, and on the eastern and windward slope of the narrowest of the continents, Brazil has the steadiest and most uniformly distributed rainfall of any large part of the globe.

The exuberance of life in Brazil must be seen to be realised. The early voyagers related the wonder and admiration which they felt. Amerigo Vespucci said that if Paradise did exist on this planet it could not be far from the Brazilian coast. Agassiz believed that the future centre of the civilisation of the world would be in the Amazon valley. The plants useful for food, and in industry, commerce, and medicine, are innumerable. Nowhere except in Ceylon does the palm flourish so. There are more plants indigenous to Brazil than to any other country, and many species, like coffee, transplanted there have doubled in productiveness. Indian corn and mandioc were already cultivated by the Indians when Cabral landed, and both upland and lowland rice grew wild. The soil lends itself kindly to any kind of culture, and in most cases two crops may be reaped annually. In a word the subsoil, the soil, the atmosphere, the forests, and the waters of Brazil are teeming with life and full of potential wealth—too much so, perhaps, for the most wholesome development of the human race. [Pg 307]

A GARDEN IN PETROPOLIS.

The most extensive and the least-developed part of Brazil is the Amazon valley. The Brazilian portion of the Amazon basin comprises forty-five per cent. of the whole territory of the republic. The northern and south-eastern borders slope up to the surrounding mountains, but the rest is an early level plain, little elevated above the sea. The plains are covered with dense forests, much of the country is frequently flooded, and communication is only possible by the streams. In their neighbourhood the climate is in many localities unhealthful, and is everywhere tropical and rainy. Back from the rivers is an unexplored and unknown wilderness. The Amazon with its tributaries forms the greatest of all navigable fluvial systems. Ten thousand seven hundred miles are already known to be suitable for navigation by steamboats, and four thousand eight hundred more for smaller boats. [Pg 308]

It is in the narrow coast-plain on the Atlantic, and in the high regions lying to the east and south of the great central depression, that the Brazilian people live.

The main orographical feature of non-Amazonian Brazil is the great mountain system which extends uninterruptedly from the northern coast through the whole country. This continental uplift corresponds to the Andes on the west coast, just as the Apalachians do to the Rockies in North America. Its relative importance is many times greater on account of its great width, and because a broad plateau nearly connects it with the Andes between the headwaters of the Amazon and Plate river systems. The joint result is that two-thirds of Brazil is high enough to have a moderate and healthful climate, but the cataracts in the rivers and the steep escarpments of the mountains make it difficult of access. [Pg 309]

The promontory of South America which reaches out to the north-east, looking in a direct line to the western extremity of Africa, is a region of gentle slopes, of wide, sparsely wooded plateaux, and of brush-covered hills. At long intervals, the interior is subject to severe drouths. The soil is fertile as a rule and the rainfall generally sufficient for cereal crops. Nearing the sea precipitation increases, and cotton and sugar thrive. The mountain ranges rarely exceed three thousand feet in height, and lie far back from the coast, from which the country slopes up gradually. This region was the first in Brazil to contain a large population, and the Dutch fought hard for it during the seventeenth century. In its area of 430,000 square miles seven of the Brazilian states are included—Maranhão, Piauhy, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Parahyba, Pernambuco, and Alagoas. The promontory of St. Roque, where the coast turns from an east-and-west direction to a north-and-south, marks a commercial division. Sailing vessels found it difficult to round this cape from the north, and consequently the commercial relations of Maranhão, Piauhy, and Ceará have been rather with the Amazon than southern Brazil. South of St. Roque the region is most easily accessible from Europe and is on the direct line of communication between both sides of the North Atlantic and the coasts to the south. [Pg 310]

The region drained by the Tocantins and Araguaya very nearly corresponds with the state of Goyaz. It is the

western slope of the Brazilian Cordillera, and differs radically from the Amazonian plain, which it adjoins. As one ascends the Tocantins and Araguaya from their mouths in the Amazon estuary the altitude rapidly rises and navigation is quickly interrupted by cataracts. In the south the level rises to over four thousand feet, and the climate shows a considerable range of temperature, with the thermometer sometimes falling below freezing in the higher mountains. Though the area is 350,000 square miles, the population hardly reaches a quarter of a million, and has not been increasing rapidly since the exhaustion of the alluvial gold deposits. Roughly speaking, it may be described as a region well adapted to cattle and agriculture, and composed of high, open, rolling plateaux traversed by low mountain ranges and well-wooded river valleys.

The next natural division comprises the oval depression lying between the great central watershed and the high range which runs straight north from Rio within a few hundred miles of the coast. This is the São Francisco valley. Politically and commercially connected is the adjacent coast-plain. Valley and plain are divided into the four states of Minas, Bahia, Sergipe, and Espirito Santo, with 430,000 square miles and 6,000,000 inhabitants. In the coast-plain the rainfall is greater than farther north, and the soil is very fertile, producing not only cotton, sugar, and tobacco, but coffee, maize, and mandioc. The slopes are more abrupt and the mountains begin closer to the sea. The interior is a great plateau traversed by high mountain ranges [Pg 311] and the tributaries of the São Francisco River. Most of this plateau is included in the great state of Minas, the most populous member of the Brazilian union, which is agriculturally self-sufficing, and one of the great mineral regions of the world. The rainfall is abundant, the climate is healthful and bracing, the birth-rate is large, and the region is admirably adapted to the white races. Its general character is a rolling plateau, three to four thousand feet above the ocean, forming extensive, treeless plains, which are interspersed with wooded mountain chains, river valleys, and extensive tracts of brush-land. The European who visits the São Francisco valley is astonished to find a country where the climate is temperate and the soil fitted to the production of all sorts of food crops including the cereals, and where, nevertheless, proximity to the equator makes practicable a multiplicity of crops in a single year. The coast-plain, which forms the greatest part of Bahia, Sergipe, and Espirito Santo, is fertile, but the climate is enervating to Europeans, and the proportion of black blood there is the largest in Brazil.

About the twentieth degree the mountains approach close to the coast, and from Victoria south to the thirtieth degree the Atlantic border of Brazil is steep and mountainous, often rising directly from the sea to a height of two thousand to six thousand feet. It is a coast of splendid harbours and magnificent scenery. The drainage is mostly inland into the Plate system, and water falling within a dozen miles of the ocean flows 2500 [Pg 312] miles before reaching the sea.

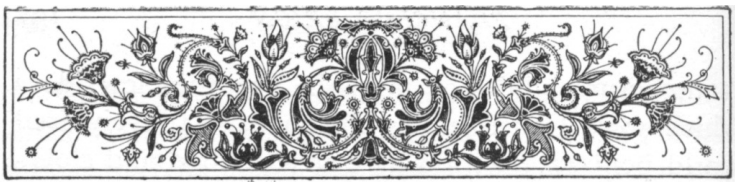
To this rule there is but one important exception—the Parahyba River, the basin of which is practically coterminous with the state of Rio de Janeiro and the federal district. This state is commercially and politically very important, although its area is small. The surface is very mountainous and the soil mostly inferior to that of the divisions to the north and south. However, it is still an immense producer of coffee and sugar. Its geographical situation and great harbour have made it the most thickly settled part of the country. The rainfall is very large, especially on the mountains nearest the sea, which are covered with magnificent forests. The coast-plain is warm though not unhealthful, save in the vicinity of the infected city of Rio, and in the higher regions the climate is delightful and in temperature almost European. The northern boundary is the Mantiqueira range which divides the Parahyba basin from the valleys of the Paraná and São Francisco. This range is the highest in Brazil, and its culminating peak—Itatiaya—is ten thousand feet high, though it is only seventy miles from the sea. Slightly lower ranges lie between the Mantiqueira and the ocean, and of these the highest is Pedro d'Assu—7365 feet—which overlooks Rio harbour, only twenty miles away.

The Brazilian portion of the great Paraná valley presents a remarkable uniformity of general characteristics. Bordering the sea is a range of mountains, or rather the abrupt escarpment of the plateau, some three [Pg 313] thousand feet high. From its summit the surface slopes gently to the west, draining into the Paraná by a hundred streams, many of which are navigable in their middle courses. This great plateau—with its area of about 250,000 square miles—is mostly treeless toward the north, but in the south is covered with pine forests. It lies in the temperate zone and snow sometimes falls on the higher peaks and *chapadas* of São Paulo. The soil is remarkably fertile, and this is the coffee region *par excellence* of the world. A coffee tree in São Paulo produces two to four times as much as in other parts of the globe. Food crops grow well, and the country might be economically independent of the rest of the world. The contour of the country is favourable to railroad-building and the region is easily penetrable. From their settlements on the seaward border of this plateau the Paulistas of the seventeenth century roamed over the whole interior of South America, enslaving the Indians and driving out the Spanish Jesuits. The rainfall diminishes toward the interior, and there is an ill-defined limit where it ceases to be sufficient for coffee. The coffee district is also limited by the lowering of average temperature with increasing latitude. The three states of São Paulo, Paraná, and Santa Catharina contain most of the region under description, but south-western Minas and extreme southern Goyaz also belong to it.

The great plateau gradually dies away to the south ending with a low escarpment across the state of Rio Grand do Sul. Physically and geographically, this State is different from the rest of Brazil. Most of its area is [Pg 314] drained by the Uruguay River, and its natural relations and affinities are with the republic of that name. Rio Grande's ninety-five thousand square miles contain over a million inhabitants, and the open, rolling plains, nowhere much elevated above the sea, are excellently adapted to cattle. The northern portion is higher, more broken, and more wooded than the southern, and agriculture has made greater progress. The climate is distinctly that of the temperate zone—hot in summer, cold in winter, and subject to sudden variations on account of the winds which sweep up from the vast Argentine pampas. The inhabitants are big, vigorous, and hardy, and great riders. All the products of the temperate zone, including the cereals, flourish, and this part of Brazil seems destined to great things in the near future.

From Bolivia around to Uruguay sweeps in a great semicircle, convex to the north, a plateau that nearly unites the Andes with the Eastern Cordillera, and forms the watershed between the Amazon and the Plate. Its eastern horn has already been described as forming the states of São Paulo, Paraná, and Santa Catharina; its western and central portions form the great interior state of Matto Grosso. Here the headwaters of the Madeira, Tapajos, and Xingu, tributaries of the Amazon, intertwine with those of the Paraguay and Paraná. The narrow depression which the Upper Paraguay forms across it is the only portion that has yet been described. The rest of the 410,000 square miles of Matto Grosso is abandoned to Indians and wild beasts. [Pg 315] Only enough is known of these solitudes to prove that in the centre of the continent exists a well-watered, fertile, and healthful region, capable of sustaining an immense population, but which is shut off from development by lack of means of communication. The northwestern part could be reached from the Amazon if the Falls of the Madeira could be overcome, a route which would also open up a great and now inaccessible

portion of Bolivia.



[Pg 316]

CHAPTER IV

EARLY COLONISATION

The permanent settlement of Brazil was begun by deserters and mutineers set on shore from ships on their way to India or to cut brazil-wood. In 1509 a certain Diego Alvarez, nicknamed by the Indians "Caramuru," or "man of lightning," landed at Bahia and escaped being eaten by frightening the Indians with his musket. He married a chief's daughter, and when a real colony was established years later he and his numerous half-breed descendants proved of great use to his compatriots. Two years later John Ramalho did much the same near Santos, hundreds of miles to the south. The story of the last of the three authentic *degradados* is even more romantic. His name was Aleixo Garcia, and with three companions he landed about 1526 in the present state of Santa Catharina. Collecting an army of Indians he led them on a conquering and gold-hunting expedition over the coast-range, across the great plateau, into the valley of the Paraguay, and even penetrated ten years before Pizarro into territory tributary to the Incas of Peru. He finally perished in the [Pg 317] centre of the continent, but when, years afterwards, the Spaniards penetrated the valley of the Paraná they found that the Indians already knew of white men and firearms.

As early as 1516 the Portuguese government offered to give farming utensils free to settlers in Brazil, and it is probable that shortly afterwards some sugar was planted. The first serious and official effort to cultivate sugar was made in 1526. Christovão Jaques founded a factory on the island of Itamarica, a few miles north of Pernambuco. It was shortly destroyed by the French brazil-wood hunters, and the settlers fled to the site of Pernambuco and renewed the effort pending the arrival of re-enforcements. Seekers of brazil-wood hailing from Honfleur and Dieppe were swarming along the coast. The value of the region for sugar raising began to be appreciated. When the news came of the failure of the Spanish expedition which Cabot had led to the Plate, the Portuguese government determined to fit out a considerable expedition, composed of colonists and families as well as soldiers and adventurers. Seduced by the cry, "We are going to the Silver River," four hundred persons enlisted. The five vessels were commanded by Martim Affonso da Souza, a great general and navigator, who had already proved his capacity and who later went to the very top in the East Indian wars. He was instructed to expel all intruders and establish a permanent fortified colony. Early in 1531 he reached the coast near Pernambuco, captured three French ships laden with brazil-wood, and sent two caravels north to [Pg 318] explore the coast beyond Cape St. Roque, while he himself sailed south with the idea of founding a colony on the Plate. But after passing Santa Catharina he was unfortunate in losing his largest ship with most of his provisions, and deemed it safer to return toward the north. At São Vicente, now a little town near the great coffee port of Santos, he dropped anchor, and there, January, 1532, founded the first Portuguese colony in Brazil. Near this point lived the solitary Portuguese, John Ramalho, surrounded by his half-breed descendants, and he gave his countrymen a glad reception. He soon showed them the way up the mountains to the high plateau which begins only a few miles from the sea. Another settlement was founded on these fertile plains near the site of the present city of São Paulo.

In the west of Brazil the settlements were established at a striking distance from the coast, but in São Paulo the colonists could more easily spread over the open plains of the interior than along the mountainous coast. On top of their plateau they were cut off from ready communication with the mother country; they struck out for themselves, and their development was something like that of the British in North America. They were the pioneers of Brazil, corresponding closely in character and habits, in the virtues of daring, hospitality, and self-confidence, and in the vices of cruelty, rudeness, and ignorance, with the pioneers of the Mississippi valley.

The Paulistas were all profoundly influenced by their intimate association with the Indian tribes. In the early days intermarriages were frequent, but the continual re-enforcement of the European element, and the [Pg 319] inferiority in capacity of reproduction which the Indian has shown in Brazil, make the traces of that intermixture hard to discover at the present time. The Paulistas and their descendants in the interior states are taller, slenderer, darker, and more active and graceful than the modern Portuguese. Their hands and feet are smaller, their movements more nervous, their manners more self-confident.

The successful founding of a considerable colony in Brazil aroused interest at home, and many courtiers solicited the Crown for grants. It was decided to partition the whole coast into feudal fiefs, each proprietor undertaking the expenses of colonisation and being given virtually sovereign powers in return for a tax on the expected production. Each of these "captaincies" measured fifty leagues along the coast, and extended indefinitely into the interior. In 1534 twelve such fiefs were created, covering the whole coast from the mouth of the Amazon to the island of Santa Catharina—these being the points where the Tordesillas line met the seaboard.

Six of these proprietors succeeded in establishing permanent colonies. Martim Affonso's settlement has already been described. In 1536 his brother, Pero Lopes, established Santo Amaro within a few miles of São

Vicente. Naturally its history soon became confounded with that of the larger settlement. Duarte Coelho founded Pernambuco in 1535, and in it was soon absorbed Itamarica, the second of the two colonies founded by Pero Lopes in 1536. The other three permanent settlements were Victoria, the nucleus of the present state [Pg 320] of Espirito Santo, Porto Seguro, and Ilheos. No one of them prospered, and their territories are still among the most backward parts of the Brazilian coast. The donatory of the territory which included the bay of Bahia, started a town, but it was destroyed by Indians. The other five captaincies were not taken hold of seriously by their proprietors. The four nuclei for the settlement of Brazil were São Paulo, Pernambuco, and the later colonies of Bahia and Rio de Janeiro.

Martim Affonso recked little of his fief or its revenues and left his Paulistas to work out their own destiny. Pernambuco was on the track of every ship which came to South America, the neighbouring interior was level and easily accessible from the coast, the soil and climate were suitable for sugar, and from the beginning relations with the mother country were intimate and continuous. Its proprietor, Duarte Coelho, determined to devote himself to his colony, and he personally headed a numerous and carefully selected colonising expedition. He spent the rest of his life there, and died twenty years later, surrounded by a large and prosperous colony, which was already a self-supporting state with all the elements of permanence. A good business man and liberal for that age, he granted land on easy terms; its possession was secure; contributions were moderate; and he resolutely defended himself and his grantees from the exactions of the Crown. [Pg 321]

The Portuguese occupation of Brazil was induced solely by commercial considerations. Explorers and emigrants went out to make their fortunes, not to escape religious or political tyranny. When the first voyagers were disappointed in not finding gold mines, they turned their attention to brazil-wood. Soon the suitability of the territory for sugar was discovered. The European demand for this luxury was increasing, and the Portuguese had become familiar with its culture in Africa. Cane was taken from Madeira and the Cape Verdes to Brazil before 1525, and there is a record of exportation at least as early as 1526. Here was found the basis for the real colonisation. From the very start the industry prospered in Pernambuco, and Brazil became the main source of the world's supply.

Near Pernambuco little trouble was experienced with the Indians. Many of the tribes were allies of the Portuguese, though the fierce Aymorés fought the settlers and once reduced the infant colony to the verge of destruction. Although the law of Portugal forbade the enslavement of Indians except as a punishment for crime, they were reduced to bondage on a large scale in Pernambuco, and the Paulistas never paid any attention to this prohibition.

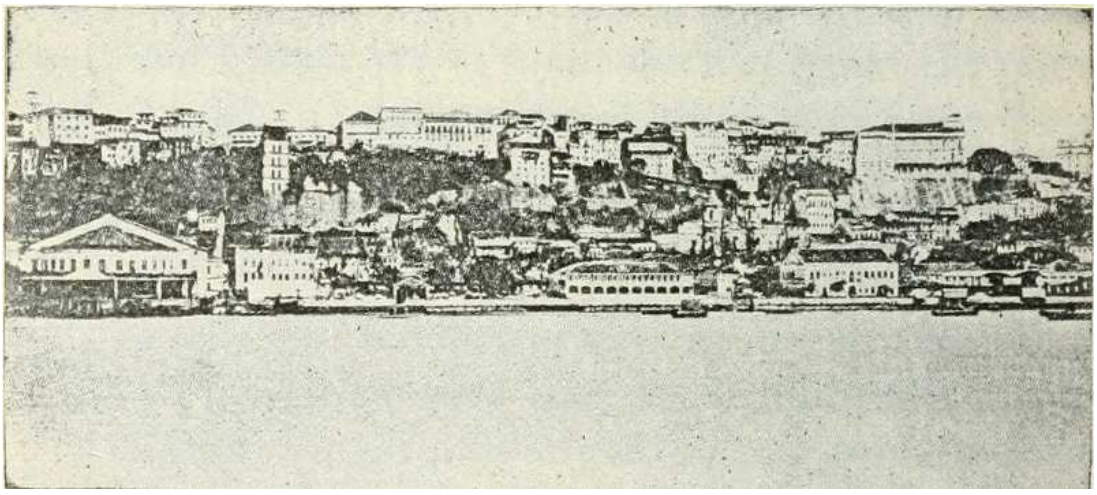
By the middle of the sixteenth century Brazil contained one rapidly expanding colony of sugar-planters, Pernambuco, which gave sure promise of wealth if not attacked from without,—a half dozen moribund settlements on the thousand miles of coast to the south, and an isolated but vigorous and self-sufficing group [Pg 322] in São Paulo, whose inhabitants produced little for export, but who were reducing the aborigines to slavery in an expanding circle. In the last there was a considerable proportion of Indian blood and in the first a large number of negroes. The smaller captaincies were little more than resorts for pirates and contraband traders in brazil-wood. The settlers were powerless to prevent the French expeditions which yearly became more numerous. Serious apprehensions were felt that the French would occupy the coast and make Brazil a basis for attacks on Portugal's African and Indian empires.

The best blood of the Portuguese nation was being drained away in exhausting wars and expeditions to India and Africa; absolute government was sapping civic vitality; the extravagances of Court and nobles were impoverishing the country. However, enough vitality remained, before the terrific destruction of Portuguese power and pride at Alcacer-Kibir in 1580, to secure such a firm establishment of the Portuguese race on the whole coast of Brazil that it never has been dislodged, and only once seriously threatened. This result was largely due to the founding of a strong military and naval post at Bahia, around which grew up a prosperous colony, and under whose protection Pernambuco spread out over the north-east coast, São Paulo developed uninterruptedly, and Rio Bay was saved from the French.

The first proprietary settlement in Bahia Bay had been destroyed by the Indians, but this magnificent and central harbour was manifestly the most convenient point whence to send assistance to the other settlements [Pg 323] and guard the whole coast. In 1549 the king determined to build a fortress and city there. Thomas de Souza, the illegitimate scion of a great house, was chosen the first governor-general. He sailed in April, 1549, with six vessels, and accompanied by three hundred and twenty officials and a number of colonists. The new capital commanded the entrance to a magnificent inland sea which offered splendid facilities for the establishment of a flourishing state. Bahia Bay is nearly a hundred miles in circumference; its shores are fertile and penetrated by rivers; each plantation has its own wharves. Within a few months a town of a hundred houses had been built, surrounded by a wall and defended by batteries; a cathedral, a custom house, a Jesuit college, and a governor's residence were under way.

Thomas de Souza was instructed to strike at the root of the difficulties that were supposed to have prevented the success of the proprietary captaincies. He was the direct representative of the king and had supreme supervisory power. Other officers, however, were associated with him who were independently responsible in judicial, financial, and naval matters. He was closely bound by instructions covering every detail that could be foreseen, and these instructions clearly show the centralising and jealous spirit of Portuguese institutions and ideas.

Few Portuguese of that age were capable of rising to an appreciation of the economical advantages of freedom. The liberal concessions to the original proprietors—free trade with the mother country, the right of [Pg 324] communication with foreign countries, and judicial and administrative independence—availed nothing. Neither colonists, proprietors, nor the central government could understand or apply them. Brazil was subjected to a systematic and continually more rigorous exploitation by the home government, and to the irresponsible and uncontrolled military despotism of little satraps.



BAHIA.

In Bahia, as in Pernambuco, the sugar industry prospered from the beginning. Bahia is close to Africa and navigation across is safe and easy. The importation of blacks began immediately, and the port continued to be the greatest *entrepôt* and distributing point for the trade during three centuries. Bahia's population is more largely black than that of any other city in Brazil, and the pure African type is frequently seen on its streets. The local cuisine includes many dishes of African origin, and the local dialect many African words. Certain African dialects are spoken to this day, and a few Mohammedan negroes there still perform the rites of the Koran in the most absolute secrecy. [Pg 325]

The municipal government of the town, though under the overshadowing power of the governor, showed some vitality and independence. The fertile island of Itaparica, just opposite the city, had been granted to the mother of a minister. Though the donation was repeatedly confirmed by the king himself, she and her heirs were never able to put their agents in possession. The municipal council successfully insisted that the original royal instructions to the governor required all grantees to occupy their estates in person.

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CHAPTER V

THE JESUITS

One of John III.'s strongest reasons for undertaking a more extensive colonisation of Brazil was the pious conviction that it was his Christian duty to promote the dissemination of the true religion in dominions which he owed to the gift of the Holy Father. He was the first and most steadfast friend of the Jesuits, then just organised and San Francisco Xavier, the Apostle of the East Indies, was sent out to one hemisphere, while the conversion of the Brazilian aborigines was determined upon in the other. With Thomas de Souza sailed an able Jesuit, Manuel Nobrega, accompanied by several other Fathers. They began a carefully planned campaign to convert the Indians and, incidentally, to exploit them in the interests of the Order.

It is impossible not to admire the courage, shrewdness, and devotion of the Jesuits. They went out alone among the savage tribes, living with them, learning their languages, preaching to them, captivating their imaginations by the pomp of religious paraphernalia and processions, baptising them, and exhorting them to abandon cannibalism and polygamy. Tireless and fearless, they plunged into an interior hitherto unpenetrated by white men. The reports they made to their superiors frequently afford the best information that is yet extant as to the customs of the Indians and the resources of the regions they explored. [Pg 327]

The Indians were easily induced to conform to the externals of the Christian cult. Wherever the Jesuits penetrated, the aborigines soon adopted Christianity, but to hold the Indians to Christianity the Fathers were obliged to fix them to the soil. As soon as a tribe was converted, a rude church building was erected, and a Jesuit installed, who remained to teach agriculture and the arts as well as ritual and morals. His moral and intellectual superiority made him perforce an absolute ruler in miniature. Thus that strange theocracy came into being, which, starting on the Brazilian coast, spread over most of central South America. In the early part of the seventeenth century the theocratic seemed likely to become the dominant form of government south of the Amazon and east of the Andes.

The Jesuit wanted the Indian to himself, and fought against the interference or enslavement by the lay

Portuguese. The colonists wanted the Indians to work on their plantations, to incorporate them as slaves, or in some analogous capacity, with the white man's industrial and civil organisation. The home government stood by the Jesuits, but the colonists constantly evaded restrictions and steadily fought the priests. The encouragement of the negro slave trade was an attempt at a compromise—intended to induce the colonists to [Pg 328] leave the Indians alone by furnishing another supply of labour.

Primarily, at least, the Jesuit purpose was altruistic, though the material advantages and the fascination of exercising authority were soon potent motives. The Jesuits gave the South American Indian the greatest measure of peace and justice he ever enjoyed, but they reduced him to blind obedience and made him a tenant and a servant. Though virtually a slave, he was, however, little exposed to infection from the vices and diseases of civilisation; he was not put at tasks too hard for him; and under Jesuit rule he prospered. On the other hand, if this system had prevailed there would have been little white immigration, the Indian race would have remained in possession of the country, and real civilisation would never have gained a foothold.

Immediately after the founding of Bahia, Nobrega sent members of the Order to the other colonies. He himself visited Pernambuco, where the stout old proprietor met him with effective opposition. Duarte did not welcome a clergy responsible solely to a foreign corporation, and over which he could have no control. In Bahia and the south the Jesuits, however, prospered amazingly. In São Paulo they laboured hard, spread widely, converted a large number of Indians, and perfected their system, but it was there they came most sharply in conflict with the spirit of individualism, and there they suffered their first and most crushing overthrow. [Pg 329]

Thomas de Souza laboured diligently during the four years of his administration, fortifying posts, driving away contraband traders, dismissing incompetent officials, and even building jails and straightening streets where the local authorities had neglected them. He visited all the captaincies south of Bahia and entered Rio Bay, then the principal rendezvous for the French privateers and traders. He appreciated its strategic and commercial importance, and was only prevented by lack of means from establishing a strong post there. In São Paulo he prohibited the flourishing trade which had grown with the Spaniards in Paraguay and Buenos Aires. Duarte da Costa, his successor, was accompanied by a large re-enforcement of Jesuits. Among them was Anchieta, one of the most notable men in the history of the Order, whose genius, devotion, and pertinacious courage laid the foundations of Jesuit power so deeply in South America that its effects remain to this day. This remarkable man was born in Teneriffe, the son of a banished nobleman, who had married a native of the island. Educated at home, from his infancy he showed marvellous talents. At fourteen, his father, not daring to risk his son's life in Spain, sent him to the Portuguese University at Coimbra. His career was so brilliant, the reputation he acquired for profound and ready intelligence, his eloquence, and his pure and elevated ideals so remarkable, that he attracted the attention of Simon Rodrigues, John III.'s great Jesuit minister, who, like all the leaders of the Order, was on the watch for talented young men. The ardent youth [Pg 330] was easily convinced that no career was so glorious as that of a missionary, and when only twenty years old he solicited and obtained permission to go to Brazil. Nobrega, the Provincial, selected him to go to São Paulo and establish a school to train neophytes and proselytes into evangelists. His own letter to Nobrega best tells what a life he found and what sort of man he was:

> "Here we are, sometimes more than twenty of us together in a little hut of mud and wicker, roofed with straw, fourteen paces long and ten wide. This is at once the school, the infirmary, dormitory, refectory, kitchen, and store-room. Yet we covet not the more spacious dwellings which our brethren have in other parts. Our Lord Jesus Christ was in a far straiter place when it was His pleasure to be born among beasts in a manger, and in a still straiter when He deigned to die upon the cross."

PADRE JOSE DE ANCHIETA.
[From an old wood-cut.] [Pg 331]

They herded together to keep warm, for in winter it is cold on the São Paulo plateau. They had no food except the mandioc flour, fish, and game which the Indians gave them. To the little college came Creoles and

half-breeds and learned Latin, Portuguese, Spanish, and Tupi. Anchieta was indefatigable. Within a year he had acquired a complete mastery of the Indian tongue, and had devised a grammar for it. He wrote his own text-books, and employed his great poetical talents in composing hymns and verses to be chanted to the pupils, recounting the stories of Holy Scripture. He visited the most savage tribes in person, and acquired a marvellous moral supremacy over them. When the Tamoyos attacked the Portuguese, and the destruction of all the southern settlements seemed inevitable, he fearlessly went to the Indian camps and persuaded the chiefs to consent to a truce while he remained among them three years as a hostage to guarantee its faithful performance by his countrymen. The savages regarded him as more than human, and tradition tells of the miracles he performed. It is related that during these three years of solitary captivity he composed, without the aid of pen or paper, his Latin "Hymn to the Virgin," celebrated as one of the masterpieces of ecclesiastical poetry.

He and his companions did not disdain to labour with their hands. They used the spade and trowel, made [Pg 332] their own shoes, taught the Indians agriculture, introduced new plants from Europe, practised medicine, and studied the botany, topography, and geology of the country. The villages of converted Indians under their government and protection rapidly spread over the São Paulo plains, and they were refuges for Indians flying from slavery on the plantations. The colonists pursued their fugitive slaves, and soon were at open war with the Jesuits. In the course of this conflict the original half-breed settlement on the plateau was destroyed and the lay Portuguese came near being wiped out. Peace was temporarily patched up, but the Paulistas soon turned the tables and compelled the Jesuits to devote themselves to their educational institutions in the towns, or to withdraw farther and farther into the wilderness.

[Pg 333]

CHAPTER VI

FRENCH OCCUPATION OF RIO

During Duarte's administration troubles with the Indians broke out along the whole coast. In Bahia itself the new governor had disobeyed the orders of the home government to protect the Indians. He joined with the colonists in exploiting them. A formidable Indian conspiracy was formed and the settlements on both sides of the city were simultaneously attacked. Many farms and villages were sacked, but soon the Indians were finally and crushingly defeated. The coast towns of São Paulo were menaced by a great confederation of tribes who used war canoes and had learned to overcome their terror of firearms. At Espirito Santo the Indian slaves rose *en masse*, killed most of the Portuguese, and destroyed the sugar plantations.

A more serious danger was the settlement of the French at Rio de Janeiro. They had formed friendly relations with the Indians, and the name of Frenchman was sufficient to insure good treatment from most of the tribes, while that of Portuguese was a signal for its bearer to be killed and devoured. This was the epoch [Pg 334] of the religious wars in France, and the traders to Brazil came mostly from Huguenot ports. Admiral Coligny conceived the idea of establishing a Huguenot settlement in South America, and Rio was chosen as the most available site. In 1555 a considerable expedition was sent under the command of Nicolas Villegagnon, a celebrated adventurer, who had distinguished himself in escorting Mary Queen of Scots from France to Scotland. He fortified the island in Rio harbour that still bears his name—a barren rock which commanded the entrance and was safe from attacks by land. The French kept on good terms with the neighbouring Indians, and remained unmolested by the Portuguese for four years. But Villegagnon was not faithful to his employers, though most of his party were Protestants, and Huguenot leaders had furnished the money for the expedition. He quarrelled with the Huguenots and finally gave up the command and returned to France in the Guise interest. Coligny's project of establishing a new and Protestant France in South America lost its very good chance of success. It is interesting to conjecture what would have been the history of Brazil if Villegagnon had stuck to the Huguenot side. In all probability re-enforcements would have been sent, and St. Bartholomew's Day—fourteen years later—might have been followed by a great emigration like that which went to New England during the Laud persecution. Rio and perhaps the whole of South Brazil would have become a French possession or a French-speaking state. [Pg 335]

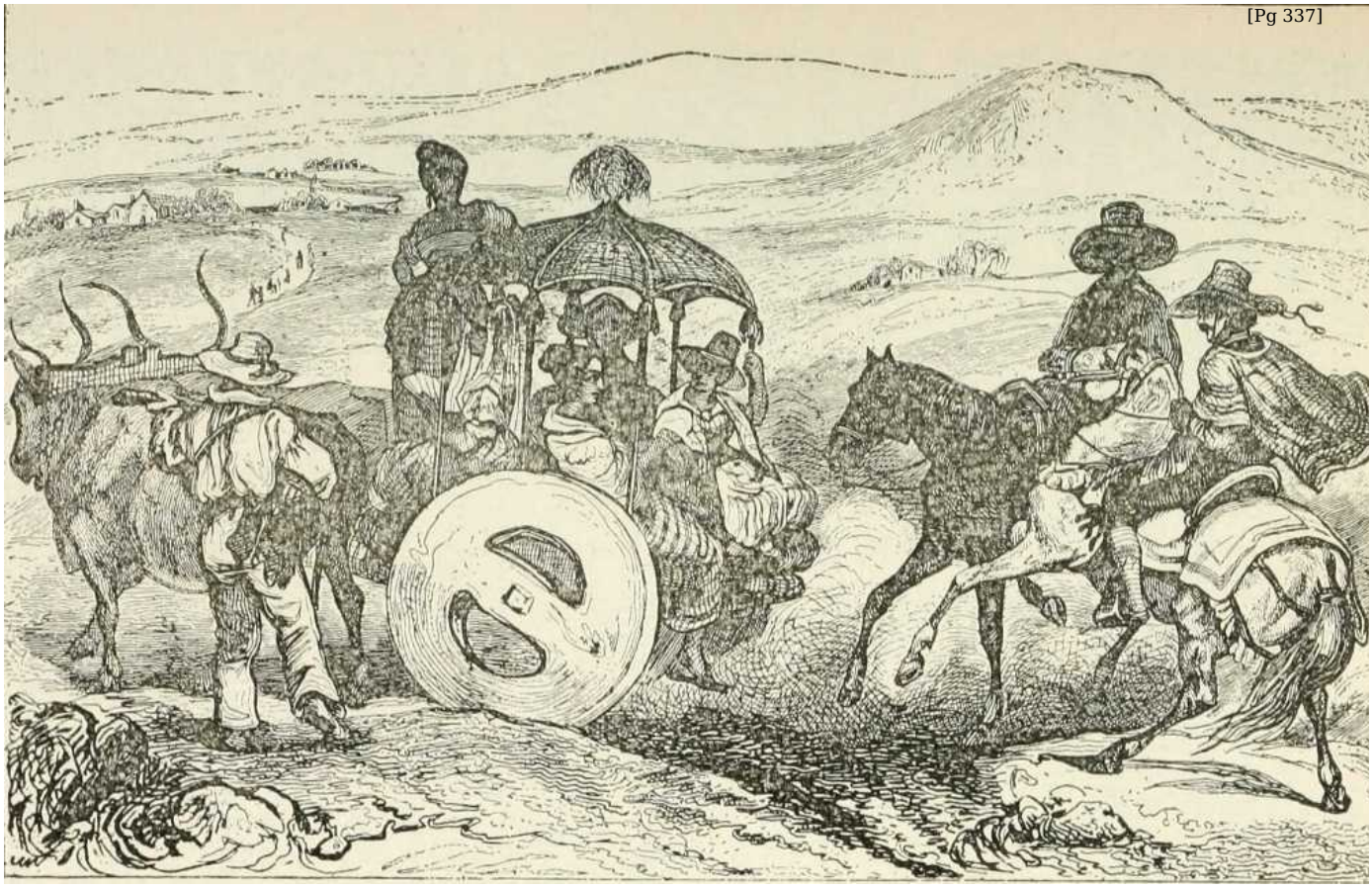
Not until 1558 was a strong and able Portuguese governor selected, and vigorous measures taken to expel the French. The new governor was Mem da Sa, a nobleman of the highest birth, a soldier, a scholar, and an experienced administrator. His name will always be associated with the establishment of the Portuguese power in Brazil on a footing firm and broad enough to enable it to withstand the Dutch attacks and the lean years of Spanish domination.

Upon his arrival he took measures to quiet the Indian slavery question by reducing the import duties on black slaves and by aiding each planter to acquire as many negroes as he needed to work his plantation. When his ships and armament arrived he proceeded to the south. He found that the French, though weak in numbers, could count on Indian allies. As he himself writes to the Court: "The French do not treat the natives as we do. They are very liberal to them, observing strict justice, so that the commander is feared by his countrymen and beloved by the Indians. Measures have been taken to instruct the latter in the use of arms,

and as the aborigines are very numerous the French may soon make themselves very strong." He harassed the French and destroyed their fortifications but could not completely dislodge them, and returned to Bahia with his work only half accomplished. Porto Seguro and Ilheos were attacked by the ferocious Aymorés and with difficulty saved from total destruction. In the South another great Tamoyo confederation had been formed with the deliberate purpose of rooting the Paulistas out of the country and putting a stop once for all [Pg 336] to their slave-hunting. When all seemed lost, Anchieta intervened, and succeeded in fixing up a peace. The Tamoyos were cajoled into becoming allies of the Portuguese in a final attempt to expel the French from Rio. Mem da Sa's nephew appeared with a considerable fleet, and after a desultory campaign of a year the French were obliged to retire. France did nothing to prevent or recover this inestimable loss, and Mem da Sa immediately laid out and fortified a city on a site which to-day is the business centre of the capital of Brazil. From the time of its founding Rio was the most important place in southern Brazil and the key to the whole region, but its great prosperity dates from a hundred and fifty years later, when gold was discovered in Minas Geraes.

Mem da Sa continued to rule Brazil until his death in 1572. The work of centralisation went on apace, fiscal and administrative officers were multiplied, and taxes and restrictions imposed at will. The Lisbon government laid the foundations of that restrictive system which finally confined Brazil to communication with the mother country. Nevertheless most of the settlements grew rapidly. Sugar-planting, cattle-raising, and general agriculture flourished. The Indians were expelled or reduced to impotence within striking distance of the centres of population.

[Pg 337]



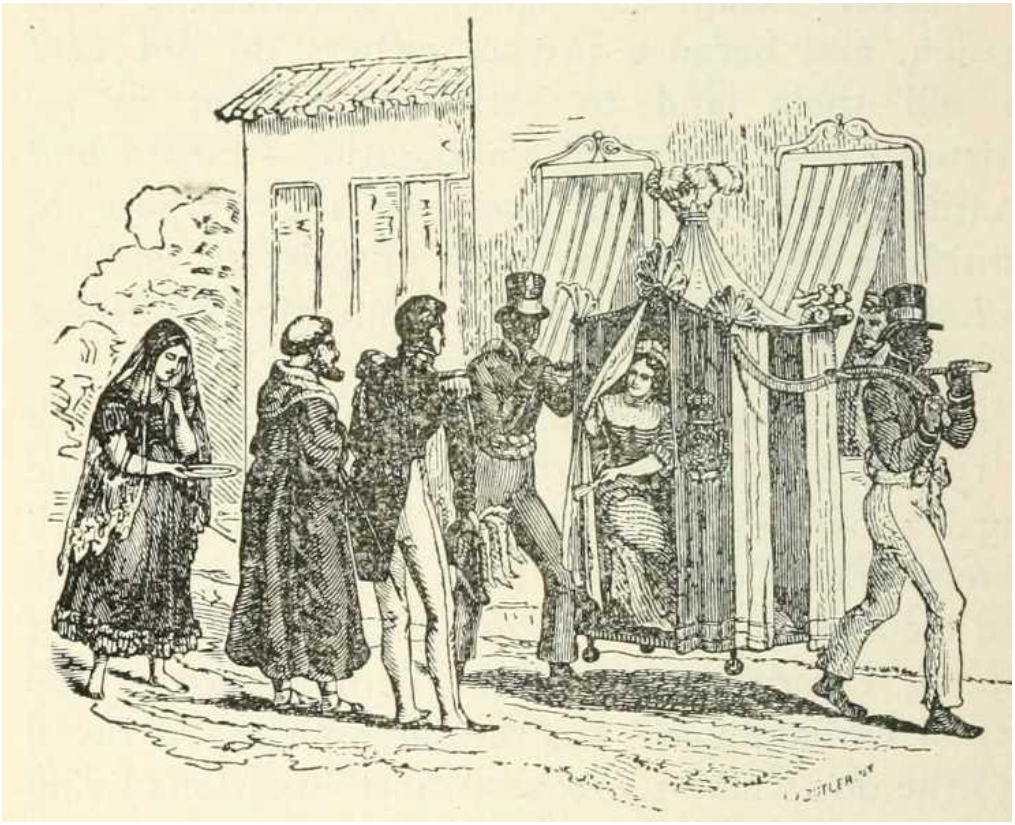
PLANTERS GOING TO CHURCH.
[From an old print.]

At Mem da Sa's death the civilised population numbered about sixty thousand, of whom twenty thousand [Pg 338] were white. The provinces of Pernambuco and Bahia had each twenty-five thousand inhabitants. Rio had some two thousand and São Paulo perhaps five, the remainder being divided between the smaller settlements—Parahyba, Rio Real, Ilheos, Porto Seguro, and Espirito Santo. Except in São Paulo most of the inhabitants were engaged in sugar-raising. The hundred and twenty plantations produced annually forty-five thousand tons of sugar, while Portuguese goods to the value of a million dollars a year were imported.

A sugar *fazenda*, or plantation, constituted a little independent village, where the owner lived surrounded by his slaves in their cabins, his shops and stables, mills and mandioc fields. The grantees had paid no purchase price for the land, and held it on condition of paying a tenth of the product and a tenth of that tenth, a tax which survives to the present time, only it is now called an export duty of eleven per cent. Land was not otherwise taxed, and to this day direct taxes on farm property are almost unknown, though imposts of every other conceivable kind have been multiplied. The tracts granted were large; the owner could hold them unused without expense; the most powerful incentive to sale and division of land did not, therefore, exist. Brazil became and remains a country of large rural proprietorship. Landowners are reluctant to sell or divide their estates, taxes on transfers are excessive, and land is not freely bought and sold. Consequently the rural population is widely scattered, grants extend far beyond the limits of actual settlement, there are few small [Pg 339] farmers and very little careful culture. Brazil is a country of staple crops and non-diversified agriculture. A fall in sugar or coffee produces a disproportionate disturbance in financial conditions, and land not suitable to the staple crop of a region is left to lie idle. Immigration has been retarded because land has been hard to obtain except by special government concession, and because private owners do not care to sell their land to settlers. Except in restricted cases, the rural immigration—negro and South European—has been for the purpose of furnishing labour for the large proprietors, and not to form a landowning and permanently established population.

The Jesuit travellers describe the Brazilian people in 1584 as pleasure-loving and extravagant. In the sugar provinces fortunes were very unequal. In Pernambuco alone more than a hundred planters had incomes of ten

thousand dollars a year. Their capital, Olinda—now the northern suburb of the city of Pernambuco—was the largest town in Brazil and the one where there was most luxurious living and the most polite society. In general the people were spendthrifts, and notwithstanding large incomes were heavily in debt. Great sums were spent on fêtes, religious processions, fairs, and dinners. The simple Jesuit Fathers were shocked to see such velvets and silks, such luxurious beds of crimson damask, such extravagance in the trappings of the saddle-horses. Carriages were unknown, and instead litters and sedan chairs were used, and these remained in common use in Bahia until very recent times. [Pg 340]



A CADEIRA.

From Pernambuco and Bahia communication with the mother country was constant and easy. São Paulo, however, differed radically from the sugar districts. Wheat, barley, and European fruits grew on the São Paulo plateau, but there was little export to Portugal, and imported clothes were scarce and dear. The Paulistas were constantly on horseback and wore the old Portuguese costume of cloak and close-fitting doublet long after it had been disused at home.

Bahia and Pernambuco were fairly well built towns, though unfortunately in the Portuguese style of architecture, whose solid walls, few windows, and contiguous houses make it ill adapted to a tropical climate. In spite of its unsuitability it was universally adopted, and even yet largely prevails in Brazil. [Pg 341]

[Pg 342]

CHAPTER VII

EXPANSION

In 1581 Philip II. of Spain succeeded in establishing himself on the throne of Portugal as the successor of the rash Sebastian, dead fighting the Moors at Alcacer-Kebir. The decadent and demoralised Portuguese nation made hardly the semblance of a struggle for its independence. The very ease with which Philip obtained the kingdom left him no pretext for depriving it of administrative independence. Native Portuguese continued to hold office in the colonies and to enjoy a monopoly of Brazilian commerce. Internally, therefore, the change did not much affect Brazil. But in foreign relations the effect was profound. Brazil became a part of a well-nigh universal monarchy, and one of the battle-fields of the struggle which had begun between Spain and the Protestant powers.

All South America was now under the same monarch; boundary questions between Portuguese and Spanish America apparently ceased to have any importance. The enormous extension of Brazil toward the interior over territory formerly conceded to be Spanish occurred during the sixty years of Spanish domination. The [Pg 343] Spanish monarch did not have time to spend on Brazilian matters, and the colonists were less interfered with from Lisbon and Madrid than might have been expected. Portuguese historians have much exaggerated the evil effects of the English, Dutch, and French half filibustering, half-trading descents on the coast, which occurred during this period. The pillage of a few towns was more than compensated by the commerce that sprang up; much Brazilian sugar escaped paying the heavy export duties; settlement extended rapidly over new territory, and the importation of negroes continued.

As early as 1575 a settlement had been made in Sergipe, but the great expansion over northern Brazil began under the rule of Philip's first governor-general. In 1583 he sent troops to take possession of the important port of Parahyba, where some French traders had obtained a foothold that prevented the inhabitants of Pernambuco from spreading north beyond Itamarica. The Spanish mercenaries were at first successful, but they could not stifle the serious Indian war which broke out. The Pernambucanos had better success, because they knew how to take advantage of the dissensions among the savages. Fortifying a town at Parahyba, they permanently established their sugar plantations in its neighbourhood, and then these indefatigable and land-hungry Creoles pushed on farther to the north. In 1597 Jeronymo de Albuquerque, the greatest of Brazilian colonial generals, attacked and defeated the powerful Pitagoares Indians, and [Pg 344] established the colony of Natal, the nucleus of the present state of Rio Grande do Norte. This brought the Pernambucanos to Cape St. Roque. To the south they had spread as far as the San Francisco River, there meeting the Bahianos who, by 1589, had taken possession of the present state of Sergipe.

North of St. Roque the Portuguese so far had done nothing except make some desultory voyages of observation, though they claimed the coast to and beyond the mouth of the Amazon. The donatories of the captaincies in that region had not succeeded in establishing any settlements. In 1541, Orellana, one of those recklessly heroic Spaniards who had helped Pizarro conquer the empire of the Incas, was a member of an expedition which crossed the Andes near Quito and descended into the forested plains, looking for another Peru—the fabled El Dorado. They finally found themselves on a great river flowing to the east, and, since their provisions were exhausted, boats were built and Orellana was sent on ahead to try to find supplies. He could not find enough to feed the main body and decided to float on down the river, well knowing it must finally bring him to the ocean. After a voyage of more than three thousand miles he came to the great estuary of the Amazon and thence made his way to Spain. No important results followed this wonderful discovery. Orellana himself shortly returned to the mouth of the river, but he could not find his way up the labyrinth of waters.

To reach the plains from the Pacific or Caribbean settlements is nearly impracticable, and the Amazon [Pg 345] valley remained unsettled. Meanwhile the seed planted by old Duarte Coelho germinated and grew into a vigorous tree whose branches were spreading out over all North Brazil. The seventeenth century had hardly begun when the hardy Pernambucanos invaded the country lying north and west of St. Roque, hunting Indian slaves, and good places for cattle- and sugar-raising. In 1603 Pero Coelho, an adventurous Brazilian then living at Parahyba, made a settlement far to the north-west of Natal, on the coast of Ceará, and penetrated eight hundred miles from Pernambuco. Unreasonable aggressions against the Indians brought on temporary reverses, but the Pernambucanos persevered, and the Jesuits also established missions. By 1610 the region was pretty well under white control, the Indians being incorporated to a greater extent than was usual in the settlements farther south.

The next forward movement was precipitated by a formidable French attempt to colonise Maranhão. Daniel de la Rivardière, a Huguenot nobleman, conceived the idea of carrying out on the north coast Coligny's plan of a French Protestant colony. In 1612 he landed on the island of Maranhão with a large and well-appointed expedition.

Jeronymo de Albuquerque fortunately happened to be on the north coast when news came of this alarming intrusion. Sending his ships on to ascertain the truth of the report, he hastened overland to Pernambuco to get a force together. With three hundred whites and two hundred Indians he started to expel the French. An [Pg 346] assault on a fort defended with artillery was out of the question, so in his turn he fortified himself, cut off the French from access to the sea, and ambushed their foraging expeditions. In such a game, his men, inured to the climate, had an immense advantage. Forced to assault Albuquerque's position, the French were repulsed. They begged for a truce, and went home at the end of a year. Albuquerque took possession of the French town, and in 1616 secured all the rest of the northern coast to Portugal by founding Pará, just to the south of the mouth of the Amazon. Several settlements were made along the coast east of Pará and also west in the estuary itself. The Indians proved docile and were easily incorporated to so great an extent that the Indian element is more predominant in Pará than in any other state on the Brazilian littoral.

On the island and around the bay of Maranhão a prosperous colony grew up. Certain enterprising business men made a contract with the government and started a regular propaganda for immigrants, and induced a large number to come from the Azores. The state thus founded was one of the most prosperous in Brazil, and was especially celebrated for the politeness and cultivation of its inhabitants. Some of the greatest names in Portuguese literature are those of Maranhenses. It is commonly said that the best Portuguese is spoken in Maranhão, and not in Lisbon, Rio, or Porto—just as the English of Dublin, Aberdeen, or Boston is considered better than that of London or New York, and the Spanish of Lima and Bogotá better than that of Madrid, [Pg 347] Barcelona, or Buenos Aires.

Meanwhile population and wealth had been increasing satisfactorily in the older provinces south of Cape St. Roque. By 1626 Pernambuco and Bahia had grown to be towns of something like ten thousand inhabitants, and the people of the respective provinces numbered about a hundred thousand. Ilheos, Porto Seguro, and Espirito Santo had made no progress, but Rio had become a city of six thousand, while the shores of her bay and the adjacent coast were now fairly settled. Rio and Santos really performed the function of ports for the foreign commerce of Paraguay and the Argentine because the Spanish laws did not permit these colonies to have ports of their own. Campos was now settled and its sugar industry was prospering. On the São Paulo plains the Paulistas had spread to the north-east to the headwaters of the Parahyba and borders of the present state of Rio, and north-west down the navigable Tieté, along which they found an easy track for their expeditions in search of slaves. The Jesuits had long since been unable to control or check the Paulistas, and had abandoned the missions near the coast. In the remote interior, along the Paraná and its great tributaries, the defeated priests thought that they would be safe, and about the end of the sixteenth century they entered that region by way of Paraguay. The Paulistas recked little of the government, especially now that the king was Spanish, and, advancing the claim that Spanish Jesuits had established missions on Portuguese territory, [Pg 348] they proceeded to wipe out the new missions.

It seems incredible that their little bands could have penetrated such distances and accomplished such results, but it is on record that they tracked nearly to the Andes, and practically exterminated, the aboriginal population of half Brazil. The Jesuits tell us that between 1614 and 1639 four hundred Paulistas with two thousand Indian allies captured and killed three hundred thousand natives. In 1632 they utterly destroyed the great Jesuit settlements on the Upper Paraná, though this involved an expedition of fifteen hundred miles, much of which is to this day rarely penetrable. One of their expeditions was like an ambulating village—women, children, and domestic animals accompanying it. They sometimes were obliged to stop, sow a crop, and wait for it to mature before they could proceed. For the time being, these predatory Paulistas almost reverted to the nomadic stage.

Naturally, no complete record of these expeditions survives. Their members were not literate men, and it is only when they fought the Jesuits, or when they discovered minerals, that a record of their routes has been preserved. We know that before 1632 they had traversed all of southern Brazil, and Paraguay, and even eastern Argentina and Uruguay. Incursions to the north and west followed shortly. There is an authentic record of an expedition reaching Goyaz as early as 1647, and it is probable that by that time they had penetrated the central plateau which stretches across to the Andes, had seen the headwaters of the southern [Pg 349] tributaries of the Amazon, and had followed the eastern mountain chain almost to the northern ocean. The Paulistas secured to their country and their race more than a million square miles of fertile and salubrious territory.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE DUTCH CONQUEST

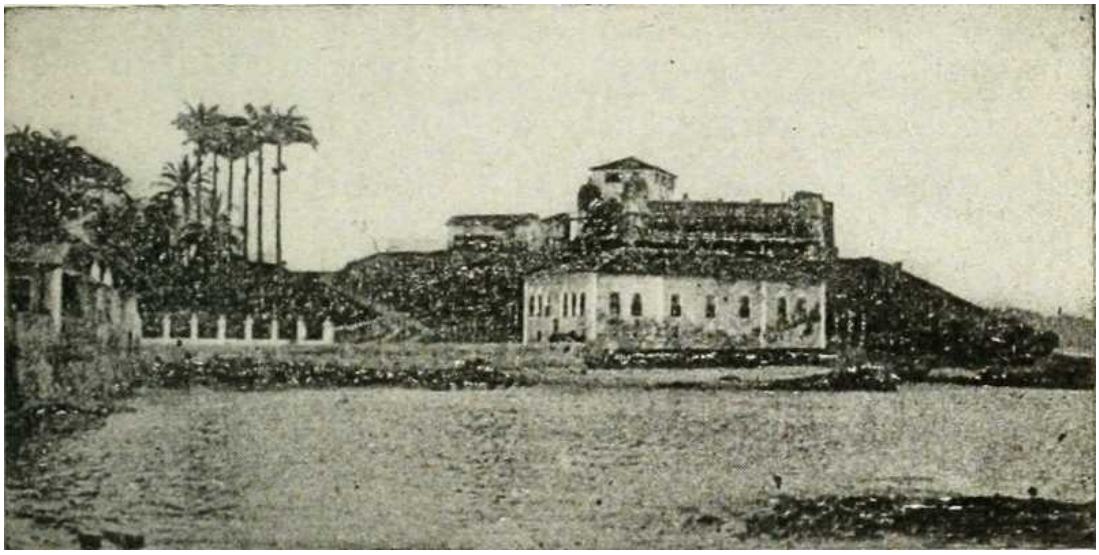
By the end of the sixteenth century Holland was practically independent, and the "Beggars of the Sea" were carrying her arms and trade all over the world. Numerous private companies of Dutch merchants made war against Spain on their own account, and great fortunes were made in the capture of Spanish fleets and in trade with Spanish and Portuguese colonies. The Dutch East India Company within a few years possessed itself of the better part of the Portuguese empire in the Indian Ocean, and the West India Company was organised to do the same in South America. Incorporated in 1621, it included various smaller companies already engaged in trade and privateering, and was an immense corporation which finally owned more than eight hundred ships, and sent to Brazil alone more than seventy thousand troops. Although protected, subsidised, and conceded a monopoly by the Dutch government, it always remained essentially a company for private profit.

[Pg 351] The Company's primary object was to capture the Spanish treasure fleets; its secondary object was to conquer the possessions of Spain and Portugal in South America. Brazil furnished the best base for the operations that were intended to make the South Atlantic a Dutch lake; Bahia and Pernambuco were near Europe, had good harbours, lay on the direct route to the Plate and the Pacific, and from them Africa could be conveniently attacked. The sugar trade was a large thing in itself and the daring Dutch traders believed that the Portuguese colonists might welcome a deliverance from Spanish domination. Spain's power was a rotten shell, and impulses lying deep in the national spirit pushed the Dutch on to aggression. The peoples of Western Europe had finally felt all the stimulating influences of the Renaissance, of the Lutheran and Jesuit Reformations, and of the Era of Discovery. It was the epoch of the Thirty Years' War, of the League of Avignon, and of that confused fighting caused by the more vigorous peoples grasping for a share of the spoils of the New World.

In 1623 news came of the equipping by the West India Company of an expedition whose destination was manifestly to be Bahia. The Spanish government took no measures for defence. The local authorities half-heartedly began to fortify the city, but there were no troops except militia to man the works, and when the Dutch fleet hove in sight a panic ensued. The governor was captured, but many of the inhabitants fled into the back country, and a guerrilla warfare was kept up which shut up the Dutch inside the fortifications. They made use of their time in improving the defences, and soon made Bahia the best fortress in South America. [Pg 352]

The news of the capture created consternation in Lisbon. Great exertions were made by the Portuguese merchants, as well as by the Spanish government, and the most formidable armament which up to that time had crossed the equator was prepared. It was composed of fifty-two ships and of twelve thousand men—the latter being mercenaries gathered from every country in Europe. The Dutch commander had not yet been re-enforced and made little resistance when such an overwhelming force arrived in Bahia harbour. He surrendered with the honours of war and the Spanish fleet retired. In a few weeks another Dutch fleet appeared, bringing provisions and re-enforcements. It was too late, however, and the Dutch did not venture to attack an enemy whom they themselves had furnished with such excellent re-enforcements. The Dutch, driven from the land, remained undisputed masters of the sea, and the Spanish and Portuguese could no longer trade except in convoys. In 1627 the celebrated Piet Heyn—the Dutch Sir Francis Drake—sailed boldly into

Bahia harbour, and despising the fire of the forty guns of the forts, captured twenty-six ships within pistol-shot of the shore cannon. He ran his own ship right in between the two best Portuguese men-of-war, the forts did not dare fire for fear of wounding their own men, the Portuguese flagship was sunk, and the rest surrendered in terror. Among the spoils were three thousand hogsheads of sugar, which Piet Heyn sent home at his leisure, while he ravaged the shores of the bay. The following year he fell in with the Mexican treasure [Pg 353] fleet and captured it bodily. This was the greatest capture ever made at sea. The West India Company declared a dividend of fifty per cent. after paying the expenses of the unsuccessful Bahia expedition, and resumed its plans of conquest with more vigour than ever.



OLD FORT AT BAHIA.

After careful consideration Pernambuco was selected as a more vulnerable point of attack than Bahia. The fortifications were feeble, and there were numerous Jewish merchants in the city whose friendship could be counted on. Once more the Spanish government did nothing to avert the threatened blow, and in February, 1630, a Dutch fleet of fifty sail with seven thousand men arrived in front of Pernambuco. Three thousand men were landed to the north of the town and easily defeated the militia which tried to prevent their taking the place from the rear. The inhabitants fled to the interior, and after a creditable resistance the forts fell. The [Pg 354] property captured was estimated at near ten million dollars. In the meantime, Albuquerque, the Brazilian commander, had retired to a defensible ranch commanding the road between Recife and Olinda, and whence communication could be kept up with the sea by way of Cape St. Augustine. This ranch is celebrated in Brazilian tradition as the "Arraial de Bom Jesus." The Brazilians rallied and from this vantage-ground began to harass the Dutch. The promises of commercial, religious, and political tolerance had produced little effect on the more ardent spirits. The Indians remained faithful to the Portuguese, and with the negroes did good service in the guerrilla warfare. For the first two years the Dutch could accomplish little except to improve the fortifications around the town, and the Brazilians acquired a confidence in their own ability to make head against regular troops which later stood them in good stead.

In 1631 a fleet of twenty ships appeared from Spain, but the Dutch Admiral sailed boldly out and gave them battle. The net results to the Spaniards were the landing of only a thousand men, who, after some difficulty, joined the militia at Bom Jesus. But the seeds of discontent were germinating among the Brazilians. On closer contact the heretics proved to be human. The planters wanted peace and an opportunity to sell their sugar. The Indians, negroes, and other adventurous spirits composing the guerrilla bands robbed both friend and foe. The soldiers were tired of serving without pay. A half-breed named Calabar, a man of remarkable [Pg 355] bravery, cunning, and skill in woodcraft, deserted to the Dutch and gave them valuable assistance. Re-enforcements came from Holland, and under Calabar's guidance the Dutch learned the value of ambuscading and made sudden expeditions which took the important settlements by surprise.

In 1633 two special representatives of the Company came with instructions to prosecute the war vigorously and to endeavour to conciliate the Brazilians. The latters' resistance weakened; many of Albuquerque's volunteers deserted; the Dutch expeditions up and down the coast were successful. The island of Itamarica, Rio Grande do Norte, Parahyba, and the settlements in Alagoas were successively reduced. Resistance was soon confined to the country just back of Pernambuco itself, and in 1635 the last posts which held out—Bom Jesus and St. Augustine—surrendered. The whole coast from the San Francisco River north to Cape St. Roque was in the hands of the Dutch. There was nothing for it but submission or emigration. Many laid down their arms, but Albuquerque and his faithful lieutenants, the negro Dias and the Indian Camarrão, reluctantly took their way toward Bahia, the only place of refuge. The Brazilian historians claim that ten thousand Pernambucanos, men, women, and children, accompanied Albuquerque, preferring to leave their homes, property, and friends rather than accept the foreign and heretic yoke. A sweet bit of revenge awaited them on their journey. Encountering and overpowering a small Dutch garrison at Porto Calvo, they took its members [Pg 356] prisoners, and among them found the traitor, Calabar. Him they hanged, while the Dutchmen were let go unharmed.

When Albuquerque reached the San Francisco he was replaced by a Spaniard, Rojas, who had brought re-enforcements of seventeen hundred Spanish troops. The new commander gave battle to the Hollanders, but in the first action was utterly defeated and lost his own life. For the next two years Pernambuco was ravaged by the most frightful burnings and massacres. The Spanish mercenaries and the bands of negroes and Indians scoured the interior, and the Dutch retaliated with the same methods. The prosperous colony was fast being depopulated and its industries ruined. It became manifest that a policy at once vigorous and conciliatory was necessary, and the Company determined to send out a governor-general with vice-regal powers.

The merchants of the Directory chose Count John Maurice, of Nassau-Siegen, a scion of the reigning house, and a descendant of William the Silent. A more fortunate selection could not have been made. Though only thirty-two years old, Count Maurice had already proved himself a brave and skilful soldier; he was a man of culture, a thorough son of the Renaissance, a lover of the arts, and, like most of his house, religiously tolerant and liberal to an extent extraordinary for that bitter age. He was one of those few spirits, in advance of their

time, to whom Catholic and Protestant, Jew and Gentile were the same—to whose instincts religious and commercial intolerance was repugnant. [Pg 357]

He arrived in 1637, and his keen eye at once saw that the two obstacles to pacification were the military raids which the new Spanish commander, Bagnuoli, was directing from his position near the San Francisco; and the fear of the Pernambuco sugar planters that Dutch dominion meant their forcible conversion to Calvinism. The Dutch troops were now well equipped and seasoned for warfare in the tropical woods, and their officers had learned how to exercise their trade under these difficult circumstances with all the coolness, shrewdness, and steadiness of their race. Commanded by Maurice they easily inflicted a crushing defeat upon the motley crew Bagnuoli had been able to gather. The whole country north of the San Francisco fell into Maurice's hands, and he crossed that river and destroyed the Brazilian base of supplies in Sergipe. The next year he was ordered by the Directory to attack Bahia with insufficient forces, and was compelled to retire after a forty-days siege. Two years later, however, his fleet defeated and nearly destroyed the largest naval force Spain had sent out since the Invincible Armada. Of the six thousand soldiers on board who had been expected to drive him from Brazil, only one thousand were landed, away north of Cape St. Roque, whence they barely managed to reach Bahia after a march of over a thousand miles through the wilderness, suffering the most frightful hardships. Maurice followed up this victory by occupying Sergipe (1640) and Maranhão (1641). Ceará had fallen into his hands in 1637. The whole of Brazil from the 3rd to the 12th degree of latitude, a solid body of territory containing more than two-thirds of the population and developed [Pg 358] resources, was apparently irretrievably lost to the Portuguese. They only retained Bahia and the isolated settlements in Pará and the southern provinces.

In internal administration Maurice was equally vigorous. He suppressed the exactions of Dutch soldiers and functionaries, and established law, order, and justice. Agriculture, industry, and commerce flourished as never before. He found Recife a miserable port village and left it a city of two thousand houses. He does not seem to have made any especial exertions to secure Dutch immigration. The Brazilians were not displaced as landed proprietors, and most of the plantations confiscated from the persistently rebellious were resold to Brazilians who accepted the Dutch rule. He permitted to Romanists and Jews the free and public exercise of their faith. Many Jews came to Pernambuco, and with their characteristic capacity soon became prominent and useful in the commercial life of the colony. The courts were so organised as to secure representation for Brazilians. He summoned a sort of legislature of the principal colonists—the first representative assembly on South American soil—and put into effect the measures it proposed. Local administration was entrusted to Brazilians, and his aim was evidently to make the colony self-governing.

But this positivist of the seventeenth century, this genial pagan who had caught the essential spirit of the Renaissance and had the courage to put it into practice centuries before it became dominant even in the [Pg 359] realm of thought, was too far in advance of his time. His countrymen could not understand him or his ideas, and the Portuguese colonists were equally incapable of appreciating what he was trying to do for them. His edifice scattered like a card house the moment he left. To all appearances every vestige of his work was swept away; it is only a memory and an example; a wave that dashed far up the beach at the beginning of the flood-tide, leaving a mark that long served only to show how far the water had once come. It remained for the nineteenth century and another nation of shopmen to put into practice, on a scale large enough to convince the world, the great principle of non-interference by the central government with the religious beliefs and the local self-government of colonies.

The moneyed aristocrats of the West India Company distrusted Maurice as a member of a reigning family which was maintained in power by its popularity with the masses. The Directory wanted immediate profits, not an empire established on a broad and sure foundation. In their hearts they preferred a steward and bookkeeper to a prince and a statesman. The Calvinist clergy bitterly complained of the liberties conceded their Catholic competitors for tithes, and succeeded in imposing on Maurice the execution of the prohibition against religious processions—then as now so dear to the Brazilian heart. Spies were sent out to report on him and he was continually hampered.

Among the Brazilians he was equally misunderstood. While personally so popular that not one of their [Pg 360] chroniclers has a word of dispraise for him, they could not forget that he was of a different race and religion, and he did not succeed in converting them to his ideas. His best personal friends were among those most influential, after his departure, in stirring up the exclusive Brazilian feeling.

Maurice was not a man to be easily daunted. For seven years he remained in office, fighting the Directory, the Calvinist ministers, the corrupt officials, trying to reconcile the jealousies between Dutchmen and Brazilians, and to create a homogeneous community. But after the power of the Nassau family began to decline with the rise of the Witt oligarchy, the Directory determined to be rid of him. In 1644 he made a vigorous demand for more troops, and when it was refused sent in a Bismarckian resignation, which, to his surprise, was immediately accepted with many polite protestations of thanks for his services.

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CHAPTER IX

EXPULSION OF THE DUTCH

Four years before Maurice's retirement Portugal broke loose from Spain, and that part of Brazil which had escaped conquest by the Dutch promptly threw off the Spanish yoke. In Europe Holland and the new Portugal were naturally in alliance, but the former was not magnanimous enough to stop her aggressions in Brazil, and the latter was too weak to resent them. Among the Brazilians dissatisfaction began to brew as soon as Maurice left. The prohibition of religious processions, the severe financial crisis among planters who were unable to pay off the heavy mortgages which they had given when they purchased confiscated plantations, the low price of sugar, and the impulse to national feeling given by the news of the success of the mother country in achieving independence all co-operated.

The opportunity brought forth the man. The head of the rebellion was John Fernandes Vieira, who is the great creator of the Brazilian nationality. A native of Madeira, he ran away as a boy to seek his fortune in Brazil. Engaged at first in menial employments, his honesty and capacity soon enabled him to strike out for [Pg 362] himself as a sugar planter. When the Dutch attacked Pernambuco in 1630 he took up arms, and only surrendered when Bom Jesus fell. Convinced that further resistance was useless he returned to his business and within ten years was the richest man in the colony. Though a devoted Catholic and a patriotic Portuguese, he was one of Maurice's most trusted advisers. When the Prince departed John Fernandes thenceforward devoted his life to the expulsion of the Dutch.

The first revolt occurred in Maranhão, where the small Dutch garrison had to abandon that captaincy as early as 1644. In Pernambuco John Fernandes organised a formidable conspiracy, and letters were despatched to the new Portuguese king asking his aid. John IV. did not dare to comply openly, for such action might have involved him in a war with the States-General, but the governor-general at Bahia was as unscrupulous as he was patriotic, and secretly afforded the conspirators every facility in his power. The celebrated chiefs of the guerrilla fighting of 1630 to 1635, Vidal, Camarrão, and Dias, were only too anxious to have another chance, and gathered their bands in the wilderness. Arms were obtained from Bahia, and in 1645 the insurrection broke out. The first move was to have been the massacre of the principal Hollanders, but the plot was discovered and the conspirators fled for their lives to the interior. At a place called Tabocas John Fernandes gathered a motley crew of a few hundred together. Only three hundred of his followers had [Pg 363] muskets, but they were protected by marshy ground in front, and the hill was surrounded by almost impenetrable cane-brakes. There on the 3rd of August the Dutch troops to the number of a thousand found and attacked the Brazilians. The bulk of the population was standing aloof, his camp was full of mutiny, nevertheless John Fernandes stood firm. The Dutch charged confidently, but they could not use their firearms to advantage, and the Brazilians showed the traditional valour of their race in the use of pike and sword. The Dutch were not able to dislodge the rebels, and after losing three hundred and seventy men they retreated to Pernambuco, leaving the insurgents with all the moral prestige of victory.

The whole province rose; the troops, which had come from Bahia ostensibly to aid the Dutch in pacifying the province, went over *en masse* to the patriots; the Dutch garrisons in the outlying towns were everywhere attacked and everywhere retreated. A few grudgingly paid mercenaries were not the material with which to defend such an empire. Within a few months the Dutch were expelled from the interior and shut themselves up in the fortified seaports waiting for re-enforcements. The Indians and guerrillas spread fire and destruction through Itamarica, Parahyba, Rio Grande do Norte, and Ceará. In spite of this sudden success the position of the patriots was very critical. Without the aid of regular troops they could hardly hope to make head against the Dutch so soon as the latter received adequate re-enforcements. The news of the insurrection [Pg 364] aroused great indignation in Holland. The house of the Portuguese ambassador was surrounded by an infuriated mob, and his government had to disavow the rebellion. Willing as John IV. might be to help the Brazilians, he dare not. By the middle of 1646 an able commander, von Schoppke, arrived from Holland with a fine army. At first John Fernandes and the militia did not dare meet him in the field. The provincials hovered about the Dutch columns, cutting off detachments, and burning sugar plantations in the line of march. John Fernandes set the example by ordering the destruction of his own property.

In 1647 Barreto de Menezes, an able professional soldier, arrived in Brazil bearing a secret commission from the Portuguese king. The bickering and despairing provincials made no difficulty about recognising it, and Barreto at once began uniting the scattered militia bands and the few regulars who had clandestinely come up from Bahia.

A few miles south of Pernambuco the low hills encroach on the coast-plain, leaving only a narrow pass between themselves and the marshes. Schoppke made a sortie along the coast road with the largest part of his force,—about four thousand men,—and there at the hills of Guararapes found the patriot army, numbering two thousand two hundred. Encamped across the level ground they barred his way, with the evident intention of giving him battle, and there on the 18th of August, 1648, was fought out the question whether Brazil should be Dutch or Portuguese. The defeat of the patriots would have meant the hopeless collapse of the [Pg 365] rebellion and the giving up by poor little Portugal of the last vestige of her claim to Brazil. Success meant that they might prolong the war for years and finally tire out Holland, or give the Portuguese government a chance to do something by negotiation.

The battle began with the Dutch taking possession of the higher ground whence their artillery inflicted some damage, but when they charged down the hill, attempting to outflank and surround the Brazilians, there ensued a confused and desperate struggle with cold steel. The regulars proved no match for these farmers, who were fighting for their homes and religion. The Dutch battalions broke and fled up the hill, followed by the Brazilians. Then the Dutch reserve came into action and the battle rolled back to the low ground, where the result was decided face to face and man to man. Some of the braver of the Dutch imprudently went through the Brazilian lines into the marshes, where they suffered terrible slaughter at the hands of the reserve. More than a thousand Hollanders perished, with seventy-four officers. Thirty-three standards remained in the hands of the Brazilians, and the remnants of the Dutch army fled to the shelter of the walls of Pernambuco. The cowardice shown by many of his troops is the only excuse offered by the Dutch general for this shameful defeat suffered at the hands of a militia inferior not only in equipment and artillery, but in numbers and advantage of position.

The descendants of the victors at Guararapes have never forgotten that it was a Brazilian and not a [Pg 366] Portuguese triumph. The Brazilians proved to their own satisfaction that their resources were sufficient to defend their institutions, and it has been well said that on that day the Brazilian nation was born.

The parsimonious merchants whose money was invested in the Company made a half-hearted effort to retrieve this unexpected reverse, but re-enforcements were sent out so grudgingly that a similar sortie next year was even more overwhelmingly defeated at the very same place. Even then the Brazilian hopes of ultimate success would have been small if at this very juncture the world-power of Holland had not received its first great check by the breaking out of the war with Oliver Cromwell. With English fleets sweeping the North Sea and Blake's cannon thundering at the Texel, the States-General had no forces to spare on far-away Brazil. The patriots kept the Dutch shut up in Pernambuco and were undisputed masters of the rest of the province. So long as communication by sea remained open the Dutch, however, could maintain themselves indefinitely. Re-enforcements might come at any time from Holland and the negotiations by Portugal were uncertain, and might, indeed, lead to Brazil's being exchanged for an advantage elsewhere.

John Fernandes steadfastly maintained the siege, urging his followers not to lay down their arms so long as a Dutchman remained in Brazil. The pusillanimous Portuguese king did not dare help the Pernambucanos, and neither was he honest enough to abide by the treaties he had made with Holland, giving up all claim to [Pg 367] North Brazil. Matters remained in this anomalous position until 1654, when John Fernandes by a single audacious stroke cut through the tangle made by complicated and timid European diplomacy.

In the fall of 1653 the annual Bahia fleet sailed from the Tagus, convoyed by powerful men-of-war. The Dutch had no naval force on the South American coast able to cope with it. When the Portuguese fleet hove in sight of Pernambuco, the Brazilian commanders from their fortified besieging camp just to the south of the city entered into communication with the Admiral. John Fernandes begged the latter to lend him some cannon for a few days and meanwhile to blockade the port. The patriot leader saw that the isolated garrison of mercenaries would have no heart to hold out for long. The Portuguese Admiral refused, saying, truly enough, that he had no instructions to aid the insurgent Brazilians, and that he did not care to risk his head by precipitating a war between Portugal and Holland. Fernandes answered that with or without his aid the assault would be made, and the Admiral yielded to his natural feelings and lent the Brazilians some big guns. John Fernandes planted them where they commanded an outlying fort he knew to be vital to the city's defences. Schoppke was compelled to retire within the central city; the Brazilians made successful night assaults on several positions, and drew their lines closer and closer until the place was untenable. On the 26th of January, 1655, the Dutch general signed a capitulation, surrendering not only Pernambuco, but all the [Pg 368] other places held by the Dutch in Brazil. His twelve hundred troops were given safe passage home, and all resident Hollanders were allowed three months to settle their affairs before leaving.

Thus ended the Dutch dominion in Brazil. Four provinces, three cities, eight towns, fourteen fortified places, and three hundred leagues of coast were definitely restored to the Portuguese Crown. A gigantic commercial speculation had failed before the obstinate resistance of a few farmers animated by a love of country and religion. Twenty-five years of bloody warfare or sulky acquiescence in alien rule had welded the Portuguese colonists along the Brazilian coast into a nation. Directly from the Dutch they had learned little or nothing. Rather were the traits which have ever since been the cause of Brazil's industrial backwardness intensified.

The characteristics of the leaders in the Pernambuco war of independence epitomise the races of Brazil. Vidal is the type of a high-class Brazilian—generous, jealous, spendthrift, proud, intelligent, quick at expedients, and not too scrupulous in his use of them. Camarrão, the Indian, perished before the final victory as if to show symbolically that his race had not the stamina to hold out in competition with white or black. Dias represents the negro—unsurpassable in fidelity and personal courage, and needing only leadership to show transcendent military qualities.

John Fernandes was a curious mixture of the mediæval and modern. His wealth did not make him cautious [Pg 369] where his country was concerned; he had been honoured with the intimate confidence of those whom he fought; he was grave, silent, reserved, strongest when others were most discouraged; no feeling of vanity ever interfered with his purposes; if another man could do a piece of work better than he, he stepped aside; when success was in sight he imperturbably let showier men have the glory. Religious faith and feudal loyalty were the mainsprings of his nature; nevertheless in war he was cautious, indefatigable, and calculating. In crises he struck like a sledge-hammer, though he could wait patiently and uncomplainingly for an opportunity. His was not a pride that disdains artifices. He conspired secretly and subtly, and with all his apparent moderation of character he blindly and unreasoningly hated everything Protestant and non-Portuguese. On the hill at Tabocas his battle-cry was: "Portuguese! At the heretics! God is with us!" When the Dutch made their last desperate charge, and it seemed as if all was up with his band of insurgents, he refused to flee, but stood beside the crucifix, calling on the Virgin and the saints, and exhorting his companions to die rather than yield to the unbelievers. When the Dutch gave back he fell on his knees and intoned a hymn. With each new victory gained he vowed a church to the Virgin. When desperate over the hesitation of the Admiral in the last scene of the war, his final argument, made in all sincerity, was that failure to expel the Dutch meant exposing thousands of Catholics to the temptation of denying their faith by a renewal of the heretic rule, and that for [Pg 370] himself, rather than share the responsibility for the murder of thousands of souls, he would lead his Brazilians to certain death.

Relentless to his enemies, to his friends and dependents he was kindness itself. It is related that a Portuguese, landed with hardly clothes enough to cover him, and seeking a protector, was directed to Fernandes. The latter was mounting his horse to go on a journey. To the man's offer of allegiance and appeal for help, he answered: "I am going to my house ten miles away and have no leisure now to relieve you, but follow me thither on foot. If you are too weak to walk, take this horse I am on. If you are faithful you shall have support as long as my means hold out; if they fail, and there should be nothing else to eat, I will cut off a leg and we will eat it together." This was said with so grave a face and severe a manner that the poor Portuguese thought he meant to repulse him. But on inquiry he found that Fernandes rarely smiled and that literally all that he had was at the service of his adherents.

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CHAPTER X

THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

In 1621 the northern provinces, Ceará, Maranhão, and Pará, had been separated from the rest of Brazil and erected into an independent government called the State of Maranhão. In Ceará the cattle-industry flourished; around the beautiful bay of Maranhão the Azoreans multiplied their colonies. Cotton, mandioc, and sugar were grown in large quantities; the cotton manufacture soon became an important industry. But the mysterious Amazon, whose entrance was guarded by the town of Pará, seemed most attractive of all. No civilised man had penetrated its length since Orellana's adventurous voyage of a century before. In 1638 Jacomé Raymundo, an able Brazilian, temporarily acting as governor of Pará, determined to explore the great river. The expedition which he sent out found its way up the windings of the multitudinous channels, and after eight months reached the first Spanish settlement in the east of Ecuador. The Spanish authorities at Lima and Quito saw no particular value in a route through a territory in which no gold or silver had been discovered, [Pg 372] and which by the Spanish policy could not be used for commerce. But when, two years, later Portugal regained her independence the expedition turned out to have been of vast importance. The Portuguese had found the practicable route into the great river valley; they controlled the mouth of the stream; and though the whole territory lay west of the Tordesillas line Spain never asserted any effective claim to it.

Meanwhile the conquest of the great interior plateaux to the south was rapidly proceeding. The wars with the Dutch rather stimulated than retarded it, for, so long as the Dutch commanded the sea, the widely separated provinces were obliged to communicate by land, and the Indian routes became better known to the Brazilians. Settlers driven from the sugar plantations on the coast took up cattle-raising in the interior of the northern provinces. In the extreme South, as early as 1635 the Paulistas had rooted out the Jesuit settlements from the whole region of the Paraná. To the North they traversed the São Francisco valley and the plateau of Goyaz. Manoel Correa explored the latter region in 1647, and in 1671 another Paulista, Domingos Jorge, penetrated with a force of subject Indians into the great treeless plains which extend beyond the mountain ranges bounding the São Francisco valley on the north. These plains are now the state of Piauhy. At about the same time the cattle-raisers who had established themselves on the lower São Francisco in Bahia, crossed over into the same territory of Piauhy. Within a short time the Indians were reduced to submission, and the [Pg 373] cattle ranges were extended over the plains of Piauhy, southern Ceará, and the adjacent provinces. This great conquest completed the junction of southern and central Brazil with Maranhão and Pará. Long lines of land communication were established, and over them travel was more frequent than would seem likely. Piauhy and Ceará soon produced an enormous surplus of cattle whose export into other provinces brought about a revolution in the alimentation of the coast Brazilians. The Indians along the north-east coast were gradually incorporated, destroyed, or pushed back, though it was not until 1699 that they were finally subdued in Rio Grande do Norte. From this time dates the astonishing development of the population of Ceará, who during this century have furnished nearly all the labour for the gathering of rubber.

In the South, settlements multiplied up and down the coast from Rio until nearly the whole of the present state was occupied. Rio and São Paulo flourished with the profits of the clandestine trade with the Spanish colonies. The Paulistas continued to spread in every direction. By 1654 they had occupied the headwaters of the Parahyba and west as far as Soracaba.

During the period just following the expulsion of the Dutch the Portuguese government was not able to enforce its policy of commercial exclusivism. Treaties with Holland and England gave the citizens of those countries a right to trade with Brazil, and the colonists kept up their commerce with the Spanish possessions. [Pg 374] Municipal charters were freely granted to Brazilian towns, and the existing franchises reformed according to the most liberal model in Portugal—that of Porto. Brazilians were relieved of the absurd feudal distinctions which exempted nobles alone from liability to torture, and regulated the clothes a man might wear. The extraordinary rapidity of Brazil's increase in population and territory during the middle of the seventeenth century was largely due to comparative freedom from vexatious restrictions and exactions—commercial and governmental. By the end of the century there were three-quarters of a million people in Brazil—a fivefold increase in seventy years, in spite of the fact that the most populous provinces had been the scene of war for twenty-four years of that time.

But the Portuguese government lost little time in returning to the old restrictive conditions. Since the loss of the Indies, Brazil was Portugal's principal source of wealth, and aristocracy and Court made the most of the unhappy colony.

Navigation companies were chartered and given a monopoly of all commerce—export and import. The Jesuits renewed their efforts to gain control of the Indians. In São Paulo they had no chance of success, but in the North the celebrated Padre Antonio Vieira, one of the greatest geniuses that Portugal has ever produced, was given a free hand. He nearly smothered the whites of Maranhão and Pará with a ring of missions, and his successors established settlements on the Amazon which finally spread so as to communicate with the Spanish missions in Peru, Bolivia, and Paraguay. The Brazilians of Maranhão and Pará did not object to the [Pg 375] occupation of the valley of the Amazon, but they bitterly resented the Jesuit encroachments in their own neighbourhood. In 1684 a rebellion finally broke out in Maranhão under the leadership of Manoel Beckman. He paid the forfeit with his life, but his work had warned the Portuguese authorities that they must not push their favours to the Jesuits too far.

During the long Dutch war many Pernambucan negroes had fled into the interior, where they had established themselves in independent communities and refused to recognise white supremacy. They fortified their villages with palisades, obtained wives by raids on the plantations, elected chiefs, devised rude forms of administering justice, and adopted a religion which was a mixture of the nature worship of their African ancestors with the outward forms of Christianity. In spite of numerous efforts to destroy them, these strange

republics lasted fifty years. It was not until 1697 that a Paulista chief, Domingos Jorge, who was employed after the regulars had failed, succeeded in shutting the negroes up in their great palisade at Palmares. Seven thousand men took part in the assault, and of the ten thousand negroes who defended it none were spared.

This was the only serious attempt at revolt on the part of the blacks which ever occurred in Brazil. Except for a few easily suppressed insurrections which mostly occurred in Bahia among the recent arrivals, the negroes remained in abject submission until nearly the end of the nineteenth century. The comparative [Pg 376] mildness of the Brazilian treatment of negroes, the practice of voluntary manumission, and the fact that no impenetrable race barrier existed all contributed to make slavery a less fearful thing in Brazil than in North America.

Both Spain and Portugal claimed the coast between Santos and the river Plate under the treaty of Tordesillas, but neither nation had made any serious attempt to take possession up to the end of the seventeenth century. As a matter of fact, the Tordesillas line passed near the southern boundary of the Brazilian state of São Paulo, but the Portuguese maps pushed all Brazil eight degrees to the east, and Portugal claimed that the line passed near the point where the Paraná and Uruguay unite to form the Plate. The Paulistas had made this claim effective over much of the disputed territory.

For a century after the foundation of Buenos Aires the Spaniards failed to occupy the north margin of the Plate, and in 1680 the Portuguese fore-stalled them by founding a colony and fort, called Colonia, directly opposite Buenos Aires. The Spanish governor promptly resented this piece of audacity and captured the place, but was compelled to restore it immediately by orders from Madrid. Louis XIV., who was then arbiter of Europe, had no mind to allow a war to be precipitated over so insignificant a matter as a post in an uninhabited part of South America. However, the question of right to the territory was left open for future determination. Colonia at that time was chiefly valued as an *entrepôt* for clandestine trade with the Spanish [Pg 377] provinces, but to its existence can be traced Brazilian possession of the great states of Paraná, Santa Catharina, and Rio Grande do Sul, and even Brazil's dominance in the Upper Paraná valley, a dominance which would have been lost had Spain insisted upon the true Tordesillas line.

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CHAPTER XI

GOLD DISCOVERIES—REVOLTS—FRENCH ATTACKS

The early attempts to find gold and silver had not been successful. A little gold was found in São Paulo in the sixteenth century, but no great discoveries were made until nearly the end of the seventeenth. The Paulistas, who scoured the interior in their slave-hunts, occasionally came across indications of gold, and rumours constantly reached the coast. But for a long time the Paulistas failed, either through ignorance or design, to give sufficiently exact information. After 1670 the rumours became so circumstantial that no doubt was felt that the mountain ranges around the headwaters of the São Francisco River were gold-bearing. Stimulated by government promises of liberal treatment, the Paulistas undertook the hunt in earnest. About 1690 they found the rich gold washings of Sabará, where to-day is one of the great mines of the world—the Morro Velho. This is three hundred miles directly north of Rio. In 1693, Antonio Arzão, a Paulista, penetrated west from this region to the seacoast at Victoria, bringing with him native gold in large nuggets. These were [Pg 379] sent to Portugal and created intense excitement. The Paulistas followed up these first discoveries by soon finding half a dozen other fields—all of them yielding gold in abundance to the crudest processes. A rush started that threatened to depopulate the seacoast and even Portugal itself. The find was the greatest gold discovery which had been made in the history of the world up to that time. The one province of Minas Geraes produced seven million five hundred thousand ounces within the first fifty years, and its total product to the present time has been twenty-five million ounces.

The Paulista discoverers of the mines soon became involved in quarrels with the swarms of adventurers who poured in from Portugal. The government at first did not establish any regular control over the mining region, and disputes arose between the old and new comers as to proprietorship of claims. Anarchy and civil war ensued, but the foreign element, nicknamed the "emboabas," came out on top with a strong man, Nunes Vianna, at the head of affairs. He became the virtual ruler of the region, and the Portuguese authorities at Rio, seeing their perquisites endangered, tried to get rid of him by force. They were unsuccessful, but finally managed to seduce his followers and secure a recognition of their own paramount authority by solemn promises to concede the reasonable demands of the miners. These promises were not kept. Vianna, though he had been induced to surrender on assurances that his life would be spared, was assassinated. [Pg 380]

The mining laws, at first liberal, were narrowed until exploration was discouraged and production oppressed. For years the authorities tried to collect a fixed amount for each slave employed—a provision which discouraged searches for new deposits. Then the system of requiring all gold to be taken to government melting-houses was enforced. Export in dust or nuggets was forbidden, and no gold was allowed in circulation except that which bore the government stamp showing it had paid the king's fifth. This involved

the searching of every traveller's pockets and the posting of detachments of soldiers at every crossroads. So oppressive and inconvenient was this that finally the chief miners and municipal authorities agreed to be responsible for a lump sum yearly.

The war of the emboabas ended in 1709, but troubles broke out in the mining regions from time to time down to the end of the colonial period. These struggles for local self-government—for the right to exist—were not confined to Minas. In various forms and at various times they were repeated in most of the provinces, and a strong belief in local autonomy never died out, though for long periods it was apparently crushed out of existence.

Simultaneously with the overthrow of the semi-independent government of Minas, which had been set up by the emboabas, a civil war broke out in the old province of Pernambuco. This was a struggle of the oligarchy of native Brazilian sugar-planters against the rigorous and corrupt rule of the royal governors and against the encroachments of the newly arrived Portuguese. Then, as now, foreigners conducted the trade of Brazil; the [Pg 381] Brazilian aristocrats remained on their plantations, disdaining the small economies and anxieties of commerce. The Portuguese were the peddlers, shopkeepers, and money-lenders for the community, as well as the officials of the government. In both capacities they pressed hard on the extravagant Brazilians. Olinda, the old capital, was the headquarters of the latter. Recife, three miles south, was the port and chiefly inhabited by native Portuguese. It had outrun Olinda during the Dutch occupation, but was legally only an administrative dependency of the older and smaller town. In 1709 the Portuguese government made Recife a separate city—a step which was bitterly resented by the Brazilians and especially by the close corporation of native families who controlled the Olinda municipal government. Hostilities broke out between them and the governor. Two thousand Pernambucanos invaded Recife; the troops deserted and the governor fled for his life, while the royal charter to Recife was torn to bits by the mob. The heads of the insurrection met to determine what form of government should be adopted. Bernardo Vieira, the best soldier in the colony, proposed that a republic should be founded on the plan of Venice, probably the first time a republic was ever advocated on American soil. The proposition met with much favour, but the conservatives shrank from so radical a departure. The bishop was made acting-governor, but his hand proved not firm enough to control the divergent interests and ambitions. The Portuguese—"mascates" they were called—revolted in their turn [Pg 382] and drove him from Recife. The Pernambucanos besieged the place, but the loss of the seaport was a heavy blow. The Olinda oligarchy was not able to secure the co-operation of the smaller municipalities, and civil war spread throughout the province. When a new governor appeared with a commission from the king, he had little difficulty, by promises of fair treatment, in inducing all parties to lay down their arms. No sooner, however, was he safely in power than he imprisoned and banished the chiefs of the revolt, especially selecting those who had favoured an independent republic.

All three great revolts—Beckman's in Maranhão, that of the emboabas in Minas, and the Olinda rebellion of 1710—followed substantially the same course. Local feeling was strong enough to sweep all before it for a time, but lack of capacity for organisation, intestine quarrels, want of persistency, soon enabled the Portuguese officials to re-establish themselves more firmly than ever.

Meanwhile Portugal had become involved in the War of the Spanish Succession. Colonia was again captured by the Spanish of Buenos Aires, and though it was restored at the end of the war its trade was never so prosperous afterwards. In the Upper Amazon Spanish Jesuits had come down from Quito, but the Portuguese expelled them, thereby confirming Portugal's title as far as the foothills of the Andes. The Spaniards of the eighteenth century no more than the Peruvians and Bolivians of the nineteenth were able to cope with the [Pg 383] difficulties of transit from the Pacific side of the mountains. Portugal's effective possession reached to the 70th meridian from Greenwich—sixteen hundred miles west of the Tordesillas line.

Rio was the only important Brazilian port which had escaped attack by hostile fleets during the preceding century, and the discovery of the gold mines gave a tremendous impetus to its prosperity and wealth. The only gateway to the mining territory, its population of over twelve thousand was soon one of the richest and busiest in all America. The opportunity was too tempting to be neglected by the French prize-hunters. A daring Frenchman, named Duclerc, appeared before the city in 1710, but, seeing that he had not ships strong enough to force the entrance, landed with a thousand marines forty miles down the coast. They met with no resistance in their march through the woods and arrived back of the city without loss. Thence they proceeded coolly to charge into the narrow streets in the face of the artillery fire from the hilltop forts that surround the city. The audacious enterprise was very nearly successful. The Portuguese regulars offered no effective resistance, and the main body of the French penetrated to the very centre of the city. There they were checked by a little party of students who had climbed into the governor's palace and were firing out of the windows. The French finally took the palace by assault, but meanwhile the city had risen behind them, their scattered detachments were massacred in detail, and the main body in the palace had to surrender at [Pg 384] discretion. The Portuguese sullied their victory by acts of mediæval cruelty—killing most of the prisoners.

The victims did not long remain unavenged. As soon as the news reached France, Admiral Duguay-Trouin, one of the ablest seamen his nation has produced, volunteered to lead an expedition to Rio. Wealthy merchants of St. Malo supplied the money, and in June, 1711, he sailed with seven line-of-battle ships, six frigates, and four smaller vessels, manned by five thousand picked men. Secretly as the expedition had been despatched, the Portuguese had received warning. The garrison had been re-enforced and the narrow-mouthed harbour and hill-commanded city were defended by three forts and eleven batteries, besides four ships of the line and four frigates. Favoured by a foggy morning he ran boldly in, suffering little loss. Of the Portuguese men-of-war not one escaped. Fort Villegagnon was blown up by the mismanagement of its garrison, the Portuguese became demoralised, Trouin put a battery on an unoccupied island within cannon-shot of the city, and disembarked troops to the left of the town where a range of hills made it easy to dominate the low ground. The poor governor knew no better tactics than to let the French enter the streets and then overpower them in fighting from the houses. But Trouin was too old a soldier to be caught like his fellow-countrymen the year before. He coolly advanced his batteries and soon had the town commanded on three sides; it was only a question of getting his cannon into position when he could batter the place at his [Pg 385] leisure. Panic extended from the citizens to the soldiers, and a week after the French had entered the harbour the governor fled ignominiously to the interior, and the French took possession unopposed.

Revenge and plunder had been the objects of the expedition. It would have been very difficult for the French to have remained in permanent possession of the city, and a conquest of the interior, with its large population and mountainous character, was not to be thought of. The city was admitted to ransom on giving up the surviving prisoners of the Duclerc expedition. Duguay-Trouin sailed triumphantly back to France with a treasure which netted the Norman merchants who had fitted him out ninety-two per cent. on their investment, in spite of the wrecking of the biggest ship on the homeward voyage.

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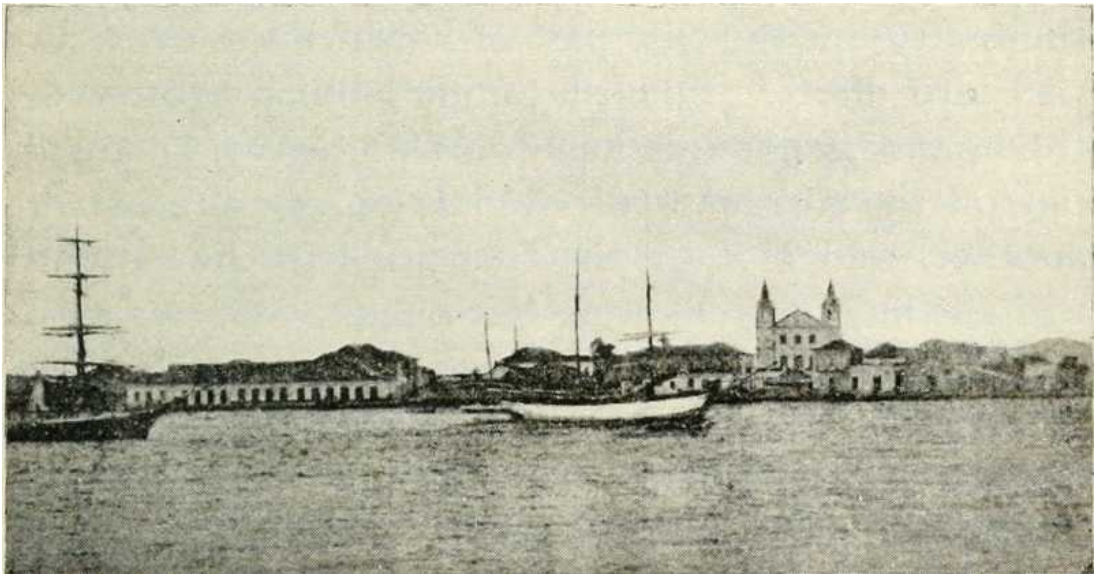
CHAPTER XII

THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Montevideo was founded in 1726 and became the nucleus of the Spanish settlements which have grown into the modern country of Uruguay. Except Colonia, the only Portuguese settlements south of the 25th degree were the town of Santa Catharina Island, the unimportant village of Laguna on the coast-plain, and the scattered ranches of a few adventurous Paulistas on the plateau.

The founding of Montevideo drew the serious attention of the Rio government to the valuable country between the Plate and Santa Catharina. The Paulistas had thoroughly explored the plains and found them swarming with cattle. The chief obstacle to the foundation of a military post as a nucleus for the settlement of Rio Grande and eastern Uruguay was the lack of a harbour on that sandy coast. When the next European war broke out, in 1735, the Spaniards again besieged Colonia, and established forts and settlements along the Uruguayan coast, from Montevideo to the present Brazilian border. In 1737, the Portuguese authorities sent an expedition to take Montevideo, which failed. On the way back the Portuguese built a little fort at the only [Pg 387] entrance which gives access to the great series of lagoons which run parallel to the coast for two hundred and fifty miles north of the southern Brazilian frontier. This is the site of the present city of Rio Grande do Sul. A few years later, a considerable number of settlers from the Azores Islands were introduced, who engaged in agriculture along the fertile borders of the great Duck Lagoon.



RIO GRANDE DO SUL.

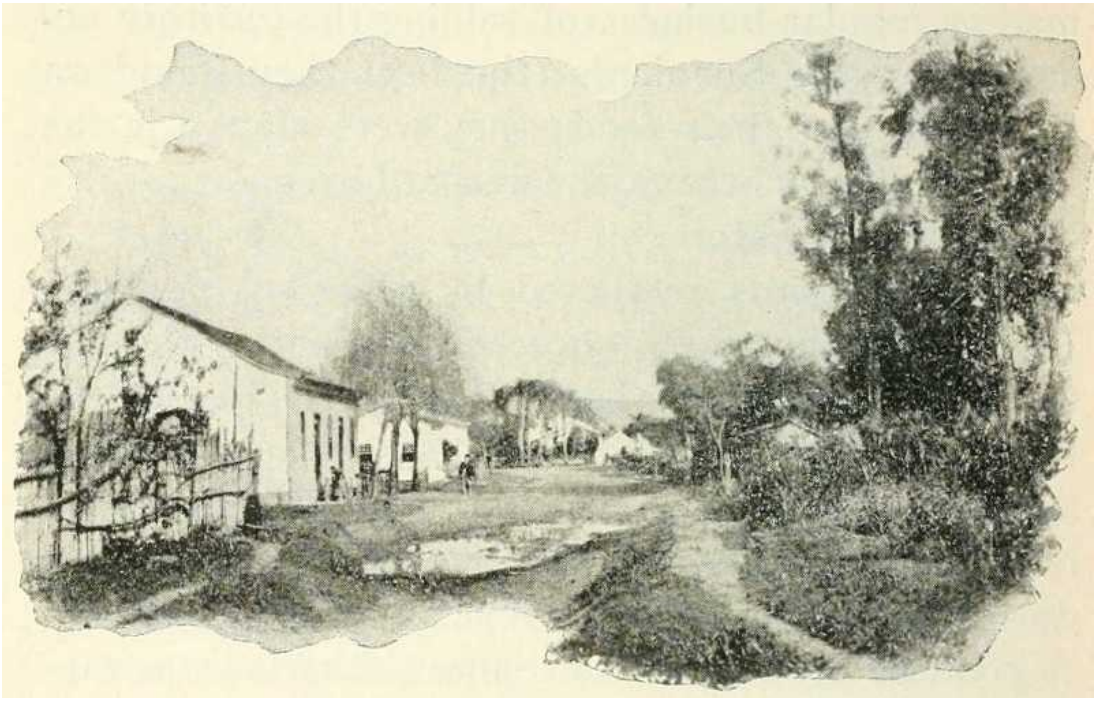
In 1750, Spain and Portugal made an attempt to reach an amicable and rational agreement about their South American boundaries. Up to that time, Spain had stubbornly claimed the territory as far north and east as Santos, and Portugal was even more unreasonable in asserting her exclusive right to the coast as far south and west as the mouth of the Uruguay. The treaty of 1750 virtually recognised the *uti possidetis*. Portugal agreed to give up Colonia, and the boundary to her possessions and those of Spain was drawn between the [Pg 388] Spanish settlements in Uruguay and the Portuguese settlements in Rio Grande. The seven Jesuit missions in the interior, two hundred miles to the north, were abandoned by the Spanish government. Spain deliberately ceded these tens of thousands of peaceful and prosperous civilised Indians, and even agreed that her troops should assist the Portuguese in the cruel dispossession. The Indians fought desperately and unavailingly. But this iniquitous provision of the treaty was the only part of it which was ever carried into effect. Spanish public opinion protested, the boundary commissions could not agree, Portugal put off the surrender of Colonia on one pretext or another, and in 1761 the treaty fell to the ground and all the questions were left open.

That year Spain and Portugal became embroiled on opposite sides in the Seven Years' War, and the Spaniards from Buenos Aires invaded the disputed territory in overwhelming force. Colonia was taken and in 1763 the Spanish governor led his army against the Portuguese settlements in Rio Grande. The fortified town of Rio Grande fell, the superior Argentine cavalry drove the Rio Grandenses back to the coast, and the Portuguese territory was reduced to the north-east quarter of the state. The flourishing farms of the Azorean settlers were laid waste, and from this invasion dates the adoption by the Rio Grandenses of pastoral habits.

The Treaty of Paris put an end to the war in Europe. The Spaniards ceased their advance, they restored Colonia once more, but retained their conquests in southern Rio Grande. [Pg 389]

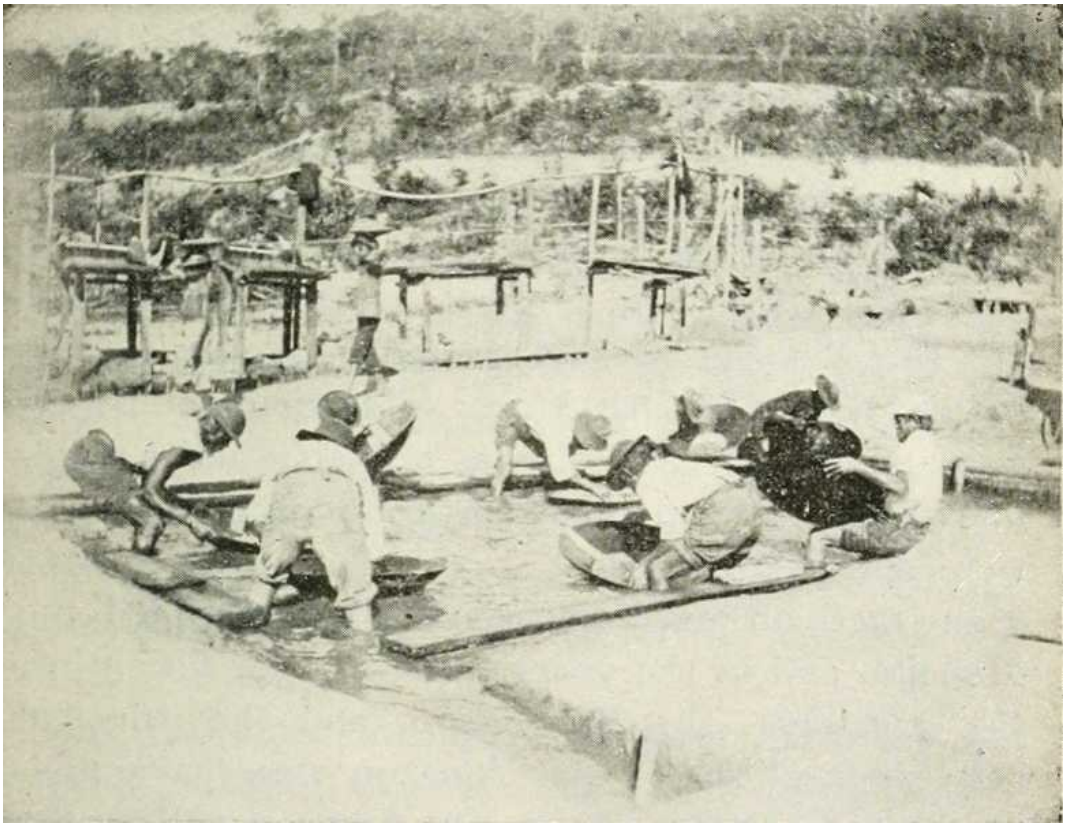
The Rio Grandenses made good use of the breathing-spell. They cared little whether there was peace or war in Europe, and four years later made a desperate effort to recapture their old capital and regain their farms in the south. Disavowed by their government, they still kept on fighting; soon they made a regular business of raiding the territory occupied by the Spaniards; the beef they found on the plains was their food; they were always in the saddle and soon became the finest of irregular cavalry and partisan fighters.

The Spaniards retaliated by invading northern Rio Grande, but never succeeded in routing the Rio Grandenses from their last strongholds. In 1775 the Brazilians were re-enforced from São Paulo and Rio and took the aggressive, and the following year recaptured the city of Rio Grande. The Spanish government took prompt steps to avenge this loss. A great fleet was sent out, Santa Catharina was captured, an army of four thousand men was on the march up from Montevideo to sweep the Portuguese out of all southern Brazil once and for all. But in this crisis European politics again saved Brazil from dismemberment. France and Spain were forming a coalition against England in the War of American Independence. Spain wished to have her hands free and to isolate England. The Spanish fleet and army were at the gates of Rio Grande when the Treaty of San Ildefonso was signed in 1777. The Portuguese definitely relinquished Colonia; Uruguay and the [Pg 390] Seven Missions remained Spanish, but most of southern Rio Grande which the Portuguese had lost in 1763, as well as Santa Catharina, was restored to them.



OLD RANCH IN RIO GRANDE.

The thirty-four years of peace which followed in Rio Grande were employed in steady growth. A craze for cattle-raising set in, and the plains were divided up into great *estancias* which were distributed among the governor's favourites or those who had distinguished themselves during the war. Substantially the entire population engaged in the cattle business. The Rio Grandenses and their cattle multiplied so rapidly that they spread out over the western part of the state, which was still Spanish, and to the south. In 1780 the curing of beef by drying and salting was introduced, which permitted its shipment, and afforded a stable market. [Pg 391]



WASHING DIAMONDS.

After the great gold discoveries in Minas during the late years of the seventeenth and early years of the eighteenth centuries, the prospectors ranged north from Sabará along the great Backbone Mountains, finding washings at many places in North Minas and Bahia. By 1740 the fields in Bahia were producing fifty to a hundred thousand ounces a year. As early as 1718 an expedition had penetrated fifteen hundred miles to the west and discovered good placers on the plateau where the headwaters of the Madeira and the Paraguay intertwine. This was the beginning of Cuyabá and the state of Matto Grosso. In ten years a million five hundred thousand ounces were taken out from these diggings. A little later still other fields were discovered farther west on the Madeira watershed. [Pg 392]

The miners at the gold camp of Tijuca in North Minas had noticed some curious little shining stones in the bottom of their pans and thought them so pretty that they used them for counters in games. Soon a wandering friar who had been in India recognised them as diamonds. This occurred in 1729, and the field thus opened up supplied the world with diamonds until the discovery of Kimberley. In the years from 1730 to 1770 five million carats were taken from the original Diamantina district, and the deposits are still second in productiveness only to those of South Africa. The diamond region was at once declared Crown property and a deadline drawn around it which none except officials were allowed to cross.

In 1716 an exploring expedition ascended the Madeira, and in the years following the Tocantins, the Araguaya, the Rio Negro, and the principal tributaries of the Upper Amazon were navigated. The Jesuit settlements in the Amazon valley continued to flourish. While the interior and the South were expanding rapidly, the coast provinces were relatively declining. The growing competition of the West Indies reduced the price of sugar. During the seventeenth century Brazil had furnished the bulk of European sugar consumption, selling her product at non-competitive prices. But the growth of the English and Dutch colonial empires brought into the field competitors who possessed as good a climate and soil and enjoyed the inestimable advantage of better government. Portugal's vicious and narrow-minded colonial system was not changed until Brazil's competitors had so far passed her that she has never since been able to make up lost ground. [Pg 393]

The wealth from mines and taxes that Brazil poured into the Portuguese treasury was squandered by the dissipated bigot, John V. When he died in 1750 he left Portugal in a bad way, and though Brazil had managed to grow in spite of mismanagement, the outlook was discouraging. The Spaniards were threatening the new settlements in the South; São Paulo had been depopulated by the migration to the mines; Bahia's and Pernambuco's sugar and tobacco industries were decadent; in Ceará and Piauhy the golden days of the cattle business had passed; Maranhão and Pará had stopped short in their development, and their spread into the interior had been cut off by the Jesuits.

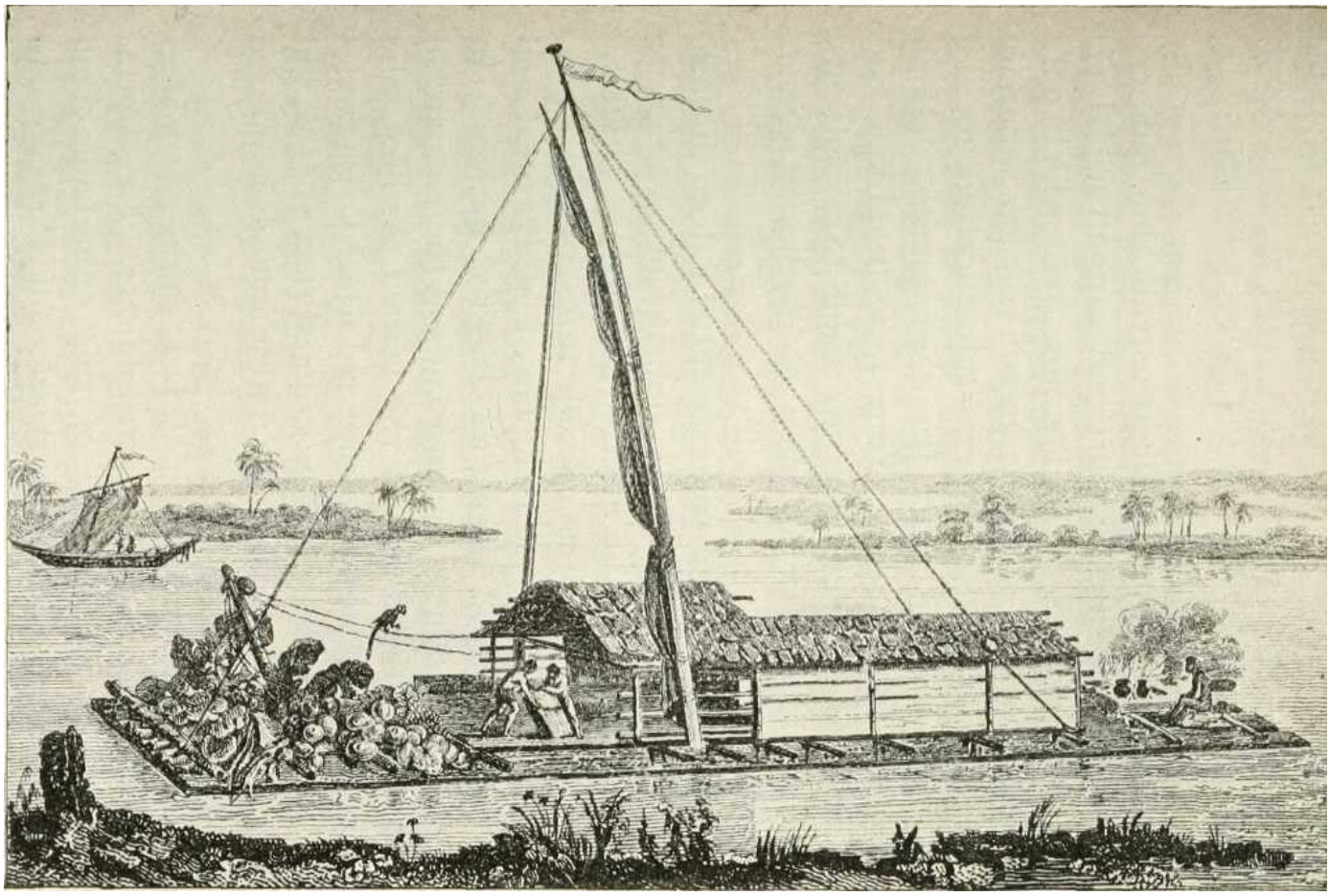
Contemporary documents prove the horrible corruption. From ministers of State down to the humblest subordinate every official had his share in the pickings. The farmers of the revenues openly paid bribes and might exact what they pleased from the taxpayers. All trade except that with Portugal was forbidden, and this was hampered in a hundred ways. Salt, wine, soap, rum, tobacco, olive oil, and hides were monopolies. All legal transactions were burdened with heavy fees; slaves paid so much a head; every river on a road was the occasion for a new toll; the exercise of professions and trades was forbidden except on the payment of heavy fees; anything that could compete with Portugal was prohibited altogether. Taxation shut off industrial enterprise at its very sources, and many of the worst features of the system then put in vogue have never been discontinued. [Pg 394]

The governors and military commanders interfered constantly with the administration of justice in favour of their friends and favourites; they accepted bribes for allowing contraband trade and permitting the immigration of foreigners; they misappropriated the funds of widows and orphans; they ignored the franchises of the municipalities; they imposed unauthorised taxes; they forced loans from suitors having claims before them; they obliged free men to work without pay; they forcibly took wives away from their husbands; they impressed the young men for the wars on the Spanish border, required every able bodied man

to serve in the militia, and commonly practised arbitrary imprisonment. How even one of the best of them interfered to regulate private affairs can best be shown by his own words:

> "I promoted the good of the people by forcibly compelling them to plant maize and pulse, and threatening to take away their lands altogether if they did not cultivate them diligently; I required the militia colonels to make exact reports about this matter and thus brought about a great increase in the production of food crops and sugar. I called the militia together for exercise on Sundays and holidays, days which otherwise the people would have spent in idleness and pleasure. Many have complained, but I have never given their complaints the slightest attention, having always followed the system of taking no notice whatever of the people's murmurs."

[Pg 395]



BOATS ON THE RIO GRANDE.
[From a steel print.]

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He describes the Brazilians as vain, but indolent and easily subdued; robust and supporting labour well, but inclined to an inaction from which only extreme poverty or the command of their superiors could rouse them. They had no education, for the only schools were a few Jesuit seminaries, and no printing-press existed. They were licentious, had no aristocracy, were unaccustomed to social subordination, and would obey no authority except the military.

Underneath the surface fermented a deep disgust. Even in the seaports the very name of government was hated, and in the interior the people withdrew themselves as much as possible from contact or participation with it. A dull hatred of Portugal and Portuguese spread among all classes of natives. In much of the country the only law was the patriarchal influence of the heads of the landed families, who often exercised powers of life and death. Instances are on record where fathers ordered their sons to kill their own sisters when the latter had dishonoured the family name.

With the death of John V. in 1750 the great Marquis of Pombal became prime minister. The enormous energy and activity of this remarkable man revolutionised the administration of Portugal and Brazil. Official corruption was severely punished; order replaced confusion; agriculture, industry, and commerce were protected and encouraged. In spite of the threatened exhaustion of the placers mining flourished. Maranhão and Pará took a new start; the worst monopolies were abolished; the price of sugar rose with the great colonial wars and the adoption of reasonable regulations. Wealth and revenues increased apace and peace and security were self-guarded. When Pombal fell, after twenty-seven years in power, Brazil's population had risen to two millions; Rio was a city of fifty thousand and the capital had been transferred there; Bahia had forty thousand; Minas contained four hundred thousand people; the yield of gold was four hundred thousand carats yearly, and the diamond production one hundred and fifty thousand carats, and, finally, Santa Catharina and Rio Grande had been saved from the Spaniards and settled. Pombal had made short work of the Jesuits. In 1755 he took away their rights over their Indians, and four years later issued an order for their immediate and unconditional expulsion and the confiscation of their property.

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Pombal had no favourites; he spared no individuals and no classes in his work of ruthlessly concentrating all power in the Crown. But he built a Frankenstein of which he himself was the helpless victim the moment his old master died. Unwittingly he prepared the way for the triumph of the ideas of the French Revolution both in Portugal and Brazil, and his most beneficent measures were the most fatal to the permanence of his despotic system. Commercial prosperity gave the Brazilian people resources; the impartial administration of law gave them some conceptions of civic pride and independence; the encouragement of education, small as it was, helped start an intellectual movement which spread over the wilds of Brazil the liberal principle then fermenting in Europe.

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Immediately upon his fall in 1777 the Portuguese government reverted to most of the old abuses, but the economic impulse did not at once die out.

Pombal had not only expelled the Jesuits, but had taken effective measures against enslaving the Indians. The latter separated themselves from the whites, and miscegenation largely decreased. On the other hand, the importation of negro slaves had been continued on a large scale throughout the eighteenth century and the proportion of blacks in the mining and sugar districts had increased. Intermixture with negroes was stimulated by the seclusion of the white women. The young men often took mistresses from among the slaves, and these unions sometimes subsisted after legitimate marriage. The system of double *ménages*, however, decreased as manners became more liberal, and opportunities for social intercourse between the sexes increased.

The more energetic Brazilians acquired the rudiments of learning in the Jesuit schools, and a few fortunate youths were sent to the University at Coimbra in Portugal. In the early decades of the eighteenth century societies for the discussion of literary and scientific questions were established in Rio and Bahia. In the centres of population little groups of scholars began to gather who surreptitiously obtained the writings of [Pg 399] French and English political philosophers. Suddenly, in the latter half of the century, a dazzling literary outburst occurred. Its seat was not in Rio, the political, nor Bahia, the ecclesiastical capital, nor yet in Pernambuco, the cradle of the nationality, but in Ouro Preto, the chief place of the mining province of Minas, twenty days' journey on muleback from the coast, and among a rude and unlettered population. Within a few years appeared six of the foremost poets of the Portuguese language: the lyrics, Gonzaga, Claudio, Silva Alvarengo, and Alvarengo Peixoto, and the epics, Basilio da Gama and Santa Rita Durão. He who writes the songs of a people rather records their history than influences it. The writings of the Minas lyric poets are the best documents extant on the character of the Brazilians of the colonial period. They clearly reveal that culture was only at its beginnings; that patriotism and national pride were indefinite and shadowy; that religion was neither dogmatic nor absorbing; that polite society had not come into being, and that the intellectual element entered little into the relations of the sexes.

The independence of the United States suggested to a few Brazilians the possibility of freeing their country from Portugal. In 1785 a dozen Brazilian students at Coimbra formed a club for this purpose, and one of them wrote to Thomas Jefferson, then Minister to France, asking American aid. Jefferson was interested, but answered that nothing could be done until the Brazilians themselves had risen in arms. A like impulse was working in the minds of the poets and their friends at Ouro Preto. A child-like conspiracy was formed whose [Pg 400] object was to found a republic with San John d'El Rei as capital and Ouro Preto as the seat of a university. A few practical men listened to the plans of the conspirators probably with a view of turning a disturbance to account in preventing the government from putting into effect an obnoxious gold tax then being threatened. Among those let into the inner circle was a young sergeant nicknamed "Tiradentes." He undertook the task of fomenting an uprising among the troops, but before anything practical had been done the whole thing had been given away to the authorities. The conspirators were arrested and taken to Rio, where the frightened governor instituted a formal and elaborate trial and took a fearful vengeance upon the helpless boys and poets. Poor Tiradentes, being without powerful connections, was hanged and quartered. His memory is now revered in Brazil as that of the first martyr to independence and the precursor of the republic. The gentle Claudio hanged himself in prison after having been tortured into a confession implicating his friends. Gonzaga and Alvarengo, with several others, were banished to Africa.

Republican and separatist ideas had, however, made no headway among the Brazilian masses. Brazil's independence was to come by the force of circumstances and not by any deliberate national effort, and for a republic she was destined to wait a century more.

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CHAPTER XIII

THE PORTUGUESE COURT IN RIO

The political development of colonial Brazil may be divided into three epochs. First, there was the confusion of early colonisation, the unsuccessful attempt to establish a system of feudal captaincies, the struggles against the Indians, French, and Jesuits, and the search for a solid economic foundation for the new commonwealth. On the whole, this era contained the promise of the ultimate development of a freer governmental system than that of Portugal.

Next followed the Spanish dynasty and the wars against the Dutch. Control of Brazil by the home government was weakened, and the colonists learned their own military power. The years following the expulsion of the Dutch—1655 to 1700—were the brightest politically in Brazil's colonial history. The municipalities, governed by local oligarchies of landowners, exercised functions not contemplated by the Portuguese code. Though the military governors were continually encroaching, and the system was imperfect, it was in essence thoroughly local. Its fundamental defect was the want of co-operation between the towns. [Pg 402]

The third period began with the consolidation of Portugal's international position in the closing years of the seventeenth century. Once secure from foreign attacks, she renewed the exploitation of Brazil with redoubled eagerness. The discovery of the mines made the plunder enormous. At first there were resistance and even formidable rebellions like Beckman's in Maranhão, of the mascates in Pernambuco, or of the emboabas in Minas. But the civic vitality of the people was not great enough to sustain any continuous and effective opposition. Early in the eighteenth century the municipalities were already at the mercy of the military governors, and Brazil was governed partly by petty despots and partly by numerous feeble local bodies who were without cohesion or power to resist interference. Brazil would have remained a dependency of Portugal during an indefinite period had it not been for a series of events which arose in Europe out of the French

Revolution.

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DOM JOHN VI.
[From an old woodcut.]

By 1807 England was the only power which still defied Napoleon. Portugal had been Great Britain's ally for a century, but Napoleon found it necessary to have command of Lisbon and Porto in order to enforce his Berlin and Milan decrees. He peremptorily commanded Portugal to give up her English alliance. The pusillanimous John, who had been prince regent since the insanity of his mother in 1792, hesitated and shuffled, seeking to put off the emperor with negotiations and evasions and a show of hostility to England. A single despatch indicating his double dealing was enough for Napoleon, who promptly made an agreement with Spain for the division of Portugal and ordered Junot to march on Lisbon. The people were ready to make a desperate resistance, but their king was in two minds each day, and the army had been withdrawn from the frontier to bid the British fleet a hypocritical defiance. John shed tears over his unhappy country, but prepared to save his own person by a flight to Rio. Junot had passed the frontier and was advancing on Lisbon by forced marches. The Prince Regent and his Court huddled their movable property on board the men-of-war lying in the Tagus. Fifteen thousand persons, including most of the nobility, and fifty millions of property and [Pg 404] treasure were embarked. Junot's advance guard arrived at the mouth of the river on the 27th of November, 1807, in time to see the fleet just outside and bearing south under British convoy.

Six weeks later the exiles caught sight of the coast of Brazil, destined thereafter to be the principal seat of the Portuguese race. The Prince Regent disembarked at Bahia, where the people received him with enthusiastic demonstrations of loyalty and tried desperately hard to induce him to make their city his capital. He adhered to the original plan, and on the 7th of March, 1808, arrived at Rio, where he was received with equal cordiality. No conditions were imposed on the helpless fugitives. The first acts of the prince regent proved that the removal would be of inestimable advantage to Brazil. He promulgated a decree opening the five great ports to the commerce of all friendly nations. The system of seclusion and monopolies fell to the ground at a single blow. Other decrees removed the prohibitions on manufacturing and on trades. Foreigners were allowed to come to Brazil either for travel or residence, and were guaranteed personal and property rights; a national bank was established; commercial corporations were given franchises; a printing-press was set up; military and naval schools and a medical college were founded. Foreigners were encouraged to immigrate and that improvement in art, industries, civilisation, and manners began which can only result from the daily contact of different types of humanity. For the first time Brazil was opened to scientific [Pg 405] investigation, and scholars, engineers, and artists were imported to aid in making its resources known. The commercial nations lost no time in trying to get a foothold in this virgin market; they sent their consuls and salesmen, and within a few months importations, principally from Great Britain, far exceeded any possible demand.

The prince regent found his South American empire divided into eighteen provinces. These constitute the present states of the Brazilian union—the only changes having been the separation of Alagoas from Pernambuco and of Paraná from São Paulo, besides the erection of the city of Rio into a neutral district. Of the three millions of people one-third were negro slaves, and the free negroes and mulattos numbered as many more. The proportion of whites in the whole country was not more than a fourth, and in the larger coast cities, in the sugar districts, and the mining regions, it descended to a seventh and even a tenth. Civilised Indians were most numerous in Pará and Amazonas, and whites predominated most in the extreme South and in the stock-raising interior. In the century since, the whites have increased to forty per cent. and the negroes have fallen to less than twenty-five, in spite of the large slave importation in the first half of the nineteenth century. Sugar was still the great staple. Exports of gold and precious stones had fallen with the exhaustion of the best placers late in the preceding century. Tobacco was largely produced, especially in Bahia, and Maranhão and Pará were centres of a flourishing cotton trade. Rice, indigo, and pepper were exported on a [Pg 406] considerable scale, and the production of coffee had been carried from Pará to Rio, and was rapidly increasing.

The people of the interior were mostly clothed in coarse cottons manufactured at home; probably nine-

tenths went barefoot and lived in rude houses without ornamentation and conveniences. The slave system, the large landed estates, the want of diversification of industry, the general apathy, the ease of maintaining one's self in the mild climate—all these causes co-operated to lessen consuming power and to diminish Brazil's value as a market for imported merchandise.

Great estates, many of them owned by religious corporations, were the rule. Only the best parts of these estates were cultivated. Enclosures were almost unknown, and the farm buildings were dilapidated. Though next to sugar the chief wealth, cattle were neglected, breeds were not kept up, and the making of butter was so little understood that it was worth a dollar a pound. The proprietors of the sugar ranches left everything to their slaves. Ploughs were unknown; lumber was sawed by hand; water power was rarely used for any purpose, though so abundant. The only schools were a few in the towns; artificial light was practically unused; the cities were dilapidated, and their filthy streets were full of stagnant water. Horsemen rode on the sidewalks in the centre of Rio itself.

Freight was brought from the interior on muleback over narrow trails, and hardly any roads for wheeled vehicles existed. The mountains and heavily forested coast regions were extremely difficult to penetrate, but [Pg 407] in the sparsely forested interior the old Indian trails furnished facilities for constant communication, which was astonishingly rapid considering the circumstances.

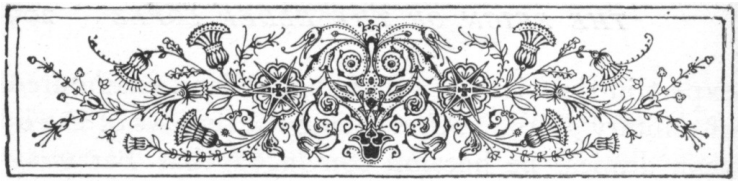
The people were very hospitable; to receive a guest was an honour; each ranch had special quarters for travellers, and the only pay the stranger could offer was to tell the news. Outside the ports no foreigner had ever been seen, and the first Englishman who visited São Paulo in 1809 was as much of a curiosity as an Esquimau would be to-day.

During John's stay in Rio, Brazil was little involved in foreign difficulties. In 1808 an expedition was sent from Pará, which took possession of Cayenne, but the place was restored to the French in 1815. In the south the breaking out of the Argentine revolution in 1810 was a temptation for the Prince Regent to increase Brazil's territory. After the expulsion of the Spaniards by the populace of Buenos Aires, the Spanish forces in Montevideo held that place against the patriots for four years. John sent an army into Uruguay in 1811 nominally to help the Spaniards, but he had to withdraw it because of British pressure. After the surrender of Montevideo by the Spaniards a civil war broke out amongst the patriots of Uruguay and the adjacent Argentine provinces. The warring factions trespassed on the territory of their Brazilian neighbours. John determined to seize the coveted north bank of the Plate for himself. In 1815 the celebrated guerrilla chief, Artigas, invaded the Seven Missions, which had been seized in 1801, and throughout that year and the next [Pg 408] the Rio Grandenses fought desperately to expel him. Finally Artigas was decisively defeated, and the Portuguese army marched down the coast and entered Montevideo without opposition. They were welcomed by the factions opposed to Artigas, but the Buenos Aires government protested and Artigas kept up a resistance in the interior until he was overthrown by rival Argentine chieftains. From 1817 to 1821 Uruguay remained in the military occupation of Brazilian troops, and in the latter year it was formally annexed under the title of the Cisplatine Province.

Brazil had had to assume the burdens as well as reap the advantages of being an independent nation. The whole extravagant government with its swarm of hangers-on, who had bankrupted both nations together, was now saddled on Brazil alone. John's advisers regarded liberal principles as dangerous to civil order, and considered all French and North Americans as firebrands whose presence in Brazil might start the flame of revolution. The United States minister was treated as if he were a Jacobin agent, and American ships were searched for Napoleon's spies. However, the removal of the Court to Rio had set forces in motion which ultimately transformed Brazil. Free ports were open doors for ideas and education as well as merchandise. Free manufacturing and immigration diversified industry and spread energetic habits. The influx of so many educated Portuguese and the introduction of the printing-press stimulated a desire for instruction among the [Pg 409] Brazilians. Ambition for employment in the public service, the road to which, under the Portuguese system, has always lain through the gates of a university, co-operated. A considerable educated class began to be formed, though the intellectual movement never extended into the body of the people. Through the former class the nation found a means of expression. A spirit of inquiry and unrest was roused, but the movement was intellectual rather than instinctive; theoretical rather than practical; from the top down, and directed more toward revolutionising the central government than developing local administration.

The first outbreak on Brazilian soil against absolutism was the Pernambuco revolution of 1817. Five lodges of Free Masons existed in the city; the priests themselves were most earnest preachers of political freedom; merchants and sugar-planters wanted lower taxes; the prosperity of the sugar trade had made the people self-confident. A conspiracy was formed which had the sympathy of many of the clergy and influential citizens. An attempt to arrest the principal agitators resulted in a riot; the troops were mostly Brazilian, and rose in favour of their compatriots, and the populace joined them. The governor fled, leaving the public departments, and the treasury containing a million dollars in the hands of the revolutionists. The movement became at once frankly separatist and republican. A Committee of Public Safety was named; the Portuguese flags were torn down; a temporary constitution proclaimed; a printing-press set up to publish a liberal newspaper. [Pg 410] Messengers were despatched to the interior and to the neighbouring provinces to announce the overthrow of despotism and to invite co-operation, but they met with no enthusiastic reception. Fear of the aggressive Jacobinism of the city of Pernambuco cooled the slave-owners and conservatives, and the dignitaries on the revolutionary committee were shocked by the impetuosity of their radical colleagues. The insurgents had not had time to provide themselves with arms, and a Portuguese fleet from Bahia quickly blockaded the port. When the royal troops came up they found the interior of the province in civil war, and the radicals were soon backed into the city, where a short siege compelled them to capitulate. The more aggressive leaders were shot by court-martial and a military government was set up. Hundreds of prisoners were carried off to Bahia, where they remained until the great reaction of 1821.

[Pg 411]



CHAPTER XIV

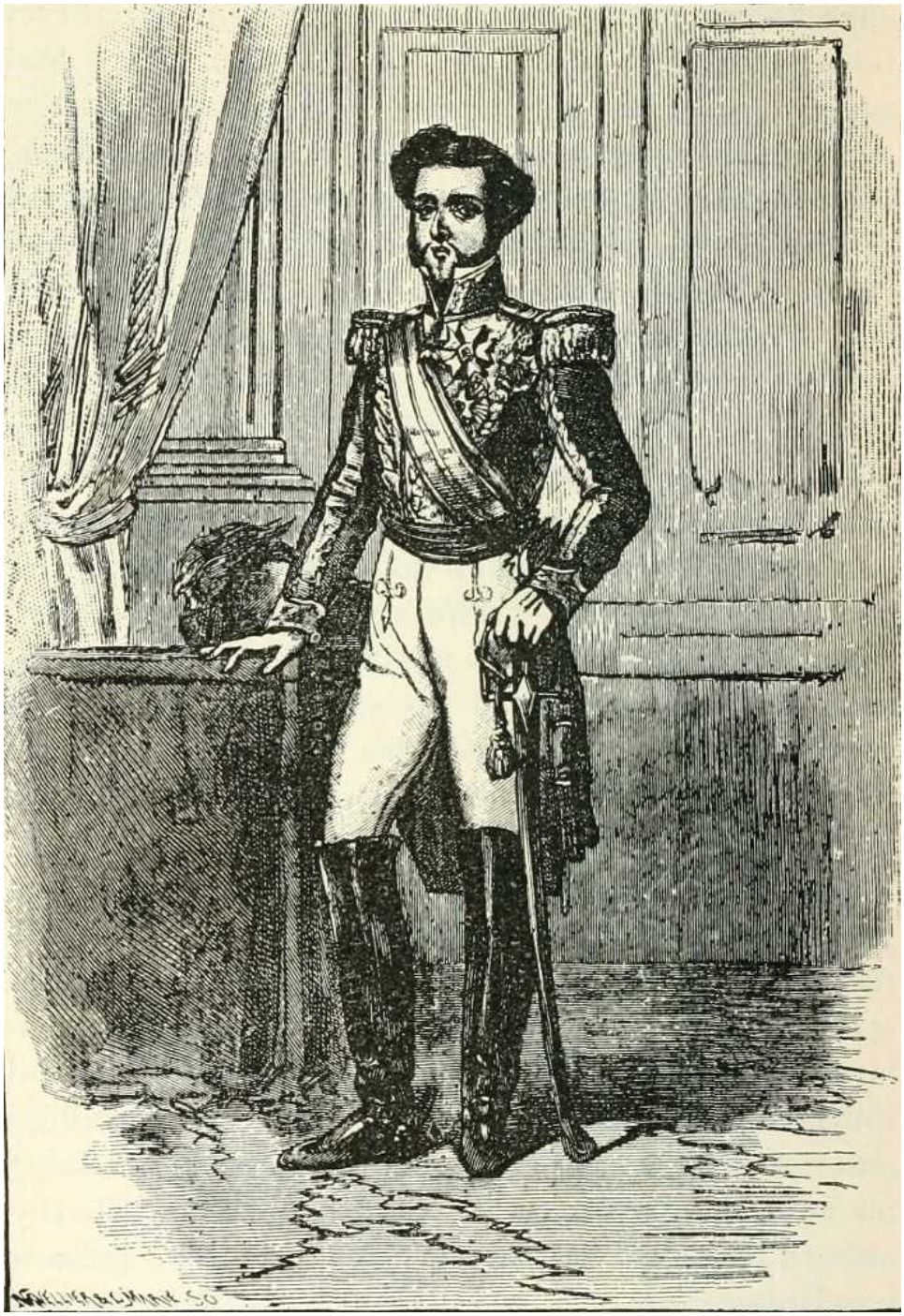
INDEPENDENCE

In 1820 the standard of revolt was raised in Cadiz against the Spanish Bourbons, who, with the aid of the Holy Alliance, had re-established absolutism after the fall of Napoleon. The feeble Ferdinand was compelled to accept a liberal constitution. When the news reached Lisbon the Regency, acting there for King John, was panic-stricken. Communication with Spain was forbidden and word sent off post-haste to John to urge his immediate return to Portugal, or at least the sending of his eldest son, as the only means of pacifying the deep dissatisfaction felt because of the absence of the Court and government. In Porto—always the centre of liberal movements—a formidable conspiracy was formed which included the leading citizens and the officers of the garrison, and in August, 1820, the royal authority was overthrown after scarcely a show of resistance, and a provisional junta installed. The movement spread over the northern provinces and thence to Lisbon, where a junta assumed power in December. After some confusion it was agreed temporarily to adopt the [Pg 412] Spanish Constitution, to summon the Cortes, and to retain the Braganza dynasty as constitutional monarchs.

The news of the rising in Porto spread like wildfire through the Portuguese possessions beyond sea. Madeira and the Azores immediately installed revolutionary juntas, and some of the Brazilian provinces could not wait until the assembling of the Cortes before establishing free governments. Among native Brazilians and immigrated Portuguese, among soldiers and citizens alike, the enthusiasm for a constitution was well-nigh universal. In Pará, Pernambuco, and Rio Grande do Sul, the royal governors were dispossessed by the united soldiers and people, and the Spanish Constitution proclaimed as the law of the land. Rio, however, lay quiet, and it was not until February, 1821, that the Bahia garrison deposed the governor, and installed a provisional junta, which, protesting allegiance to the House of Braganza, proclaimed the Spanish Constitution, nominated deputies to the Cortes, and promised to adopt whatever definite constitution might be framed by that body.

The action of Bahia was decisive. Throughout the interior it met with approval. That John could hope for no support from Brazil in case he decided to make a struggle against the Portuguese revolutionists, was evident. Reluctantly he issued a proclamation announcing his intention to send Dom Pedro, his eldest son, to treat with the Cortes, and he promised to adopt such parts of the new constitution as might be found expedient for Brazil. To such delay native Brazilians and the Portuguese-born were alike opposed. In Rio the troops and [Pg 413] people arose, demanding an unconditional promise to ratify any constitution the Cortes might adopt. On the 26th of February a great crowd assembled in the streets, and while the cowardly King skulked in his suburban palace, the Prince Pedro addressed the people, swearing in his father's name and his own to accept unreservedly the expected constitution. The multitude insisted on marching out to the King's palace to show their enthusiastic gratitude. Trembling with fear John was forced to get into his carriage, and the miserable man was frightened out of his wits when the crowd took the horses out to drag him with their own hands. He fainted away and, when he recovered his senses, sat snivelling, protesting between his sobs his willingness to agree to anything, and sure that he was going to suffer the fate of Louis XVI.

[Pg 414]



DOM PEDRO I.
[From an old woodcut.]

Thereafter Dom Pedro, though only twenty-two years old, was the principal figure in Brazil. He resembled his passionate, unrestrained, and unscrupulous mother rather than his vacillating, pusillanimous father. He had grown up neglected and uncontrolled in the midst of his parents' quarrelling and the confusion of the removal to Brazil, receiving no education except that of a soldier, and hardly able to write his native tongue correctly. He was handsome, brave, wilful, arrogant, loved riding and driving, was eager and shameless in the pursuit of pleasure. His manners were frank and attractive and he was active-minded, quick to absorb new impressions, enterprising, strong-willed, loved popularity, and intensely enjoyed being the principal dramatic [Pg 415] figure in any crisis. His personal courage was unquestionable, and he was prompt of decision in the face of dangers and difficulties. While capable of warm friendships and with strong impulses of devotion and gratitude, he lacked real faithfulness. Between him and his father little love and no sympathy existed. Prior to the events of 1821 he had not been admitted to the councils in state affairs, and his closest friends were among the young Portuguese officers, who, like most of their class, sympathised with the constitutional movement. Pedro was a Free Mason, and the Liberal opinions advocated in the lodges greatly influenced him. To Pedro, therefore,—young, ardent, popular, holding progressive notions,—both Brazilian and Portuguese Liberals naturally turned.

Seeing the rôle of leader and ruler of Brazil ready to his hand, Pedro favoured the departure of his father for Portugal. A meeting of the Rio electors, held on the 21st of April, to elect members to the Cortes suddenly changed into a tumult, and demanded that the King assent to the Spanish Constitution before his departure. He had no choice but to yield, though probably neither he nor the popular leaders had ever read the document. The demonstrations continuing, Pedro became uneasy lest his father's journey should be delayed, and marched his troops into the square and cleared the people out at the point of the bayonet. This audacious move was followed by general stupefaction, and the King quietly escaped, leaving Pedro as regent. As his [Pg 416] vessel weighed anchor he said to his son: "I fear Brazil before long will separate herself from Portugal; if so, rather than allow the crown to fall to some adventurer, place it on thy own head."

The grasping policy of the Portuguese members of the Cortes furnished the impulse that drove the Brazilians into union and independence. The Cortes met in Lisbon, and, although most of the Brazilian

delegates had not arrived, immediately undertook to pass measures touching the most important interests of the younger kingdom. In December, 1821, news reached Brazil that decrees had been enacted requiring the prince to leave Brazil, abolishing the appeal courts at Rio, creating governors who were to supersede the juntas and be independent of local control, and sending garrisons to the principal cities. Tremendous popular excitement followed. The coupling of the order for Pedro's retirement with the provisions for the enslavement and disintegration of Brazil, made the provinces realise that he was the only centre around which they could rally for effective resistance. A cry rose up from the whole country, praying Pedro not to abandon them. The address sent by the provincial junta of São Paulo was penned by the hand of José Bonifacio de Andrada, and may well be called the Brazilian declaration of independence.

> "How dare these Portuguese deputies, without waiting for the Brazilian members, promulgate laws which affect the dearest interests of this realm? How dare they dismember Brazil into isolated parts possessing no common centre of strength and union? How dare they deprive your Royal Highness of the Regency with which your august father, our Monarch, had invested you? How dare they deprive Brazil of the tribunals instituted for the interpretation and modification of laws; for the general administration of ecclesiastical affairs, of finance, commerce, and so many institutions of public utility? To whom are the unhappy people hereafter to address themselves for redress touching their business and judicial interests?"

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José Bonifacio, whose voice and example, more than any other man's, gave expression and direction to the aspiration for independence, belonged to the English parliamentary school which was dominant then in liberal thought. The elevation of the young and progressive prince to an independent throne seemed an easy method of establishing constitutional government, as well as of securing Brazil's autonomy. Pedro did not hesitate long in acceding to the wish of the Brazilians. On January 9, 1822, he formally announced that he would remain in Brazil—thus defying the Portuguese Cortes. The word "independence" had not yet been employed, and there was a very general hope that the Portuguese would listen to reason when the Brazilian deputies arrived in Lisbon. The only active resistance to Pedro in Brazil came from the Portuguese soldiers, some of whom revolted and went so far as to march under arms to a point commanding the city of Rio, but their nerve failed them in face of the immense concourse of citizens who were preparing to fight.

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DOM JOSÉ BONIFACIO DE ANDRADA.
[From a steel print.]

Pedro threw himself unreservedly into the hands of the patriots. José Bonifacio was made Prime Minister, and measures taken to re-establish the control of the central over the provincial governments. But the ruling groups in the various capitals were not very ready to surrender their authority. Pedro called a council, but representatives from only four provinces responded. Bahia and Pernambuco were held in check by Portuguese garrisons, and other provinces hesitated before committing themselves. Meanwhile the Portuguese majority in the Cortes paid no attention to the warnings of the Brazilian members, but ruthlessly pushed forward the measures for the commercial and political subjection of Brazil. Most of the Brazilian members withdrew, while a squadron was sent to Rio to escort the prince back to Portugal. On May 13 1822, he assumed the title of "Perpetual Defender and Protector of Brazil," and from this to a formal declaration of independence was only a step. In June he notified the Cortes that Brazil must have her own legislative body, and, on his own responsibility, issued writs for a constituent assembly. The Cortes responded by re-enforcing the Bahia garrison, and the Bahianos retaliated by attacking the Portuguese troops. The Pernambucanos expelled their garrison and sent promises of adhesion to the prince. On the 7th of September Pedro was in São Paulo, and there received despatches telling of still more violent measures taken by the Cortes, accompanied by letters from José Bonifacio urging that the opportunity they had so often planned for together had at last arrived. Pedro reflected but a moment, and then, dramatically drawing his sword, cried, "Independence or Death!" Everything had been carefully timed, and his entrance into Rio a few days later,

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wearing a cockade with the new device, was greeted with enthusiasm. On the 12th of October he was solemnly crowned "Constitutional Emperor of Brazil," announcing that he would accept the constitution to be drawn up by the approaching constituent assembly. [Pg 420]

Prompt and efficient measures for the expulsion of the Portuguese garrisons from Bahia, Maranhão, Pará, and Montevideo were taken. The militia came forward enthusiastically; the regular forces were rapidly increased; Lord Cochrane, the celebrated free-lance English admiral, was placed in command of a fair-sized fleet which sailed at once for Bahia, and, defeating the ships which remained faithful to the Portuguese cause, established a blockade that soon enabled the land forces besieging the city to reduce the place. At Maranhão Cochrane's success was still easier; Pará also fell without resistance at the summons of one of his captains; and the news of these successes was followed by that of the surrender of the garrison at Montevideo. Within less than a year from the declaration of independence not a hostile Portuguese soldier remained on Brazilian soil.

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CHAPTER XV

REIGN OF PEDRO I.

Independence was the result of a plan carefully arranged by José Bonifacio and his Brazilian associates. Pedro had declared himself emperor in an access of dramatic enthusiasm. He wanted the glory of founding a great empire and he loved to think of his name as that of the first legitimate monarch who was really self-abnegating enough to establish constitutional government of his own free will. The rôle of a Washington, with the added glory of unselfishly resigning absolute power, appealed to his boyish vanity. But the cold fit came on when he undertook to perform his promises. His loud protestations of constitutionalism turned out to be mere windy mouthings. Though his reign largely assisted in maintaining Brazil's territorial unity, it cut off the promise of local self-government and helped bring on twenty years of bloody revolts. He was not exactly a hypocrite; he loved to hear sonorous periods about liberty rolling out of his mouth, but he had no idea of what they really meant. [Pg 422]

José Bonifacio and his brothers remained at the head of affairs when independence was declared, but, ardent and successful as the older Andrada had been in that movement, he proved no statesman, and had not the strength to oppose his wilful young master. Almost immediately the Andradas engaged in bitter quarrels with the other leaders of the independence party, and summarily banished the five ablest advocates of a liberal constitution. They used their power to revenge themselves on their personal enemies, their secret police was worse than anything John had maintained, and they forcibly suppressed the newspapers which dared criticise their acts. Pedro's authority was accepted slowly outside of Rio. The ties binding the northern provinces to him were especially feeble. A constituent assembly had been summoned, but great difficulty was experienced in securing a full representation. Pernambuco and the neighbouring provinces hesitated long before consenting to have anything to do with it, and Pará, Maranhão, and Piauhy were never represented. It finally met in May, 1823, with only fifty out of the one hundred members in their seats. The Emperor opened the session with an arrogant and dictatorial speech. "I promise to adopt and defend the constitution which you may frame if it should be worthy of Brazil and myself. We need a constitution that will be an insurmountable barrier against any invasion of the imperial prerogatives." Such language excited an unexpected protest even among the members of this humble and inexperienced assembly. Though a majority were magistrates, they were not without a sense of the dignity of their functions as legislators, and were [Pg 423] eager for liberty—a liberty interpreted according to their own undigested theories.

The Andradas bitterly attacked those who dared protest against the Emperor's language, and a majority was only obtained for the government programme by the lavish distribution of decorations. Pedro soon tired of the Andradas and their fiercely anti-Portuguese policy, and summarily dismissed them. The disgraced ministers passed at once into the most virulent opposition, and they inflamed popular prejudice against the resident Portuguese and aroused fears that the Emperor was plotting a reunion of Brazil with Portugal. As the session went on, the assembly showed a more independent spirit, and Pedro became more and more irritated. The Brazilian newspapers insulted his Portuguese officers and the assembly took the part of the former. In November matters reached a crisis. Pedro drew up his troops in front of the assembly's meeting-house and demanded immediate satisfaction to the insulted officers and the expulsion of the Andradas. The answer was a brave refusal, but against his cannon nothing availed. He sent up an order for an instant and unconditional dissolution, and, arresting the Andradas and other Liberals as they came out of the building, deported them on board ship without the formality of charge or trial.

Pedro ordered a paper constitution to be drawn up by his ministers. In form it was liberal, but he had no serious intention of putting it in force. [Pg 424]

Even in Rio, the people ignored the invitation to give their formal adhesion to this delusive document. A show of acceptance was sought to be obtained from the provinces by going through the form of submitting it

to the municipal councils. These councils were then close corporations, largely self-elective, and dominated by the bureaucratic caste, but even so, north of Bahia they paid no attention to the Emperor's communication, and in the South some members had to be imprisoned before their consent could be extorted. The Emperor swore to the constitution, and it was gravely promulgated as the nation's fundamental law, but no congress was summoned, as a matter of fact the government continued a pure despotism wherever the Emperor's power extended. The press, which had sprung into existence during the agitation for independence, and which, after having been throttled by the Andradas, had partly revived during the session of the constituent assembly was now definitely suppressed. Taxes were levied on the sole authority of the monarch; laws were put into force without other sanction than his will; citizens were arbitrarily banished, and military tribunals condemned civilians to death in time of peace.

We can never know the extent of the shock felt by the Liberals on hearing of the forcible dissolution of the constituent assembly. In Pernambuco it was one of the stimulating causes of a rebellion. In that city the press had not been suppressed and the spirit of 1817 was still alive. A strong separatist feeling existed, and when the junta resigned, the popular choice made Carvalho Paes, who had been engaged in the former rebellion, [Pg 425] governor. The Emperor sent up his own man, but authorities and people refused to recognise him. An open breach followed, and Pedro, with his usual vigour, undertook to establish his dominion over the hitherto aloof North.

In July, 1824, the Pernambucanos threw down the gauntlet by proclaiming the "Confederation of the Equator." This was intended to be a federal republic after the model of the union between the provinces of Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador. The adhesion of Pernambuco, Parahyba, Rio Grande do Norte, and Ceará could be counted upon, and that of Maranhão, Pará, and Bahia was hoped for. Bahia, however, remained apathetic, and that city furnished Pedro a convenient base for his operations. He sent Admiral Cochrane to blockade and bombard Pernambuco, while an army marched up the coast. Factional civil war had broken out in the interior of the revolted provinces, and the imperial forces were joined by Carvalho's local enemies. The patriots fought desperately, but were overwhelmed before they could provide themselves with arms or organise their resistance. The city had to surrender on the 17th of September, though fighting was kept up for a long time in the interior. Cochrane sailed north, reducing the ports one by one, and by the end of the year the serious resistance was at an end.

The victorious Emperor punished the patriots with ruthless severity, sending many of the leaders to the scaffold, and establishing military tribunals which inaugurated a reign of terror. An Englishman named [Pg 426] Ratcliff was brought to Rio and hanged, not so much for his part in the insurrection as because he had once offended Pedro's mother in Portugal. "She offered a reward for his head," said the Emperor as he signed the death-warrant, "but now she shall have it for nothing." In the spring of 1825 it seemed as if Pedro was certain to establish himself at the head of a military despotism extending from the Amazon to the Plate. Before the Pernambuco insurrection his revenue and recruits had been drawn solely from Rio and the adjacent provinces. Now his fleet and disciplined army, recruited by impressment and concentrated under his eye, enabled him to get revenue from all the ports and to hold the provinces in check. His sea-power and his possession of the purse-strings gave him a tremendous advantage. He imported Germans, Swiss, and Irish with a view to forming a corps of janizaries. All Brazil seemed submissive, and the enthusiasm which had flamed out among the Brazilians in 1821 and 1822 had died down, leaving as its only permanent effect a strong sentiment against reunion with Portugal.

Externally his position seemed secure. He was assured of Canning's active support in securing formal recognition as an independent monarch; Portugal was helpless; though his application for a defensive and offensive alliance had been refused by Henry Clay, the United States was the first to recognise Brazil's independence; even the Holy Alliance had little objection to an independent American state ruled by a legitimate monarch. In the summer of 1825 a treaty of peace was framed between Portugal and Brazil [Pg 427] through the intermediation of England. Independence was formally recognised, but Pedro made the error of consenting that his father should take the honorary title of Emperor of Brazil, and by a secret article he pledged Brazil to assume ten millions of the Portuguese debt, though it had been incurred in war against herself.

In March, 1825, a rebellion against Pedro broke out in Uruguay, and the Argentine gauchos swarmed over the border. The Brazilians easily held the fortified city of Montevideo, but the Spanish-Americans were successful in the open field, and after six months of harassing fighting caught the imperial army in a disadvantageous position and cut it to pieces in the decisive battle of Sarandy. The Buenos Aires government at once gave notice that it must recognise that Uruguay had reunited itself to the Argentine, and Pedro responded with a declaration of war and a blockade.

The preparations for war involved him in unprecedented expenditures, which piled up the debt already accumulated in his father's time and added to by the war of independence and the suppression of the "Confederation of the Equator." He decided to call together the representatives of the people and insist that they bear a share of the responsibility. So little interest was taken that it was hard to hold the elections, and the members had to be urged to present themselves. On the 3rd of May, 1826, the first Brazilian Congress met. Intended as a mere instrument to furnish supplies for the war, and meeting with the fear of the fate of [Pg 428] the constituent assembly before its eyes, it hesitatingly began the work of parliamentary government. Except for the revolution of 1889, the sessions have never since been interrupted.

A week before the assembling of Congress the news reached Brazil that King John was dead. Pedro was the eldest son, but his brother Miguel was a candidate for the vacant throne. Pedro had to make an immediate choice between the two crowns. He decided to keep that of Brazil and to transfer that of Portugal to his daughter, Maria Gloria, then a child seven years old. He tried to head off Miguel by making the latter regent and promising that Maria should marry him as soon as she was old enough, while he tied his brother's hands by promulgating a constitution for Portugal. The scheme failed to preserve the peace, and the Portuguese absolutists, supporting Miguel, and the constitutionalists, Maria Gloria, almost immediately became involved in a civil war. During the latter part of Pedro's reign he was continually preoccupied with Portuguese affairs and trying to promote his daughter's fortunes in Europe.

The war on the Plate turned out difficult and disastrous. Notwithstanding that great land forces were sent, no progress was made toward reducing Uruguay to obedience, and the overwhelming naval force blockading Buenos Aires was harassed by a small fleet improvised by an able Irishman—Admiral Brown—in the Argentine service. Fast-sailing Baltimore clippers fitted out as privateers infested the whole Brazilian coast, often venturing in sight of Rio and soon sweeping the coasting trade out of existence. Fruitless attempts to enforce [Pg 429] the blockade involved Pedro in difficulties with neutral powers; Brazilian merchants were disgusted with the

war, and communication between the provinces became nearly impossible.

The Brazilian land forces in Uruguay were increased to twenty thousand, but the Argentines under General Carlos Alvear audaciously averted the danger of an invasion of their territory by planning and effecting an inroad into Rio Grande itself. The Brazilian general allowed Alvear to slip between his main body and Montevideo, and the latter penetrated to the East, sacked the important town of Bagé, and was off to the North with the whole Brazilian army in hot pursuit. On the 20th of February, 1827, the Argentines turned and attacked the Brazilians at a disadvantage, defeating them with great loss. In this battle of Ituzaingo sixteen thousand men took part, and the armies were nearly equal in numbers. The Brazilians escaped without serious pursuit, while the Argentines retired at their leisure, assured that no aggressive operations would soon be undertaken against them. Pedro's hope of dominance on the south shore of the Plate was ended. Naval disasters suffered at the hands of the indefatigable Brown made him still more anxious for peace. Negotiations were begun with the Argentine government which was only prevented by lack of money and internal factional quarrels from undertaking an aggressive war against Brazilian territory. Operations were kept up languidly on both sides for a year, and finally Pedro in 1828 consented to a preliminary treaty by [Pg 430] which he relinquished his sovereignty over Uruguay, obtaining in return Argentine consent that it be erected into an independent country.

The first session of the Brazilian Congress had been very timid and voted as the Emperor desired. The session of 1827 was not so respectful; the news of Ituzaingo had made him seem less formidable. For the first time the chamber became a forum for the discussion of governmental theories, and the voice of Vasconcellos, the great champion of parliamentary government, was heard. In the fall of 1827 independent newspapers began to make their appearance and Pedro dared not interfere with them. The tone of most of them was exaggerated, but in December the *Aurora Fluminense*, with Evaristo da Veiga as editor, issued its first number. By universal consent he is recognised as the most influential journalist who ever wielded a pen in Brazil. His profound and temperate discussions of public affairs gave him an ascendency over opinion which can hardly be understood in countries where party conventions and set speeches give opportunities for authoritatively outlining policies.

[Pg 431]

EVARISTO FERREIRA DA VEIGA.
[From a steel engraving.]

When Congress met in May, 1828, the Emperor and his government had completely lost prestige. The public's and Chamber's consciousness of their rights and their power had made a distinct advance. Vasconcellos infused into the debates an independent and statesmanlike spirit not unworthy the great popular assemblies of the most advanced countries. The youth of this remarkable man had been passed in pleasure-seeking, but his election to Congress gave him an object in life commensurate with his great abilities, and he applied himself with unquenchable ardour to the study of political science. Corrupt in morals, inordinate in ambition, his venality notorious, his constitution ruined by disease, his skin withered, his hair grey, and his appearance that of a man of sixty, though he was but thirty, the spirit within rose superior to all physical and [Pg 432] moral defects. His rôle was peculiarly that of champion of the prerogatives of Congress. By his side was Padre Feijó, afterwards regent—incorruptible in morals and unyielding in will—the champion of federation and democracy, and the earliest Brazilian positivist.

This Chamber of 1828 made a real beginning toward making ministries responsible to Congress, and started legal and administrative reforms, but the Emperor insisted that its sole attention be given to increasing taxes. When the Chamber definitely refused in 1829 he dissolved it in the hope that the next might prove more tractable. This act destroyed the last remnants of Pedro's popularity. From that moment his abdication or expulsion was inevitable. His friends tried to create a reaction by organising societies in favour

of absolutism, and governors of retrograde principles were appointed, but the popular irritation against him because he was a Portuguese by birth and sympathy constantly grew. Brazil divided into two parties—all the Brazilians belonged to one and only the resident Portuguese to the other. The new Chamber was harder to manage than the old one. The Andradas had returned from exile, and most of the new members were bitterly prejudiced against Pedro. In the midst of the discontent came the news of the July revolution in Paris, giving the liberal propaganda a tremendous impetus. The assassination of a newspaper man named Badaro in November, 1830, aroused popular indignation to a fearful pitch. Pedro made a last effort to regain his [Pg 433] popularity by making a journey through the province of Minas. His cold reception convinced him that the disaffection was not merely local, and he returned to Rio sick at heart. In March, 1831, disturbances broke out in the Rio streets between the radicals and the Portuguese. Vasconcellos and Feijó were absent, but Evaristo drew up a manifesto demanding immediate reparation for the outrages committed by the rioting Portuguese. The Emperor tried to still the rising storm by dismissing his ministry, but the rioting continued and he suddenly again changed front and appointed a ministry of known reactionary principles. The announcement was followed on the 7th of April by the assembling of a mob, among whose members were professional men, public employees, and even soldiers and deputies. Pedro's proclamation was torn from the messengers' hands and trampled under foot beneath the windows of his palace. The troops were all on the popular side. A committee crowded its way into the Emperor's presence, but he would yield nothing to compulsion, saying with dignity: "I will do everything for the people, but nothing by the people." The news of the desertion of the very troops guarding his person he received with equanimity, but the populace showed equal stubbornness. Throughout the night the crowd stuck to their posts, and about two o'clock in the morning he suddenly drew up to a table and, without consulting any one, wrote out an unconditional abdication in favour of his infant son. The ministers of France and Great Britain had remained with him [Pg 434] during this night of anxiety, and when the morning came they were reluctant to accept his abdication as final. All the foreign diplomats except the representatives of the United States and Colombia followed him on board the British warship, where he took refuge. They wished to give him their moral support in case a counter-revolution were attempted.

The most potent cause for Pedro's loss of popularity was that he was a Portuguese. He offended the self-love of a jealous people in a hundred ways by favouring his Portuguese friends. Almost as fatal was his treatment of his blameless wife. One mistress after another succeeded to his favours, and he acknowledged and ennobled his illegitimate children. Most of his concubines did not hold him long, but the last, who was said to be of English descent, acquired a complete ascendancy over him. He publicly installed her as his mistress; created her a marchioness; forced the Empress to accept her as a lady-in-waiting and submit to ride in the same carriage with her. The court attended in a body the baptism of her child, and some of his love letters to her are indescribable. They could have been written only by a degenerate. In the fall of 1826 the poor Empress was *enceinte* with her seventh child in nine years, and while in this condition Pedro brutally abused her. She never recovered and died in the most fearful agony. Pedro was absent looking after the war in the Plate, but the marchioness had the heartless effrontery to demand admittance to the sick-room, and [Pg 435] Pedro on his return dismissed the ministers who had dared to approve the action of the official who refused to let his mistress gloat over the tortured deathbed of his wife.

Pedro was too boyish, talkative, and familiar to maintain an ascendancy over such a people as the Brazilians. At all hours of the day and night he was to be seen driving furiously about the streets, and he constantly showed himself in the theatres. He liked to drill his troops himself, and frequently beat the soldiers with his own imperial hand. Once he nearly maimed himself striking at a stupid recruit with his sword, and, missing the blow, catching his own foot. On another occasion he almost killed himself and two members of his family by overturning his carriage. He was always ready to explain to any mob at hand his reasons for his official policy, and was too fond of excitement and applause to refrain from making a speech whenever he had a chance. The inmost emotions of his heart were too cheaply exhibited on the Rio streets for the populace to have much respect for them. He was a belated knight-errant with a decided touch of the demagogue.

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CHAPTER XVI

THE REGENCY

After Pedro's expulsion the country was left in a very insecure situation. In Rio the Portuguese were as numerous as the native Brazilians. A great part of the population was under arms and radicalism and revolution were in the air; but, for the moment, fear of the Portuguese and of Pedro's restoration enabled cool-headed, conservative leaders to maintain peace. The members of Congress in the city selected a provisional regency. The ministry, whose dismissal had been the occasion of the outbreak against Pedro, returned to power and, so far as Rio was concerned, government proceeded without interruption. Within a few weeks Congress met in regular session, and a permanent regency was elected. Bahia had revolted and expelled the pro-Portuguese military commander even before Pedro's deposition by Rio. When the news of the events of the 7th of April reached Pernambuco and Pará the troops promptly renounced their commanders.

In Congress grave differences of opinion appeared. The Brazilian party quickly divided into two factions— [Pg 437]
the conservatives, who were faithful to the dynasty and wanted the fewest possible changes, and the radicals. The former had stepped into control ahead of the latter, but they had not the real force of the country behind them. There was a growing demand for a larger measure of self-government by the provinces and for sweeping democratic reforms.

The regency had no real prestige, the military soon became jealous and dissatisfied, and the party in favour of the Emperor's restoration began to assume a formidably menacing attitude. In July Rio seemed on the point of plunging into a bloody and desperate civil war. The Regency called upon Padre Feijó, the great patriot priest and leader of democratic opinion, and gave him absolute power as minister of justice. His firm measures soon suppressed the disorders in Rio, and the national guard which he organised among the better classes of the people held the revolting regiments in check. In the provinces, however, the local authorities often ignored the commands of the governors appointed by the regency; ambitious local leaders plotted to turn the situation to their personal advantage; and the soldiers and disorderly elements were inflammable material ready to their hands.

In nearly every province civil wars broke out. The typical process was for a military officer, a national-guard colonel, or any other person who had acquired local prestige, to issue a pronunciamento and announce the establishment of a liberal government whose scope was only limited by the imagination and knowledge of [Pg 438]
constitutional law possessed by the writer of the pronunciamento. If the municipal authorities resisted they were expelled, and creatures of the head of the insurrection put in their places. This overturning of legally existing authority would usually be resented by some neighbouring official or some rival of the petty dictator, and a confused conflict would ensue in which the rank and file of neither side would have a very clear conception of what they were fighting about, although the words of "liberty" and "local rights," "constitutionalism" and "union," were overworked in speeches and proclamations. It is not worth while to give the detailed story of these monotonous and tedious uprisings, massacres, encounters, and usurpations, though the operations often rose to the dignity of campaigns and pitched battles. Hardly a province escaped. In Pernambuco in 1831 the soldiery sacked the city and the people avenged themselves by killing three hundred and banishing the rest. Next year another military revolt broke out in the same city, which soon became an insurrection whose nominal purpose was to restore the Emperor, and which lasted four years. Two hundred persons were killed in Pará in 1831 during a single night of street fighting. A bitter little civil war in Maranhão lasted all through the winter of 1831-32, and was only put down by a general sent from Rio. In Ceará the partisans of the Emperor kept the province in a state of anarchy for several months. In Minas Geraes the friends of Pedro obtained possession of the capital, and the patriots had to fight hard to get the [Pg 439]
better of them. Though most of these insurrections were suppressed by the people of the state concerned, disrespect for the central government was increasing, and a blind and jealous hatred of the Portuguese and everything foreign grew continuously.

During the four stormy years which succeeded Pedro's expulsion, Congress discussed violently the terms of the constitutional revision which all saw to be inevitable. Though the radical elements predominated, the conservatives and the senate succeeded in bringing about a compromise. A single regent was substituted for the triple system; he was to be elected by universal though indirect suffrage; and, most important of all, each province was given its own assembly with power to levy taxes and conduct most of the affairs of local government. The conservatives managed to preserve the life senate and the nomination of the provincial governors by the central government.

The party in favour of Pedro's restoration had been gaining ground. The Andradas, always in the most extreme opposition when out of power, went over to it, and the conservatives were gravitating in the same direction when Pedro's own death in 1834 put an end to the movement. He died at a happy moment for his fame,—covered with the laurels he had just won by driving out his usurping and absolutist brother, Miguel, and by using that opportunity to endow Portugal with a constitution. By a curious irony of fate, this reckless soldier and descendant of a hundred absolute kings was the instrument through which constitutional [Pg 440]
government was given to both branches of the Portuguese race.

The statesman who had proved himself most nearly master of the situation during these stormy years was Padre Feijó. He represented the average Brazilian—the disinterested and honest public. He had energy and intrepidity; his eloquence was peculiar and commanding; his advocacy of his beliefs was uncompromising; he had been a leader in sustaining liberal ideas; and he had proven his practical courage and capacity in putting down the counter-revolution in Rio. He naturally became a candidate for sole regent after the passage of the *Acto Addicional*, or amendment to the constitution. It seemed appropriate that to him should be entrusted the putting into force of the law which was expected to change Brazil into a federation of democracies united under a constitutional monarchy. Elected after a close contest, he took office in the latter part of 1835, sincerely anxious to rule well and sustained by a popular love and confidence such as few Brazilian statesmen have enjoyed. However, from the beginning he was unable to count on the support of a majority of the Chamber. He was not the man to manage by adroit manipulation and skilful distribution of patronage, but his own work and that of Vasconcellos had borne fruit, and the popular branch of the legislature had become the dominating political force in the Brazilian system. The tide was now setting toward conservatism; the heroic impulses that had brought about the revolution of 1831 had lost their force; the nation's temper was cooled; [Pg 441]
the politicians had forgotten their fine enthusiasm and were busily engaged in personal intrigues.

Feijó inherited from the former regency the two most formidable revolutions which so far had broken out—that of Vinagre and Malcher in Pará, and the great rebellion in Rio Grande do Sul. He was hardly fitted to deal with such a complicated situation as that of Brazil in 1836. He himself said: "I am a man to break, never to bend." Though he gave the officeholders of Brazil an object-lesson in unblemished integrity, his actions were often harsh and arbitrary. When on the floor of the Chamber he had been the chief exponent of democracy, but as chief executive he rode roughshod over his inferiors, refused to be guided by others, even in matters where no principle was involved, and proved that he had the true Latin tendency to centralise administration.

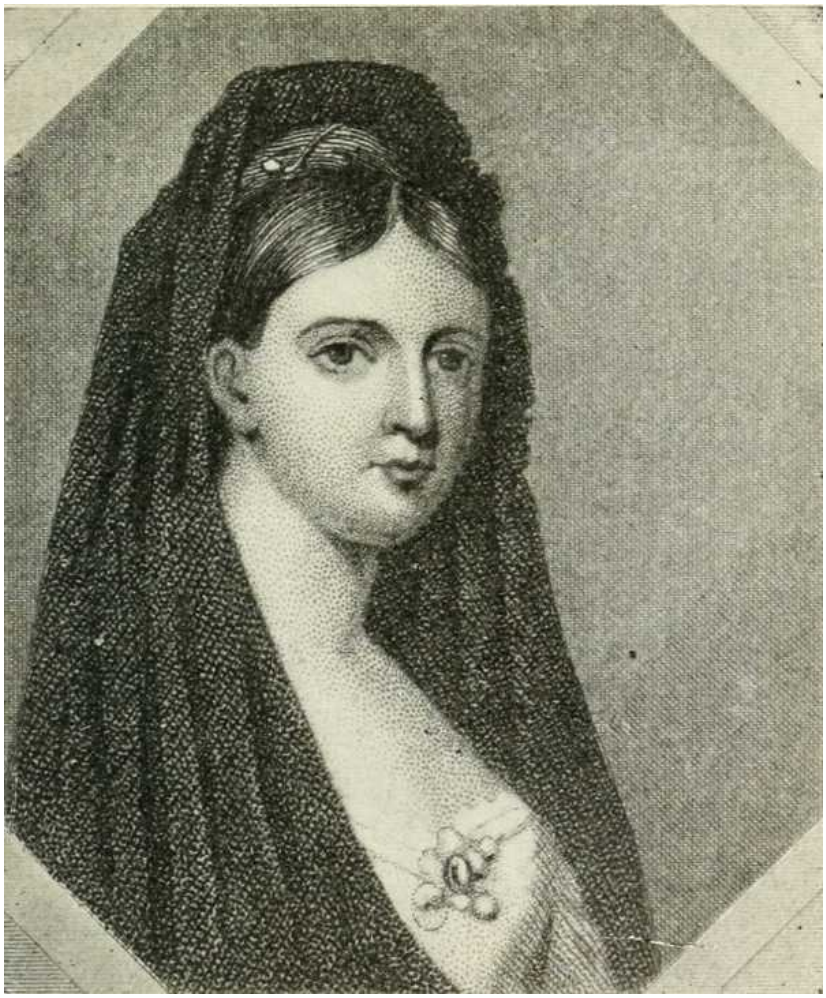
Vasconcellos soon outgeneralled Feijó. A dread of innovation was spreading among the landholding classes. The merchants and Portuguese of the cities naturally gravitated away from the radical regent. The opposition majority in the Chamber, compactly organised by Vasconcellos's skilful management, was encouraged, feeling that it was backed by the mercantile and office-holding classes, and by the persons of highest intelligence and best social position. It clung together with a cohesion unusual in South America, and was the foundation upon which the historical parties were built whose names are constantly encountered in Brazilian political history [Pg 442]
for the next fifty years.

For two years Feijó struggled against the adverse conditions. For the Pará revolution he found a clever and faithful general in Andrea, and managed to keep him well supplied with money and troops, so that a vigorous pursuit of the guerrilla chiefs resulted in their capture and the pacification of the province. But in Rio Grande the people were too strong and too independent to be reduced by troops sent from without, and Congress hampered him by refusing votes of credit. The revolution which had broken out there three months before he assumed the regency had been occasioned by anti-Portuguese feeling and the unpopularity of the governor. The latter was obliged to flee from Porto Alegre with hardly a semblance of resistance. At first Feijó wisely limited his interference to the nomination of a new governor. It was not safe to irritate the half-feudal chiefs, backed by their bands of gauchos trained in constant raids over the Uruguayan border and who were too accustomed to seeing revolutions on the Spanish side to hesitate much about undertaking one on their own account. But the new governor was ambitious and tried to take advantage of the jealousies among the gaucho leaders to make himself supreme. He got some of the ablest of them on his side, but the others were stimulated into more determined fighting. The rebels kept the field in formidable numbers, and among their able partisan chiefs was Giuseppe Garibaldi, who here took part in his first war for freedom. At first evil [Pg 443] fortune followed the patriots, and they were badly defeated in the battle of Fanfa, where their greatest leader, Bento Gonçalves, was captured and carried to Rio. His lieutenants rallied again and declared Rio Grande an independent republic.

Feijó despatched a new governor, whose oppressive measures soon brought about a wholesale desertion by the Rio Grandenses, who had hitherto supported the union side. By the middle of 1837 Rio Grande seemed hopelessly lost to Brazil, and the government only held the coast towns.

His bad management of affairs in Rio Grande was the immediate occasion of Feijó's resignation (September, 1837). The victorious conservative majority immediately stepped into power. Bernardo de Vasconcellos reaped at length a personal reward for his years of labour and intrigue, and became the ruling force in the Chamber, and Prime Minister, though a wealthy senator, Araujo Lima by name, had been elected regent. But Vasconcellos was merely the first among equals and held his power only so long as he could command the support of the conservative majority. A sort of oligarchy grew up which directed the work of reaction without much more regard for outside opinion than Pedro himself had shown. However, Brazil had finally entered upon a stage of government which in form was parliamentary and in substance was partly so. It was rather the parliamentarism of Walpole than of Gladstone; the members owed their seats to the administration; they were a sort of self-nominating and self-renewing body; and departmental and judicial administration [Pg 444] continued in much the same old way.

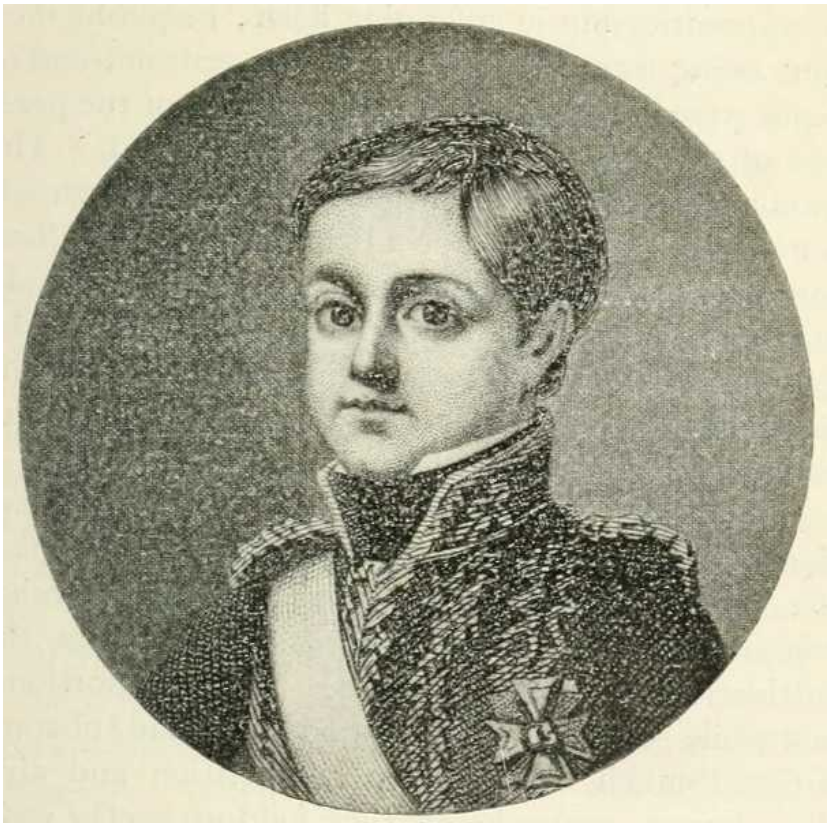
The great task before the conservative regency was to undo most of the work which had been wrought by the federalist and democratic movement of the early 30's. The amendments to the constitution, known as the *Acto Addicional*, had apparently established the autonomy of the provinces in their local affairs. If these amendments had been put into effect, Brazil would have become a federated state like Switzerland or the United States. The conservatives were alarmed at the length to which the provincial assemblies were already going in managing their own affairs, and succeeded in turning the country back on the road toward centralisation and unification. A law was passed which interpreted the *Acto Addicional* so as nearly to destroy provincial autonomy. The provincial assemblies were forbidden to interfere with the magistracy; their resolutions could be vetoed by the governors or the national Congress; their power of controlling the administration of justice was taken away. They became little more than advisory bodies completely under the dominance of governors appointed from Rio, and who rarely were citizens of the states they ruled. At first there was little opposition, and the regency easily suppressed a separatist movement in Bahia which proposed to establish a republic until the boy emperor should come of age.



DONNA JANUARIA.
[From a steel engraving.]

The reorganised regency was, however, weak. The attitude of the nation was merely tolerant and expectant. The war in Rio Grande, continued and the attacks of the Liberals in the Chamber increased in force and effectiveness. Ministers began to change and shift; the conviction grew that the conservative oligarchy would not long rule the country. Liberals and conservatives alike inclined to the idea that the best thing was to return to a ruler selected from the legitimate royal family. According to the constitution the boy emperor would not become of age until he reached eighteen, in 1843. If the constitution were strictly followed the country would have to be governed for years by a hybrid executive—a regent who was neither a ruler by popular choice nor yet a monarch by blood and succession. Many advocated declaring the Emperor's eldest sister, Januaria, regent, though the young lady protested tearfully against being turned into such a thing as she imagined a regent to be. More insisted that the Emperor, in spite of his tender years, immediately assume the functions of supreme ruler.

The politicians in opposition, with the two surviving Andradas at their head, took advantage of this feeling. Bills were introduced in Congress authorising the Emperor to take the reins at once. The regent's ministers did not dare directly oppose these measures; they only tried to compromise as long as possible. But difficulties and dissatisfaction increased; a formidable revolution broke out in Maranhão; the Rio Grandenses invaded Santa Catharina. It was evident that the regency could not continue to hold the clashing provinces together. While the intellectual conviction had never been stronger that union between the provinces was an advantage, circumstances were increasing dissatisfaction and insubordination in every part of the empire.



DOM PEDRO II.
[From a steel engraving.]

The contest in Congress over the Emperor's majority assumed an acute phase as soon as the session of 1840 began. The ministry in desperation sought to prevent immediate action by calling Vasconcellos back to power and proroguing the session. The announcement of this step was followed by an outburst that left no recourse but a submission of the matter in dispute to the boy emperor himself. The opposition deputies went out in a body to see him, and begged him to consent to assume his imperial functions at once. Though entirely unauthorised by the constitution, no one made serious objection to such a revolutionary way of proceeding. The young Pedro accepted with dignity and confidence; the city and country went wild with delight, and on the 23rd of July, 1840, Congress assembled in a sort of extraordinary constituent assembly and without a dissenting voice proclaimed him of age.

Although the ten years of the regency were the stormiest in Brazilian history, they were in many respects the most fruitful. The nation was serving an apprenticeship in governing itself; its public men were being trained; the value of self-restraint and of peace were being learned. The freedom of the press and of parliament was definitely established. The production of literature began; professional schools were put on a footing not unworthy of any civilised country; learned societies were organised; the study of the resources of the country was continued; social intercourse developed; communication between the provinces increased; the study of foreign languages became general among the polite classes.

Industrially, too, the period was one of germination of those seeds from which subsequently grew the prosperity of the country. Though foreign commerce increased little during the civil wars, the cultivation of coffee assumed large proportions, and while sugar and cotton, food crops and tobacco, suffered much from foreign competition and civil disturbances, nevertheless they held up pretty well. The confusion of the times and the weakness of the central government prevented any great improvement in the public finances, but neither taxes nor debt were piled up as they had been under Pedro I. Though the efficiency and honesty of the administration left much to be desired, the small resources of which the central government disposed brought about an era of comparative economy in the departments.

CHAPTER XVII

PEDRO II.

The so-called Liberals went into power on the declaration of the Emperor's majority, and proved to be more tyrannical and centralising than the Conservatives whom they had replaced. Provincial governors were dismissed wholesale solely for factional advantage. The Chamber of Deputies was dissolved and a new one elected in the fall of 1840, and in the choice of deputies the Andradas interfered, securing an overwhelming Liberal majority.

In reality, however, the Andradas had not won the confidence of the ruling *coteries*, nor of the boy emperor. When they quarrelled with Aureliano, one of their colleagues, the matter was submitted to Pedro, who was

then only fifteen and a half years old. His decision was against the Andradas. They resigned, and from that moment until his mental powers began to fail Pedro II. was the supreme authority in the State. He governed parliamentarily as far as he deemed it possible, left most matters to his Cabinets, kept out of view, and was careful to ascertain public opinion. None the less he was the final arbiter in matters of the first importance. In the politics of the next fifty years he was incomparably the most potent Brazilian. [Pg 450]

Happily for his country he resembled his mother rather than his father. Studious and laborious, books were his great occupation. He was an indefatigable and omnivorous reader, and, though especially fond of history and sociology, few subjects and few literatures escaped him. No fact ever failed to interest him, but his mind was too discursive and his studies too widespread and too superficial to give him a store of sound and well-digested knowledge. Morally he was a complete contrast to his dissipated father. He was a monarch of the conscientious nineteenth-century type. He as a little boy had been obedient to the priests and ladies to whom his rearing had been entrusted, but they retained no great influence over him. Though thoroughly respectful toward religion he was not especially devout, and his political ideas were gathered rather from his own reading than from direct teaching. As a father and husband he was good and kind, and conscientiously devoted all his energies to the performance of his duties, public and private. His first act on assuming power was to forbid the people of his household to ask any favours of him in regard to public affairs.

His manners were democratic. Though tall and handsome he cared little for his personal appearance; his clothing was ill-fitting and ill cared for; he drove about in rickety old carriages with absurd-looking horses; he kept no Court properly so called; he would gobble through his state dinners in a hurry to get back to his books; he would call Cabinet meetings at inconvenient hours of the night if an idea struck him. Though his subjects loved and trusted him, the general tendency was rather to laugh at his peculiarities. It could hardly be said that people personally stood much in awe of him. At the same time, when action was to be taken in a crisis, he could be as arbitrary as any czar. He took no pride in imposing his will over that of others, and his manners and methods were always mild and gentle. Some believe that he deliberately assumed careless, democratic ways, thinking them best adapted to maintaining himself in power, and it is certain that he showed little anxiety about his position and seemed to value it slightly. Intellectually restless though he was, his judgment was sound enough to enable him soon to foresee that the inevitable tendency was toward a republic, and in the latter part of his life he often said that he was the best republican in the empire, and that his main function was to prepare the way for it. At bottom he was not a man of strong passions or intense will, but was rather a mild-mannered and philosophic opportunist whose greatest merit was that he loved peace, and whose greatest achievement was that Brazil remained internally quiet during his long reign. [Pg 451]

With the fall of the Andradas the Conservative party returned to power, and a reactionary parliamentary government, with the Emperor as a sort of regulating and controlling *deus ex machina*, was definitely installed. Great things were hoped for from the new régime, and loyalty to the young Emperor was enthusiastic, sincere, and universal. However, the internal disturbances were too serious to be calmed in a day. The revolution in Maranhão, which had been bequeathed by the Regency, was formidable. In pacifying it a general named Luiz Lima e Silva first came to the front, and was named Baron of Caxias for his services. This officer was less than forty years of age, and came of a family of soldiers, one of whom had been the military member of the first Regency. He had served in all the wars and most of the insurrections since 1822, and had always shown solid though not especially brilliant qualities. He was a good manager of men, and a steady, pertinacious, and shrewd negotiator. His detractors accuse him of unscrupulous bribery, and it is certain that he was extraordinarily successful in sowing discord among his opponents. He obeyed the orders of his superiors and was faithful to the Emperor. Probably the limitations of his character were as important as his affirmative abilities in enabling him to grow into the great military consolidator of the distracted empire. His work in the first years of the forties was hardly inferior in importance to that of the Emperor himself. [Pg 452]

[Pg 453]

BARON OF CAXIAS.
[From an old woodcut.]

The return to power of the Conservatives in 1841 caused great dissatisfaction among the displaced Liberals

and the advocates of provincial autonomy. The Conservatives seemed to have captured the young emperor, and the Liberals began to insist on the application to Brazil of the English maxim, "The king reigns but does not govern." In 1842 a revolution broke out in Sorocaba, the home of Padre Feijó, in the state of São Paulo. The trouble was aggravated by the harsh measures taken by the Conservative governor to suppress it, and soon spread to various points in the province and thence to Minas Geraes. The revolutionists announced that their objects were to free the Emperor from the coercion of the Conservative oligarchy; to maintain the autonomy of the provinces; and to preserve the constitution, whose guarantees were being rendered nugatory. Fighting only lasted two months, but there were fifteen important fights in Minas and five in São Paulo. The government forces under Caxias were completely victorious, and in the final and decisive battle of Santa Luzia he overwhelmed and dispersed three thousand men and captured all the principal leaders. The [Pg 454] Emperor and Caxias adopted a magnanimous and conciliatory policy toward the defeated rebels, though the Conservative ministers persisted in advocating harsh measures.

Only Rio Grande do Sul remained under arms, and even there the rebels were not averse to accepting the Emperor's authority. As soon as Caxias had finished the pacification of Minas, he was ordered south. The campaign began by his winning two important victories, and he followed them up by promises of amnesty which detached some of the most formidable rebel chiefs. Finally, in the spring of 1845, Rio Grande returned to the Brazilian union on the concession of a full and complete amnesty. That province has ever since enjoyed a larger measure of autonomy than any other part of Brazil.

By the beginning of 1844 the disintegrating effects of a long continuance in power showed itself among the Conservatives. The Cabinet came to an issue with the Emperor over a question of an appointment, and he called the Liberals to power. The new government was ready to carry out the Emperor's policy of full and free amnesty and pacification by concession. With the collapse of the revolution in Rio Grande the central government seemed at length to have passed all danger. The demands for a juster interpretation of the *Acto Addicional* and for a larger measure of autonomy to the provinces and municipalities died out altogether, or took a peaceful form. The Liberals in power turned out to be as conservative as the Conservatives themselves, [Pg 455] and the work of consolidation and centralisation proceeded uninterruptedly.

The Liberal ministry, was, however, in a false situation. The very name they bore was an implied promise to effect reforms. Their majority soon split up into warring factions. Congress spent the session of 1848 in quarrelsome debates; the fall of Louis Philippe had diffused a spirit of revolution in the air; the municipal elections were accompanied by riots, and the ministry itself deliberately encouraged a renewal of the anti-Portuguese agitation. The Emperor thought himself obliged to intervene, and appointed a Conservative Cabinet. In Pernambuco the new Conservative governor displaced the Liberal officials who had been holding office for the last three years. The latter were anti-Rio and anti-Portuguese, and they and their partisans started an insurrection known as that of the *praieiros*. It quickly assumed a formidable character and as many as two thousand revolutionists took part in a single battle, but after three months of fighting they were completely defeated. Little difficulty was experienced in restoring public order. The movement had been rather a partisan uprising than a general popular revolution.

This was the last attempt for more than forty years to establish a federal system. The necessities of the stormy period from 1827 to 1848 had led, step by step, to a form of government which was centralised and yet not absolute. The imperial system had been the result of a natural growth. When the fabric reached stability the professional ruling classes feared to disturb it, and the people were too inert and indifferent to [Pg 456] afford support to agitators and reformers.

PRINCESS ISABEL IN 1889.

Agriculture, commerce, and industry advanced only slowly during the first eight years of Pedro's rule. The country was getting ready for the activity which followed. Great Britain's efforts to induce the Brazilian government to carry out its treaty obligations for the suppression of the slave-trade had been futile. In 1845 the British Parliament passed the Aberdeen Bill, which authorised British men-of-war to capture slavers even [Pg 457] in territorial waters. This measure was especially directed at Brazil, whose coast had become practically the sole market for the horrible traffic. The bill did not immediately effect its purpose, and the slavers made the most of the opportunity. In 1848 over sixty thousand negroes were imported into Brazil. Immigration from Europe had practically ceased with the expulsion of Pedro I. and the anti-foreign demonstrations of the Regency, but it now slowly began again. In 1843 Dom Pedro, being then not quite eighteen years old, was married by proxy to Theresina Christina, daughter of Francis, King of Naples. There is a tradition that the Emperor turned his back when he saw his bride's face. Nevertheless, he made her a good husband. Their two boys died in infancy, but in 1846 Isabel was born, who still survives and lives in Paris with her husband, a grandson of Louis Philippe, and with her three sons, the eldest of whom is named for his grandfather and was twenty-seven years old in 1902.

[Pg 458]

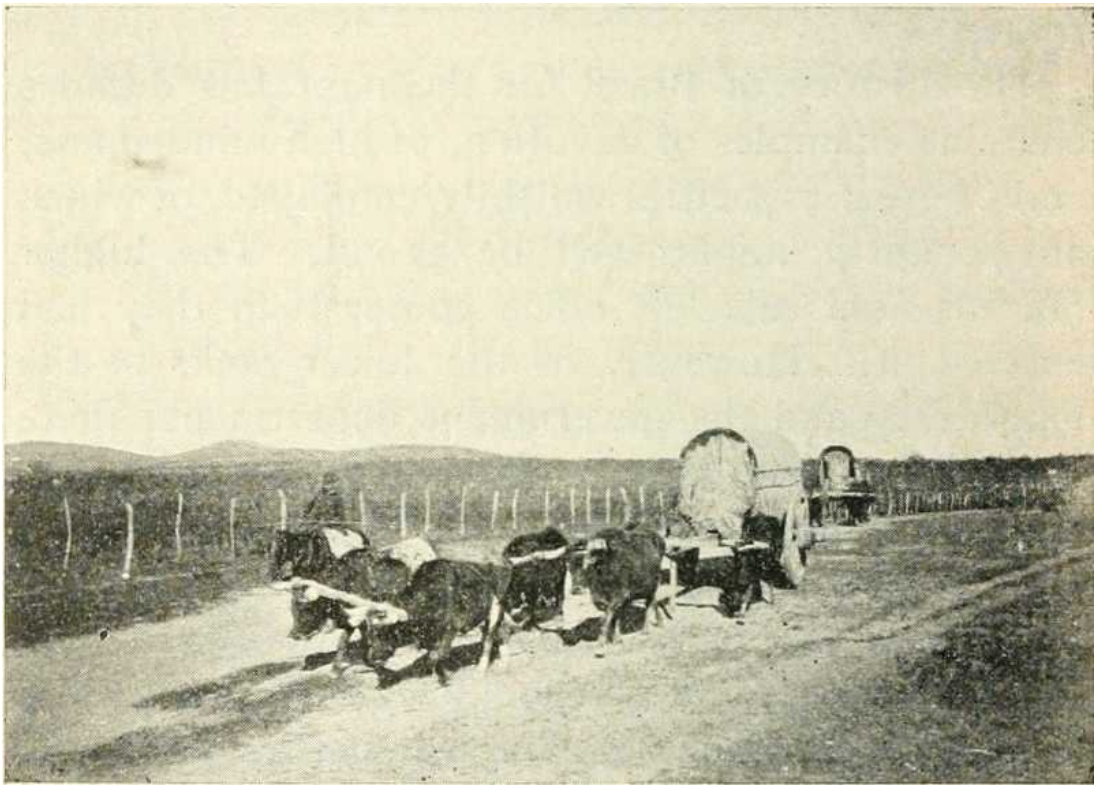
CHAPTER XVIII

EVENTS OF 1849 TO 1864

After the final pacification of the country prosperity came with a rush. In the six years from 1849 to 1856 foreign commerce more than doubled. The circulating medium was brought to a sound basis. Coffee had doubled in value by 1850, and its culture was rapidly extended. The profits of sugar-raising had not risen in the same proportion, and Rio, São Paulo, and Minas drew slaves from the northern provinces. The decline of mining in the late years of the eighteenth century and the profitableness of sugar and tobacco during the great wars had made Maranhão, Pernambuco, and Bahia overshadow the South for a time, but now the tide turned the other way. Brazil's drift has ever since been to the South.

The Emperor and government followed an enlightened and vigorous progressive commercial policy. The subjects of internal communication, of colonisation, of better steamship facilities, of the opening of public lands to settlement, of public instruction, of liberal treatment to foreigners, and of administrative and [Pg 459] financial reforms were taken up intelligently. So far as the government was concerned the suspicious and jealous exclusive policy was abandoned, and large amounts of foreign capital began to be invested in commercial houses, preparing the way for the great government loans and railroad building soon to come. The British had the lion's share of the importing and the Americans of the carrying trade.

The history of Brazil for the next few decades contains examples of devotion, of high-mindedness, and of great capacities worthily employed, of which any country might well be proud. The higher officials as a rule left office poorer than they had entered it. However, in the lower ranks of the magistracy and the government departments there was much to be desired. The public service became more and more the one career sought by young men of ability. The mercantile and property-owning classes in general kept out of politics. Only the landowning and slaveholding aristocracy owed a nominal allegiance to the two parties whose active members were the officeholders or those who hoped to become officeholders. The most promising and prominent young men were selected from the graduates of the universities, placed in the magistracy, thence to be promoted to the Chamber of Deputies, and to be governors of provinces. The final goal was a nomination to the senate, where, from the dignified security of a life position, the successful Brazilian politician watched the struggles of those below him. [Pg 460]



PAMPAS OF THE RIO GRANDE.

The bright young magistrates were preoccupied with their own ambitions and were not responsible to the people of the localities they happened to be governing for the moment. Real local interests were not studied. Those who reached the highest positions applied their well-trained minds to larger problems, but their work was too much from above down—they produced admirable reports and framed admirable laws, but among the lazy magistracy and indifferent people the energy to put them into effect was too often wanting. But the level of political well-being rose noticeably, though fitfully. The Brazil of 1850 had progressed far beyond the Brazil of colonial times. Liberty of speech was unquestioned and unquestionable; arbitrary imprisonment had died [Pg 461] out; the grosser forms of tyranny had vanished; property rights and the administration of civil justice had much improved. Judges no longer openly received presents from litigants, though the nation had not risen to the conception of a judiciary independent of the executive.

In 1850 the Emperor chose a new Conservative Cabinet, which proved the most efficient the country had known. Its first great act was to abolish the slave trade.

The year 1850 is also memorable as that in which the yellow fever began those terrible ravages on the Brazilian coast which have never since entirely ceased. The first epidemic is said to have been the worst which ever visited Rio. Two hundred persons fell sick daily, and the wealthier classes were especially attacked. Among the victims was the great statesman, Bernardo de Vasconcellos, and many deputies, senators, and diplomatic representatives. Congress adjourned in terror. In the earlier epidemics the citizens of Rio were just as susceptible as foreigners. Later, however, they acquired a relative immunity—an immunity which is not shared by Brazilians who have lived in non-infected districts.

Brazil and Argentina had agreed in 1828 that Uruguay should be an independent and neutral buffer state between them. But the Buenos Aireans never forgot that for geographical and historical reasons Uruguay naturally belonged to them. Rosas, the Argentine dictator, assisted the Oribe faction, which openly advocated entering the confederation, while the Rio Grande Brazilians who owned much property on the Uruguayan side [Pg 462]

of the border aided the Rivera faction.

To protect the property interests of its citizens and prevent Rosas from conquering Uruguay the Brazilian government quietly made military preparations and formed an alliance with the Rivera party and with Urquiza, the ruler of the province of Entre Rios, to which the dictator of Paraguay and the president of Bolivia gave a passive adhesion. It amounted to a coalition to forestall Rosas's plan of uniting the whole of the old Viceroyalty and the Plate valley under his rule. Brazil was virtually the instigator of a combination of the weaker Spanish-American states against the strongest one.

Urquiza crossed the Uruguay, and with the aid of the Brazilian troops made short work of Oribe's army, which was besieging Rivera in Montevideo. Rosas responded with a declaration of war and began collecting a formidable army. Urquiza resolved to carry the war to the gates of Buenos Aires. The allies gathered in camp on the left bank of the Paraná, a hundred miles above Rosario, a great army which numbered four thousand Brazilians, eighteen thousand Argentines, mostly from the half-Indian provinces of Entre Rios and Corrientes, and a contingent of Uruguayans. A Brazilian fleet under Admiral Grenfell had penetrated up the Paraná and protected their crossing of the great river. On the 17th of December they got safely over the Paraná, and out of the low country of Entre Rios on to the dry pampas of the right bank. Thence they marched down on Buenos Aires, where Rosas was awaiting them. On the 3rd of February, 1852, he gave them battle in the [Pg 463] suburbs of that city. He was completely defeated and fled to England.

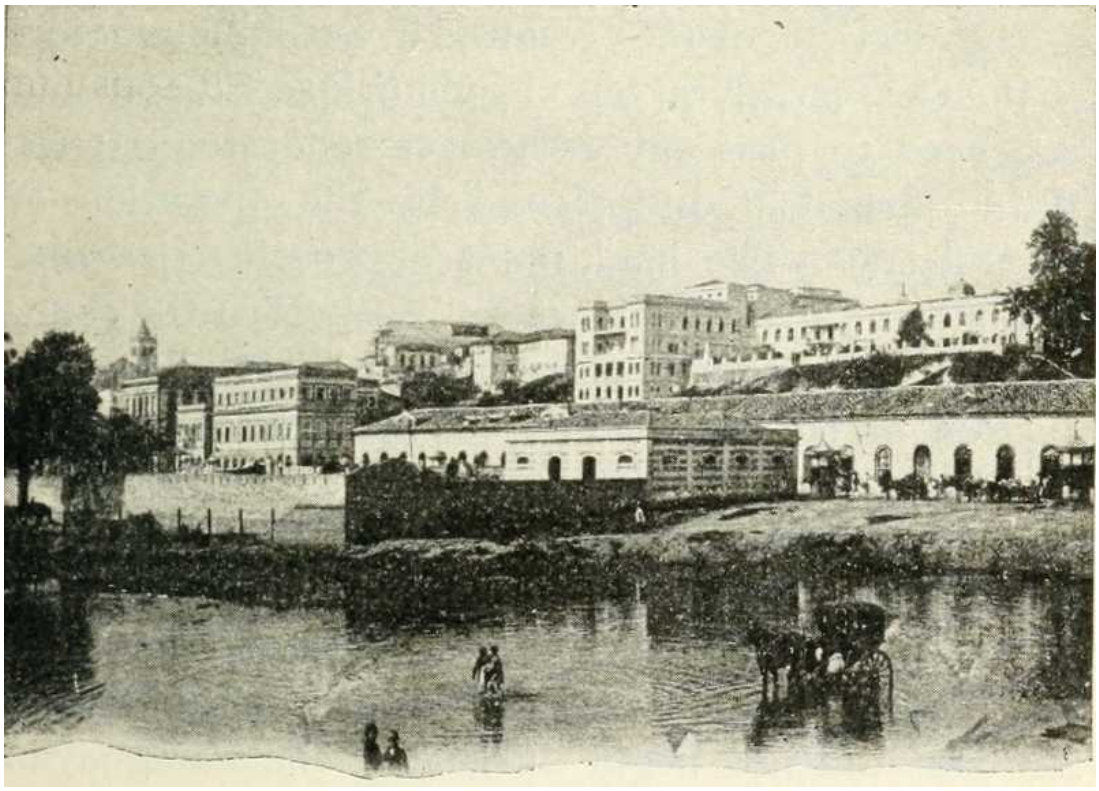
Brazil found herself in a peculiarly advantageous situation. The war had cost her little in money or men. Buenos Aires might no longer hope to dominate the other Argentine provinces, and seemed likely to offer small resistance to the unified and centralised empire. Uruguay's independence of Buenos Aires, and Brazil's preponderance in Montevideo were assured. The Rio Grandenses flocked over the border, bought large amounts of property, and enjoyed peculiar privileges, while the Uruguayan government accepted subsidies from that of Brazil.

The country's commercial development continued even more rapidly after the war. In 1853 the Bank of Brazil was authorised to issue circulating notes, and the expansion of credit stimulated business. The same year the Conservative ministry, which had so brilliantly governed the nation since 1848, was forced to resign on account of the constant interference by the Emperor. It was replaced by the "Conciliation Cabinet"—whose chief, the Marquis of Paraná, adopted the policy of admitting Liberals to administrative positions. He remained in power until 1858, and his name will always be associated with one of the most prosperous epochs in Brazilian history. The first railway systems were inaugurated; the receipts of the treasury grew fifty per cent.; European immigration amounted to twenty thousand a year; private wealth and luxury increased; and [Pg 464] numerous theatres, balls, and social reunions furnished an indication of the rise of the level of culture.

One of Brazil's reasons for entering on the war against Rosas was to open up the navigation of the Paraguay, Paraná, and Uruguay, upon which she depended for access to a large part of her territory. The treaties made at the conclusion of the war assured, against her protest, free navigation to all nations. Brazil has intermittently attempted to confine the navigation of the international rivers of South America to the nations having territory on their banks.

Paraná's "conciliation" policy seems to have suited the Emperor very well, although it tended to hamper the development of two great parties in clearly defined opposition to each other. The elections came more and more under the control of the bureaucracy and were mere ratifications of selections made by the ministers. Congress lost rather than gained in influence, and the whole system became steadily more centripetal.

[Pg 465]



OLD MARKET IN SÃO PAULO.

From 1849 the country had been having prosperous times, but in 1856 the inevitable commercial crisis came. Prosperity had brought about extravagances in governmental administration; the budgets showed deficits; foreign loans were resorted to; the currency fluctuated violently. Brazil entered upon seven lean years, during which foreign trade remained stationary, the revenues increased only at the cost of heavy impositions, and the public debt grew. With the death of the Marquis of Paraná in 1858 the regular Conservatives returned to power. He had been the dominant figure in politics since the Regency, and his

personal prestige and the confidence the Emperor reposed in him had had much to do with holding the government together during the panic. But the new ministry could not make headway against the difficulties. A new currency law was necessary, but the mercantile and speculating classes bitterly opposed the rigid measures proposed by successive Cabinets. Paraná's neutral policy had given the opposition a hold in some of the most important provinces, and the following elections showed a vast increase in the number of Liberals and of dissident Conservatives. Conservative Cabinets succeeded each other rapidly from 1858 to 1862. The opposition to a contraction of the currency grew in force, and the dissidents and Liberals finally obtained a [Pg 466] majority. The Emperor at last called upon the leader of the dissident Conservatives—Zacarias—to form a government. But he was as powerless as his predecessors, and as a last resort the Emperor temporarily gave up the effort to govern after the English system, and selected a Cabinet outside of the Chamber of Deputies.

The elections of 1863 resulted in a complete defeat of the Conservatives, but the victorious Liberals did not need to pass any radical currency legislation. Hard times had disappeared by the operation of natural law. The bank-notes approached par and the budgets nearly balanced. With 1864 the country entered upon a new era of prosperity. The production of coffee had doubled from 1840 to 1851, and then had remained stationary. But with the cessation of the Civil War in the United States an era of high prices was inaugurated which coincided with Brazil's financial rehabilitation, and stimulated planting. Although real activity in the building of railroads did not begin until after the Paraguayan war, four short lines had been started before 1862. The years of peace and order had disaccustomed the people to the thought of violence, and a steady advance had been made toward government by law. The highly educated statesmen placed by the Emperor at the head of affairs understood the most important principles of good government and tried conscientiously to put them in practice. In transportation, banking, posts, and telegraphs, commercial methods, etc., the improvements of modern civilisation were easily introduced, though in agriculture the indolence of proprietors and the [Pg 467] apathetic ignorance of the slaves prevented any rapid advance.

On the whole, Brazil had made greater political and industrial progress when the Paraguayan war broke out than any other South American country, though grave vices remained to hamper her further development. The mass of the people were apathetic and ignorant; slavery tended to discredit industrious habits, at best so difficult to maintain in the tropics; the upper classes showed little interest in or aptitude for commercial matters: commerce, banking, railroads, mining, and engineering prospered only where foreigners personally engaged in them. The people themselves, in spite of the enlightenment of the educated classes, showed little initiative or energy.

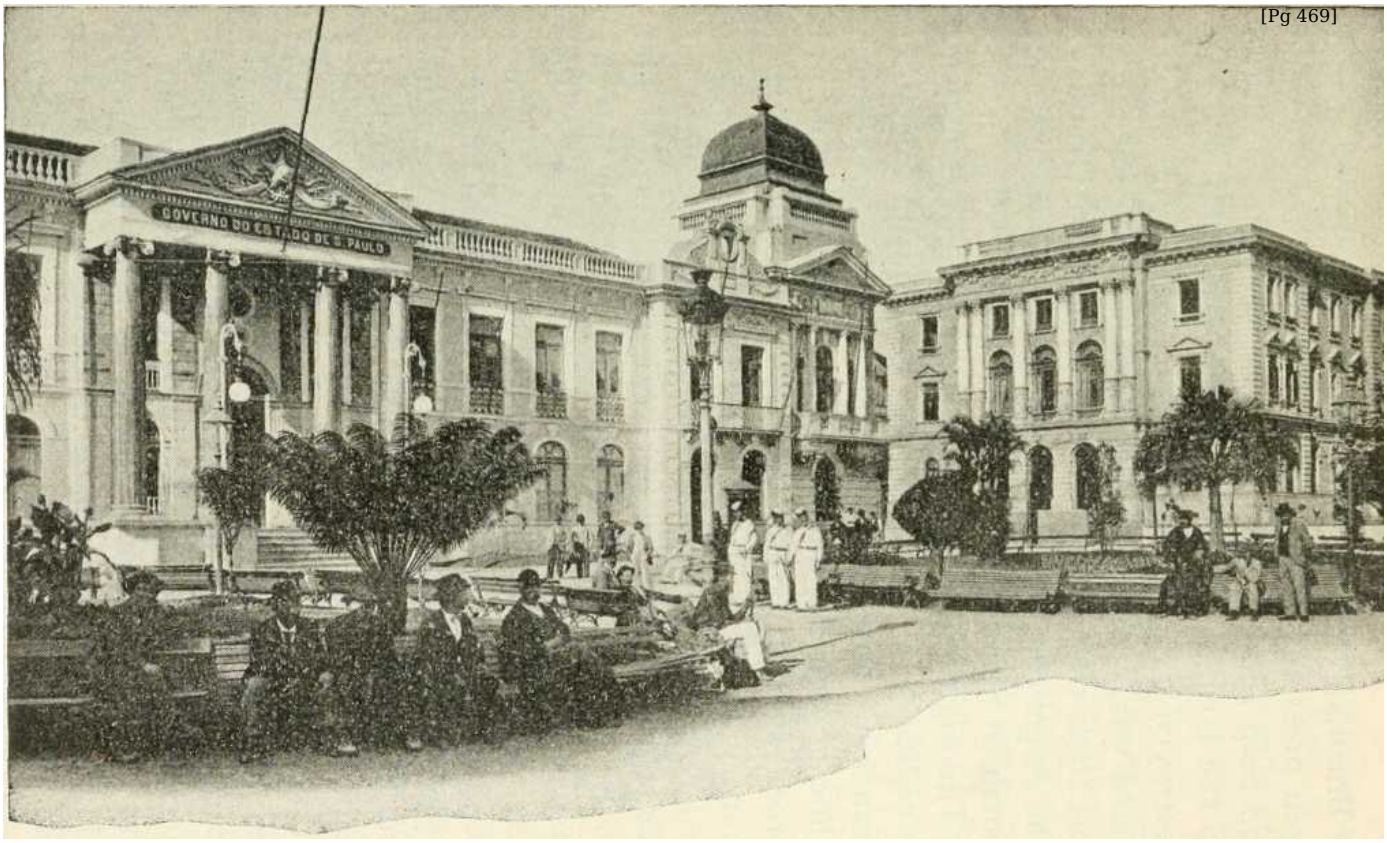
[Pg 468]

CHAPTER XIX

THE PARAGUAYAN WAR

Brazilian statesmen might well have been pardoned if, in 1865, they had claimed for their country the hegemony of South America. The result of the war against Rosas had been brilliant; the Argentine had only just emerged from half a century of civil war; Uruguay was almost a Brazilian protectorate; Brazil's internal condition was settled; in concentration of power, as well as in wealth, population, and extent, she was at the head of the continent. With the republics on the west she maintained good relations, while all the time she was firmly pressing her territorial claims on toward the foot of the Andes. She even attempted to control the navigation of the great waterways of South America.

[Pg 469]



GOVERNOR'S PALACE IN SÃO PAULO.

In 1863, Florés, a defeated chief, returned from Buenos Aires and set up the standard of revolt in Uruguay. Penetrating as far as the Brazilian border he received assistance, and Aguirre, the Montevidean president, protested. At the same time the latter ruler refused to settle certain claims on behalf of Brazilian citizens [Pg 470] which the Rio government had been pressing. The Emperor decided to intervene and help Florés, and thereupon sent a man-of-war up the Uruguay River, which blockaded a port and destroyed Uruguayan public property. Aguirre declared war, and Brazil and Florés in alliance besieged and took the principal towns in western Uruguay. The Argentine received satisfactory assurances and remained neutral.

This high-handed adjustment of Uruguayan affairs furnished a pretext to the Paraguayan dictator, Francisco Lopez, to intervene in his turn. Under a line of vigorous dictators who concentrated all the forces of the nation into their own hands, that country had become menacing to the loosely organised Argentine Republic. Lopez even thought he was strong enough to bid defiance to Brazil. The tyrant was, in fact, an impossible neighbour for the two more progressive and civilised powers. For years he had been preparing for war and at the moment was stronger in a military way than either of his bulky neighbours. He hated both Argentines and Brazilians, and his people had been taught to despise the courage of the latter. Though Brazil's intervention in Uruguay was a matter in which he had an interest, a dignified protest would have obtained ample assurances that the latter's independence would be respected, for there is no evidence that the imperial government intended to do anything more than to replace its enemy Aguirre by the friendly Florés. But the arrogant tyrant wanted to draw the world's attention to himself. He appreciated how difficult it would be for Brazil to [Pg 471] send an army against him and how much more difficult it would be to maintain one, and he also knew that she was unprepared to undertake a serious war on foreign soil.

Without any declaration of war, in the fall of 1864 he seized a Brazilian steamer which was making its regular trip up the Paraguay River to Matto Grosso. The crew were imprisoned, and only the intervention of the American minister saved the lives of the Brazilian minister and his family. This outrage left Brazil no alternative. Lopez followed up the seizure of the boat by an expedition up the Paraguay River against Matto Grosso, and easily conquered the principal southern settlements in that province.

The geographical position of the Argentine made her attitude of decisive importance to both belligerents. Uruguay and the southern provinces of Brazil were separated from Paraguay by the Argentine provinces of Corrientes and the Missions. Argentina had favoured Florés's pretensions, and Lopez was so obnoxious that the secret sympathies of Buenos Aires were with Brazil. Further than neutrality, Mitre, then president of Argentina, would not go. He declared that no permission would be given either belligerent to cross Argentine territory with troops. Lopez was made desperately angry at this refusal; he thought he could count on the alliance and support of Urquiza, the virtually independent ruler of the province of Entre Rios and Mitre's enemy, and seems to have believed that he might as well finish up with both Argentina and Brazil at one [Pg 472] sitting. In March, 1865, he deliberately declared war on the Argentine, and eighteen thousand Paraguayan troops crossed the Paraná and began offensive operations against Corrientes, Uruguay, and Brazil.

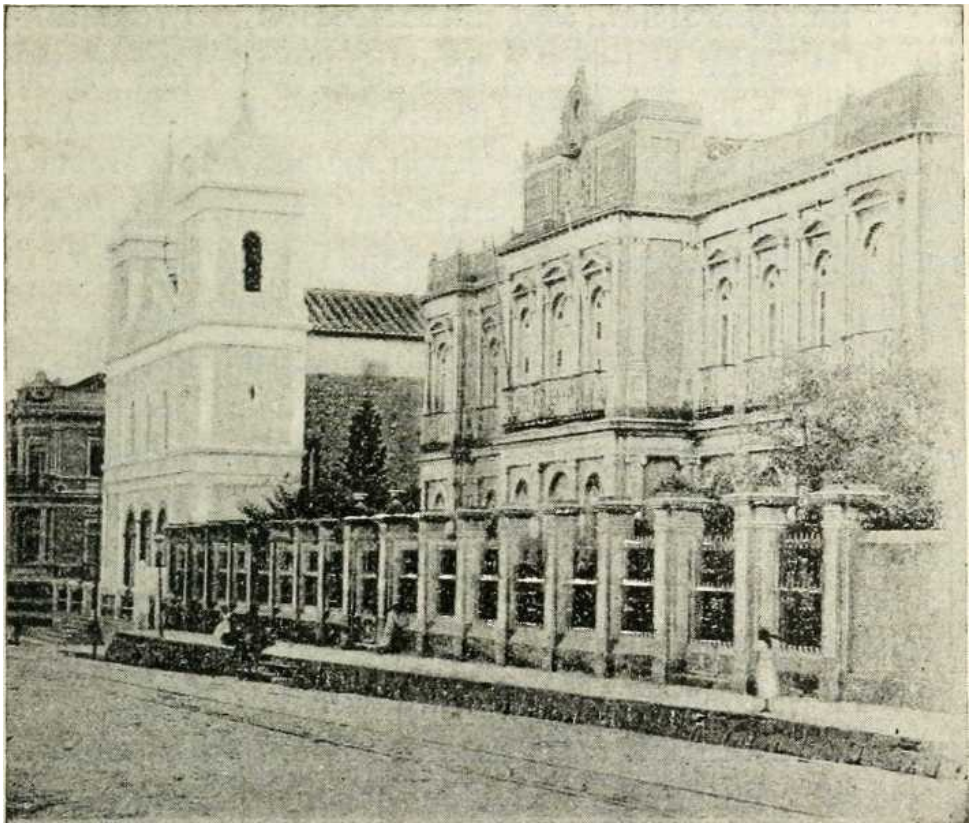
Instead of rising against Mitre, Urquiza declared himself against the Paraguayan dictator, and as his province of Entre Rios controlled access to Paraguay by water, Lopez found that the only result of his rash act was to open up the way by which his enemies could most conveniently reach him. On the first of May, 1865, a formal alliance was made between Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay. Mitre was agreed upon as commander-in-chief; the allies promised not to lay down their arms until Lopez should be overthrown and expelled from Paraguay; and pledges were given to respect Paraguay's independence. Of the three allies Brazil was the only one which could be expected to give its whole force. Florés could only answer for the colorado faction of Uruguay. Argentina did not represent much more than Buenos Aires. Entre Rios was Urquiza's, and the other outside provinces had no great interest in the result. Nevertheless, the alliance was very advantageous to Brazil. It would have been well-nigh impossible to wage a successful war against an enemy shut up in the middle of the continent, and accessible only by a three-months' march across nearly impassable country, or by tedious navigation up a single river running through a third country, and where an army would have to be

disembarked direct from ships on the enemy's soil. The adhesion of Argentina made an aggressive war possible, and the event proved how hopeless would have been a campaign by Brazil alone. [Pg 473]

The story of the military operations belongs to the history of Paraguay, and only those events which bore a direct relation to internal affairs in Brazil will be mentioned here. The successful naval battle of Riachuelo, on the Paraná, just below the southern end of Paraguayan territory, in June, 1865, aroused great enthusiasm in Brazil. National feeling was hardly cooled by the news which soon followed of a Paraguayan invasion of Rio Grande, and rose again with the defeat of that invasion. Brazil's regular army numbered less than fifteen thousand men before the war, but at the Emperor's call fifty-seven battalions of volunteers were organised in the fall of 1865. A loan of five million pounds was arranged in London, and no expense was spared in fitting out the army and in strengthening the fleet. By the end of the war Brazil had eighty-five ships, not counting transports, of which thirteen were ironclads. The voyage from Rio de Janeiro to Paraguay takes a month, and the transportation of men and material was tedious and extremely expensive. The government resorted to the issue of paper money, and outraged the feelings of the financial world by compelling the Bank of Brazil to give up the reserve it was maintaining for the redemption of its note issues. The premium on gold rose and the currency fluctuated wildly, although general trade continued to boom. [Pg 474]

In September, 1865, the Paraguayan army which had invaded Rio Grande was captured in a body, and peace was confidently expected. Lopez, however, decided to fight it out to the bitter end, and it was April, 1866, before the allies could gain a foothold on Paraguayan soil. For the next six months Brazil was sickened with accounts of desperately bloody and indecisive battles, of which the last was an awful repulse before Curupayty. For more than a year thereafter the allies lay motionless in their camps in the south-western corner of Paraguay, while the cholera carried off thousands.

Though his favourite general, Marshal Caxias, was a Conservative, and not on good terms with the Liberal Cabinet, the Emperor insisted that he be sent to take command. Re-enforcements were vigorously recruited from all over the empire, and in July, 1867, the cautious Caxias began a slow advance. The expenses were mounting up to sixty millions a year; the country chafed at the delays, Caxias quarrelled with the ministers. In July, 1868, the Emperor dismissed them on his own responsibility, and, though the Liberals had still a large majority in the Chamber, called in a Conservative Cabinet. On this occasion the Emperor's pressure was not influential enough to change a minority into a majority, and the Chamber preferred dissolution to submission. Meanwhile Caxias had at last begun to win victories. The very month of the fall of the Liberals he took the great fortress of Humaitá, which guarded the passage up the Paraguay, and Lopez retreated to the neighbourhood of his capital accompanied by almost all the surviving Paraguayans. In November Caxias [Pg 475] cleverly outflanked him and taking him in the rear compelled him to fight outside of his trenches until hardly any Paraguayans were left. By the beginning of 1869 Lopez was a fugitive, the Brazilians were in possession of Asuncion, and the war was over except for pursuing Lopez and the few starving soldiers who followed him through the woods.



HOSPITAL AND OLD CHURCH AT PORTO ALEGRE.

Elections were held in March, but it was not worth while for the Liberals to make even the show of a contest. The Liberal leaders issued a manifesto declining to take any part, and, censuring the Emperor for [Pg 476] calling the Conservatives to power against the known wishes of the majority of a legally elected Chamber, announced that they would respect the laws and would confine themselves to a non-parliamentary propagation of the doctrines of anti-absolutism, liberalism, and emancipation. From this time dates the systematic propaganda for the republic. The war ended with the Emperor's son-in-law hunting down the Paraguayan bands. In March, 1870, Lopez was caught with the last few hundred men who remained faithful and speared by a common soldier as he tried to escape through the woods.

The war had cost Brazil three hundred million dollars and over fifty thousand lives. She had gained no substantial result except assuring the safety of Matto Grosso and securing the free navigation of the Paraguay. The Emperor did not attempt to use his victory by establishing a hegemony over South America. Rather did the end of the Paraguayan war mark the beginning of a policy of systematic abstention from

intermeddling with outside matters. Paraguay and Uruguay were left in full enjoyment of their independence, and the Argentine then began her marvellous industrial progress and political consolidation. The Plate republics reaped the benefits of the war, while Brazil bore its heaviest burdens. Most of the Argentine provinces had taken little part except to furnish provisions and horses at high prices, and the opening up of Paraguay redounded to the benefit of Buenos Aires and Montevideo—not to that of Rio. No spirit of imperialism spread among the Brazilian people, though they are still proud of the record their soldiers and [Pg 477] sailors then made. Their bravery in field fighting and the assault of fortified places was proved beyond question, no matter how poorly they may have been commanded, and how deficient their organisation. The history of no war contains more examples of heroic and hopeless charges, or stories of more desperate hand-to-hand fighting. But a successful battle was followed by torpor; Brazilian tenacity was shown in the patience with which defeats were sustained, and in holding on month after month in camp, rotting in the miasmatic swamps, rather than in pursuing advantages obtained in the field.

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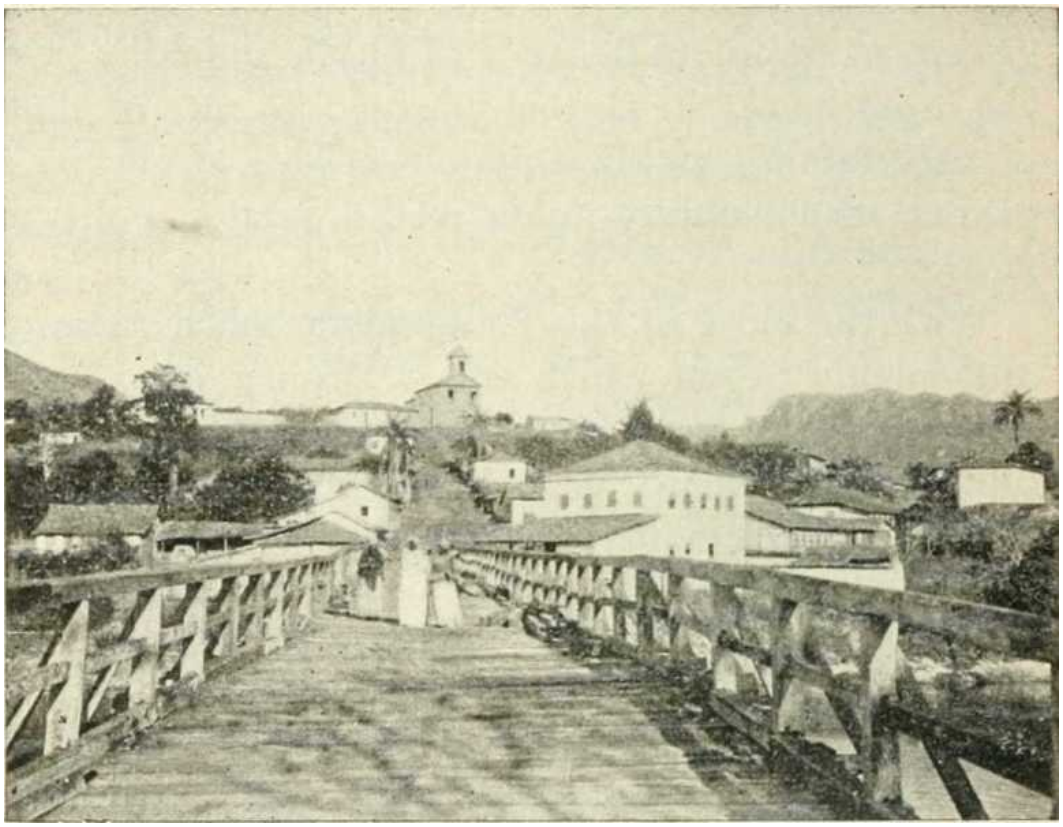
CHAPTER XX

REPUBLICANISM AND EMANCIPATION

From 1808 to 1837 the tendency had been in the direction of democracy and decentralisation. Then the tide turned and from 1837 to the Paraguayan war the central government grew stronger and federalism weaker. The power of the Emperor reached its apogee in 1870. The senators had been personally selected by him and he could count on their gratitude and friendship. Deputies were elected indirectly by electors chosen by a suffrage nominally universal, but the elections—primary and secondary—were mere farces, absolutely controlled by the ministry which happened to be in power. The local governors and magistrates, the officers of the national guard, and the police, all dependent on the central government for their positions, formed a machine against which opposition was useless. If intimidation was not sufficient, the baldest frauds were shamelessly resorted to—false polling lists, manufactured returns, and the seating of contestants by the majority in the Chamber or the returning boards. Of this system the Emperor was the real beneficiary, for the [Pg 479] Cabinets held at his pleasure, and if the majority of a Chamber did not sustain a ministry which he desired to keep in power, all he had to do was to order a dissolution. But this hybrid system contained in itself the elements of sure decay. The Emperor was no arbitrary despot and neither wished nor would he have been able to govern in complete defiance of public opinion. On the other hand, the system afforded no sure method of ascertaining public opinion nor of throwing a proper responsibility upon well-organised political parties.

With the close of the Paraguayan war a series of movements began which ended twenty years later with the overthrow of the empire. Brazil's history during those twenty years is an account of the republican propaganda, the abolition movement, the attempt to reform the elections, the religious agitation, the growth of positivist doctrines, the demand for economic independence by the great provinces, and finally the infiltration of liberalism and insubordination into the army. This evolution, however, affected principally the educated classes. The masses of the people were and still remain largely indifferent to the march of public events.

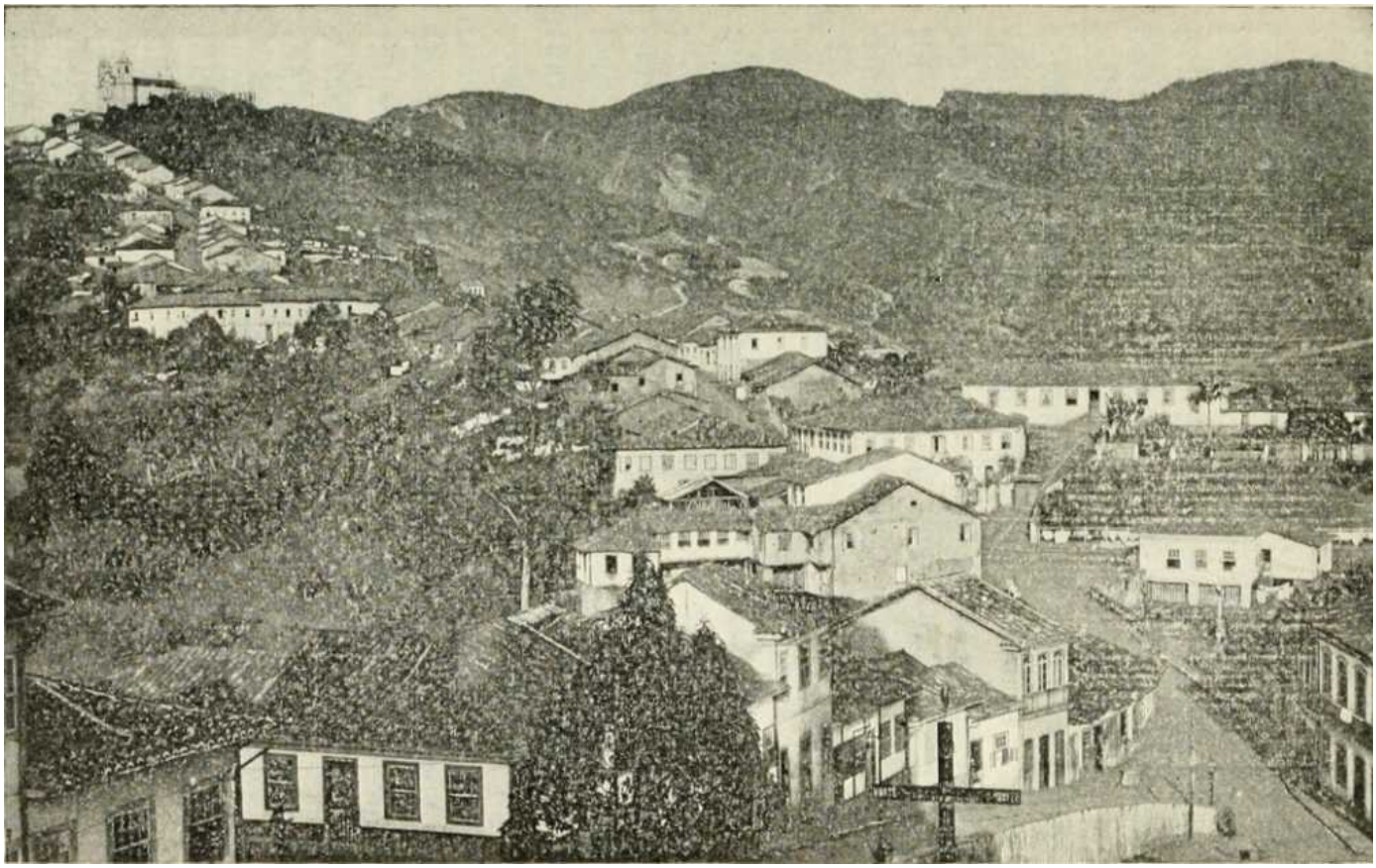
Commerce and industry continued to expand throughout the Paraguayan war. From 1865 to 1872 the annual revenues doubled, and though in 1868 the emissions of paper money had reduced its value one-half, it steadily rose thereafter until in 1873 it again reached par. Just after the war the budget balanced, and the production of coffee rose one-half. But with relief from financial pressure the Conservative ministers became [Pg 480] extravagant, and when the great world panic of 1873 came both government and country were badly caught. A foreign loan of five millions sterling made in 1875 was not enough to meet the mounting deficits. In 1878 new issues of paper money were resorted to, and exchange dropped, remaining below par for ten years in spite of a subsequent doubling of coffee production and a great increase in the value of exports. Population, however, which had increased from five to ten millions from 1840 to 1870, in the next twenty years mounted to fifteen millions.



BRIDGE AT MENDANHA.

The suppression of the slave trade by the Aberdeen Act and the Queiroz law made it probable that the [Pg 481] institution itself would ultimately disappear. Brazilian character and customs had always stimulated voluntary emancipation, and in Brazil the negro does not reproduce as rapidly as the white. In 1856 the slaves numbered two millions and a half, being nearly forty per cent. of the population, but in 1873 their number had fallen to 1,584,000, or only sixteen per cent. The institution was, however, socially and politically very strong. Slaves furnished nearly all the labour employed in the production of staple exports, and it was believed that emancipation would be followed by agricultural collapse. But the Emperor was too enlightened a Christian and too susceptible to the good opinion of the civilised world not be at heart an abolitionist. However, it was only at the height of his influence that he deemed it wise to force the consideration of abolition on the reluctant nation. Agitation had begun modestly in 1864; in 1866 gradual emancipation was seriously proposed, but the breaking out of the war caused the matter to be adjourned. In 1869 Joaquim Nabuco, father of the present Brazilian minister to Great Britain, succeeded in virtually committing the Liberal party to emancipation. With the return of peace the question was taken up vigorously. The reactionary Conservative Cabinet resigned rather than be an instrument of the Emperor's wishes as to emancipation, and Pimenta Bueno was appointed Prime Minister for the especial purpose of getting a law through Congress declaring all children born thereafter free. This statesman failed, but Rio Branco, father of the present [Pg 482] Minister for Foreign Affairs, was more successful. After a bitter and prolonged parliamentary struggle, in which Rio Branco used every weapon that his position gave him in gaining and holding doubtful Congressional votes, the law was passed in 1871. Thereafter all children born of slave mothers were free, though they remained bound to service until twenty-one. The proprietors were also required to register all their slaves. Under the influence of these measures the number of slaves decreased with astonishing rapidity —falling from 1,584,000 in 1873 to 743,000 in 1887.

Rio Branco's victory disrupted the Conservative party, and after achieving it he was unable to hold his majority together. The Chamber was dissolved, and though the new one supported him half-heartedly the old line Conservatives had become deeply dissatisfied with the radical tendencies of the government and the Emperor. Public men of all parties awoke to realisation of the inconsistency between the constitution and the Emperor's personal power. Not much was said in the Chamber, but outside the republican propaganda assumed an active form, and the conviction fast crystallised that the empire could not last for many years. A republican press came into existence and a republican party was organised under the leadership of Saldanha Marinho, an able lawyer of Rio. Republican societies were formed in all the centres of population, but there was no thought of armed revolution. There is, indeed, no evidence that the Emperor ever opposed the republican propaganda, though occasionally he detached some of its able members by promotions to office. [Pg 483]



CITY OF OURO PRETO. [Pg 484]

In 1873, 1874, and 1875 the question which most absorbed public attention was the imprisonment of the bishops of Pará and Pernambuco by the civil authorities. The lower ranks of the priesthood were uneducated, and real interest in religion had largely been confined to women and the lower classes. With the growth of liberal ideas among the laity the Church awoke to the necessity of a reformation. These two bishops were leaders in this counter-movement, and they selected the Masonic Lodges as a point of attack. In spite of the nominal prohibition of the Church, Free-Masonry had been permitted in Brazil since 1821, and the lodges had become mere social clubs and philanthropic societies. Free-Masons were members of those semi-religious brotherhoods which take charge of local church feasts and constitute the most important link between the lay and spiritual worlds in Brazilian communities. The two militant bishops ordered that the brotherhoods should expel their Masonic members or suffer the penalty of losing their right to use the church edifices. Where these orders were not obeyed interdicts were laid. The progressive element and the magistracy took the side of the Masons, but the bishops were not without their supporters. The government insisted that the obnoxious interdicts be withdrawn: the bishops refused to yield, and were prosecuted in the civil courts and sent to prison. The Princess Isabel was believed to be on the priests' side, and while the excitement gradually died [Pg 485] out and things went on as before, a wider breach than ever had been created between the progressive and conservative classes. Like the slave-owners devout Catholics now felt that they could no longer depend on the imperial system to protect them against the rising tide of radicalism.

The financial difficulties growing out of the great panic drove Rio Branco from power in 1875, and a succession of Conservative Cabinets struggled along until 1878. The question of electoral reform came to the front, for every one was sick of the absurd system in vogue, and the leaders of both the historical parties hoped for great things from a radical change. The Emperor was opposed to giving up the indirect method of voting, but was anxious to try some lesser reforms. On his return from the United States and Europe in 1877 he virtually instructed the Cabinet to put through a bill drawn after his suggestions, but the Prime Minister resigned because the Emperor insisted that the change could not be made by an ordinary statute, but must go through the tedious process of an amendment to the constitution. The Emperor called in a Liberal Cabinet and a new Chamber was elected.

The Liberal ministry continued in power until 1880, and then fell, partly because it had lost its hold with the Liberal majority, and partly because of the riots in Rio over the street-car tax. A law had been passed compelling each passenger to pay a cent in addition to the regular fare. The people refused, burned the cars, cut the harness in pieces, threw the conductors off, and fought the police until the business of the city was [Pg 486] brought to a standstill. The Emperor called upon a cool and experienced politician, José Antonio Saraiva. But the latter refused to take office unless he should be allowed to push through the election bill in the form of an ordinary law. Right here the Emperor suffered a great defeat. He thought himself obliged to yield, and the vigorous minister at once secured the passage of a radical law which completely transformed the electoral system. Suffrage was confined to the educated and property-holding classes, but the electors voted directly for deputies, and the country was divided into districts each of which chose a single deputy. The electoral body was now permanent, and each deputy was responsible to a definite constituency. Saraiva resigned the moment his bill was enacted into law, and every precaution was taken to ensure that the election of 1881 should be free from any suspicion of official pressure. The result was a revelation to the small-bore politicians of the old régime. One hundred and fifty thousand voters registered out of an adult male population of about three millions, and ninety-six thousand voted. The new members were divided nearly equally between the two historical parties—the Liberals getting sixty-eight and the Conservatives fifty-four. Two ministers were defeated for re-election and many of the contests were decided by small majorities. In subsequent elections the Saraiva law proved not to be so effective, and since it is not in the Latin nature to be satisfied with gradual improvement, the liberal movement, of which the electoral law was a symptom, swept on with [Pg 487] increasing violence until the beneficent law was uprooted along with the mistaken system on which it had been painfully grafted.

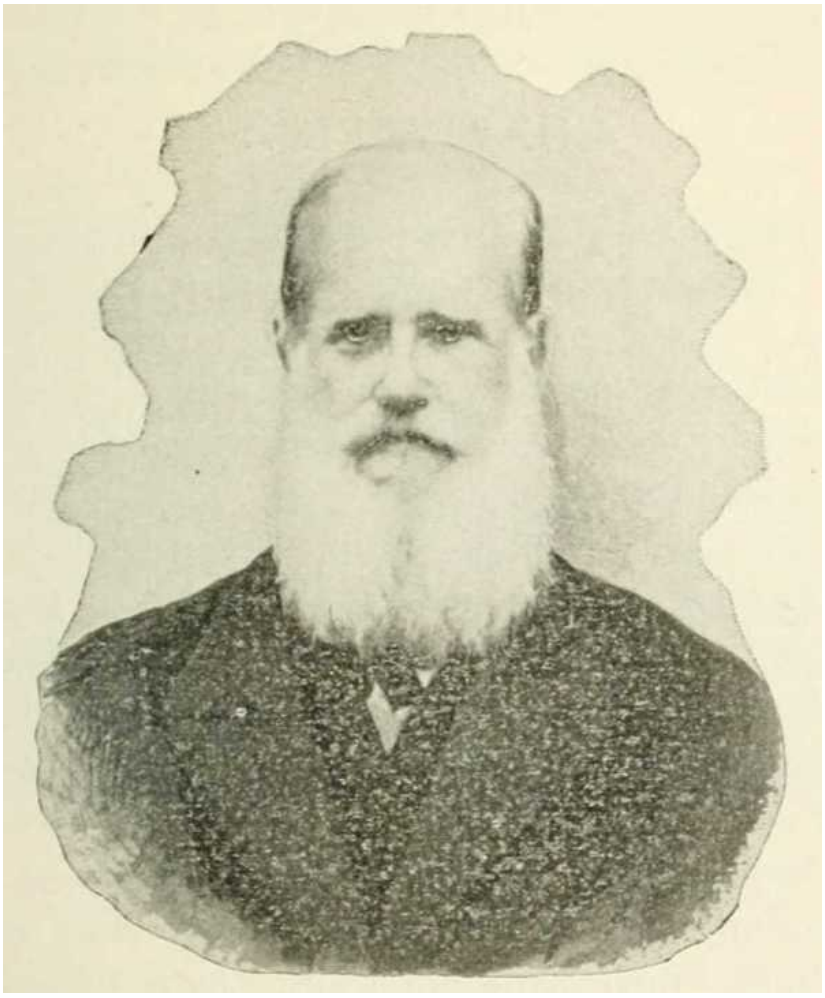
As soon as electoral reform was out of the way abolition became once more the dominant question in Brazilian politics. Though the majority of Liberals were abolitionists and the doctrine was one of the official principles of the party, the various Liberal Cabinets which succeeded each other from 1881 to 1884 managed to dodge the dangerous issue. Finally the Dantas ministry faced it squarely. A bill was introduced prohibiting the sale of slaves, establishing an emancipation fund, and freeing slaves as fast as they reached the age of sixty. A terrific parliamentary battle followed and the project was defeated by only seven votes—forty-eight Liberals and four Conservatives voting for it, and seventeen Liberals and forty-two Conservatives against. The Emperor dissolved the Chamber and the excitement over abolition became national. The abolitionists subsidised newspapers, held public meetings, and marched through the streets in procession carrying pictures representing the torturing of slaves. No means were spared which might aid to rouse the national conscience. The negroes were advised to revolt, and assistance was openly promised to them. The elections of 1884 were violently contested, instead of being free from fraud and protest like those of 1881. Nor did the government so conscientiously abstain from interference. Nevertheless the Chamber elected did not differ materially in its composition from that which had preceded it. Sixty-five of the one hundred and twenty [Pg 488] members of the new House were Liberals, but of these fifteen were opposed to abolition. For the first time avowed republican members were elected—three being returned, and two of them came from São Paulo—Prudente Moraes and Campos Salles, the first two Brazilians to hold office avowedly as republicans and who reaped their reward by becoming two decades later the first two civil presidents of the republic. No election was ever held in Brazil which was so earnestly contested and which constituted so genuine an expression of the wishes of the people. Nevertheless, on the main question—that of abolition—the result was apparently a drawn battle.

With the meeting of the Chamber in 1885 the agitation broke out afresh. The crowds on the Rio streets hissed anti-emancipation deputies, and there was a bitter fight for the control of the organisation of the Chamber. It was soon evident that the Dantas ministry could not force abolition through, and it resigned. Saraiva was called in and he skilfully arranged a compromise. With the aid of Conservative votes he passed a bill for gradual and compensated emancipation. This done, he resigned. The Liberal party was disorganised and dissatisfied with him, and he did not deem it worth his while to try and hold it together. The quarrelling Liberal majority was aghast when it was announced that a Conservative Cabinet would take the reins of government. The Emperor had begun to show decided symptoms of a failure of his mental powers and was [Pg 489] ceasing to be a controlling factor in parliamentary affairs. Saraiva's resignation further exacerbated the Liberal leaders against the imperial system, and at the same time continued to lose ground with the slaveholders.

In the election the Liberals had no chance and largely refrained from voting. The governing classes shrank from the probable consequences of abolition; the temper of the country seemed to have cooled; the election reform of 1881 had not proven in practice to be of much value. Though not so absolute as before, the provincial governors resumed their control of the result, and returns were made according to the wishes of the ministry in power. One hundred and three Conservatives received certificates and only twenty-two Liberals, and most of the latter came from the interior where official pressure could least easily be applied. Not a republican was returned, and the declared abolitionists had almost disappeared, although every one knew that the final blow to slavery could not long be deferred.

The new administration devoted itself to the finances. Since 1871 the deficits had been continuous; one sarcastic statesman said amid applause that "the empire is the deficit." The issue of paper money had been excessive. Better times began in 1886. A loan of six millions sterling was contracted for on favourable terms; from forty per cent. below par the currency rose to par in the succeeding three years; imports and exports increased by leaps and bounds; and the revenue grew seventy-five per cent. in a single year. The production of coffee in São Paulo, and of rubber in Pará and Amazonas reached unprecedented figures; foreign [Pg 490] immigration was subsidised and a systematic propaganda to secure it undertaken. From thirty thousand it ran up to one hundred thousand a year, and the apprehensions that emancipation would cause a dearth of labour were largely quieted. Government subsidies had kept up the building of railroads during the years when the treasury was most embarrassed, and naturally went on more rapidly when prosperity came. When the Paraguayan war ended there were only 450 miles of railroad in the country. In the decade that followed 1450 were built, while from 1880 to 1889 five hundred miles a year were constructed.

The Conservative Prime Minister, Baron Cotegipe, struggled hard through 1886 and 1887 to save the remnants of slavery, but intelligent and unprejudiced opinion was nearly unanimous for the entire abolition of the disgraceful and barbarous institution. Project after project was presented, each one more radical than the last. The slaves began to flee from the plantations. The army refused to aid the police in capturing them. The poor old Emperor had gone abroad, sick and failing, leaving Isabel as regent. Her advisers, mostly priests and foreigners, told her that the delay was endangering the dynasty. Cotegipe resigned and John Alfredo was made Prime Minister for the especial purpose of passing an emancipation act. When Congress met in May, 1888, the speech from the throne announced that the imperial programme was absolute, immediate, and [Pg 491] uncompensated emancipation. The prestige of the Crown was sufficient to hush nearly all opposition. Within eight days the law had passed both Houses and been signed by the princess. The votes against it were hardly numerous enough to be worth counting. Only Cotegipe and a few devoted monarchists stood in their places and read aloud the handwriting on the wall, prophesying the sure and speedy overthrow of a monarchy which had thus cast off its surest and most natural supporters.



EMPEROR DOM PEDRO IN 1889.

[Pg 492]

CHAPTER XXI

THE REVOLUTION—THE DICTATORSHIP—THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REPUBLIC

Every intelligent man in Brazil had long recognised the force of the permanently working causes which were undermining the empire. Affonso Celso, in 1902 considered the ablest advocate of restoration, and the son of the last Prime Minister of the empire, said, in 1886, from his place as national deputy, that the empire maintained itself only through the tolerance of its enemies. Neither one of the two great parties of office-holders was really monarchical, although the members of both co-operated with the Emperor for the sake of the patronage. But the Brazilian masses were too apathetic to take any violent measures for the overthrow of the worn-out institution without some definite stimulus. This was furnished by the "military question" in 1889.

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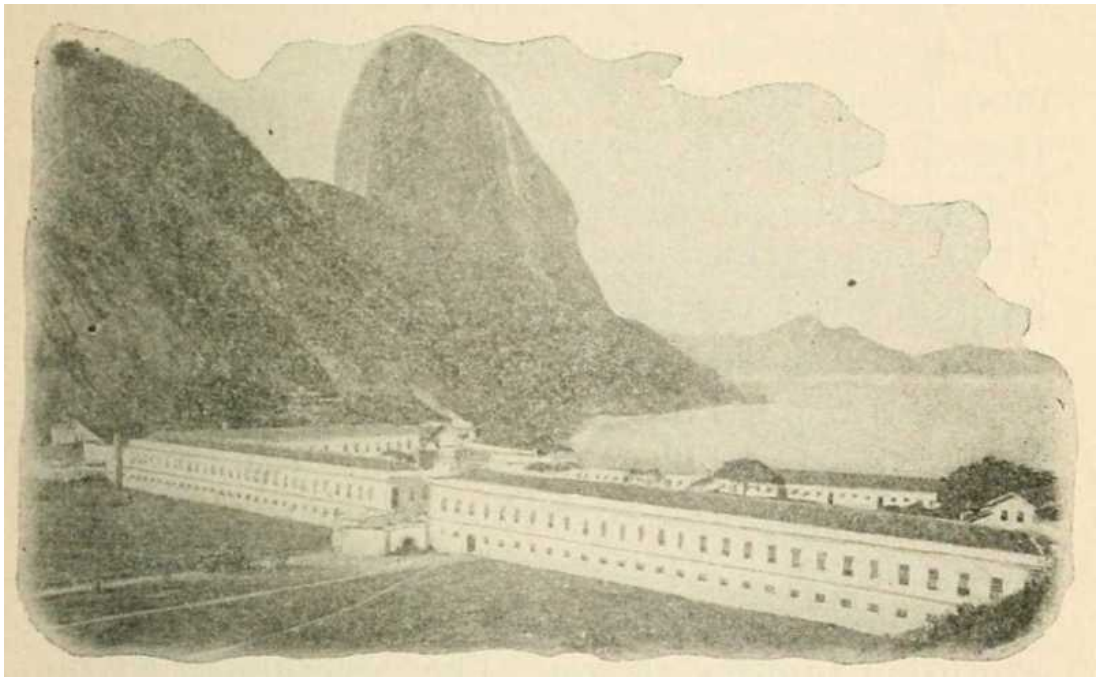


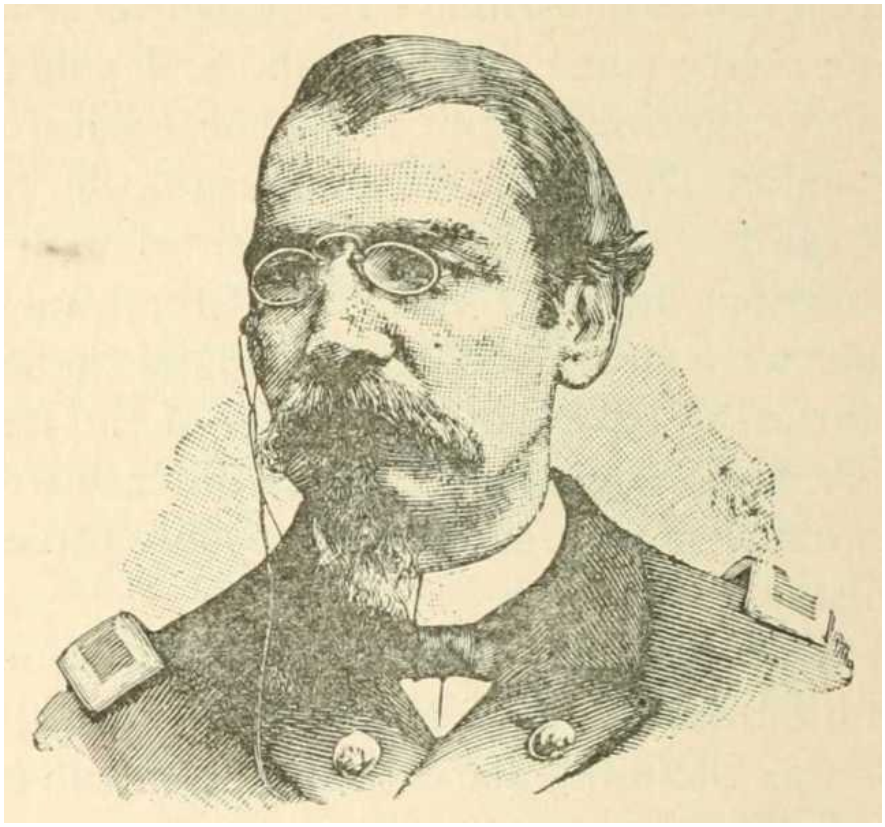
MILITARY SCHOOL AT RIO JANEIRO.

The teachings of Benjamin Constant, a professor of the military school at Rio, had thoroughly impregnated the younger officers of the army with republican doctrine. The officers were extremely sensitive about their professional rights, and a spirit of disaffection and insubordination was rife among them. In 1886 there was great indignation in the army because an officer, who had engaged in an undignified newspaper controversy with a deputy, was reprimanded by the secretary of war. A little later another officer insisted on attacking through the press a pension law advocated by the war department, and his cause was taken up by the highest generals with the Marshal Deodoro de Fonseca at their head. This general was transferred from his post to a less desirable one, and a new outburst of indignation among the officers agitated army circles. The ministry thought it best not to push the matter. In 1888 the bad feeling was further exacerbated by the police arresting some officers for disorderly conduct in the streets. Again the army demanded satisfaction, and again [Pg 494] it was given. The favourite champion of military dignity, Deodoro, was sent off to Matto Grosso in the spring of 1889, and this was taken as equivalent to a punishment for his activity in maintaining the privileges of his profession. Again the government thought it prudent to yield, and he was allowed to return.

In the meantime, the Emperor's health had grown more feeble and the Princess Isabel was in power. Herself unpopular, her parsimonious husband, the Comte d'Eu, was bitterly disliked by most Brazilians. The rumour gained credence that there was a plan to have the sick Emperor resign in her favour. Though the general feeling was that so long as the old man lived and reigned he ought not to be disturbed, the hot-headed republican officers were in no humour to allow the princess to succeed to the throne. The Conservative Cabinet had been met with a flat refusal from the army when they ordered it to assist in capturing fugitive slaves. The government's hand was thus forced on the slavery question. John Alfredo's Cabinet succeeded to Cotegipe's, but was no happier in its dealings with the "military question." The princess determined to call in the Liberals, and their hard-headed leader, Ouro Preto, was made Prime Minister. By many this was believed to be a part of the plot for an abdication—that the princess's friends wanted a strong man at the head of affairs when the *coup d'état* came.

Ouro Preto took charge of the government in June, 1889, and shortly dissolved the Chamber after some [Pg 495] bitter debates in which, for the first time in Brazil, the cry of "Viva a Republica!" was heard on the floor of Parliament. The new ministry had no trouble in controlling the elections, and the new Chamber that met in August was Liberal. Ouro Preto felt strong enough to undertake to reduce the malcontents to submission. He began by strengthening the police force and the national guard, and removing certain regiments from the capital. But in September Deodoro returned from the remote wilds of Matto Grosso and was received with great demonstrations by his comrades. Secret meetings of officers were held, and they pledged themselves to sustain at all hazards the prestige of the military class. Professor Constant, whose influence with the younger officers was predominant, openly threatened the ministry.

Early in November still another battalion was ordered off from the capital to the north of Brazil, and this was the immediate occasion for the formation of a military conspiracy in which Professor Constant and Deodoro were the original chiefs. They determined to make an alliance with the republicans and invited the co-operation of Quintino Bocayuva, the chief of the militant republicans; of Aristides Lobo, a republican editor of Rio; of Glycerio, one of the republican chiefs in São Paulo; of Ruy Barbosa, a great lawyer and editor, whose attacks on the government had been very effective, though he had not yet declared himself a republican; and of Admiral Wandenkolk, who was expected to secure the help of the navy. [Pg 496]



GENERAL BENJAMIN CONSTANT.
[From a woodcut.]

Deodoro and Constant could absolutely count upon one brigade—the second—and were well assured of the sympathy of all the regular forces in Rio. Of course the plan could not be kept secret from the government police, though the public seems to have known nothing of the gravity of what was going on. On the 14th of November, the rumour spread that Deodoro and Constant would be arrested. Orders had, in fact, been given for the transfer of the disaffected brigade, and the ministers were warned that it was preparing to resist. That night the members of the Cabinet did not sleep, and the morning found them still in anxious council at the War Department, which faces the great square of Rio. Constant had ridden out to the quarters of the Second [Pg 497] Brigade, and early in the morning led it to the square and drew up in front of the War Department. Deodoro took command of the insurgent troops, sending an officer to demand the surrender of the ministers. Ouro Preto called upon the adjutant-general, Floriano Peixoto, to lead against the revolters the troops which were in the general barracks. Floriano, after a little hesitation, refused, and it is doubtful whether the troops would have followed him had he consented. There was no one to raise a hand for the ministers. They surrendered and sent their resignations by telegraph to the Emperor at Petropolis, twenty-five miles away in the mountains. Their impression seems to have been that the insurrection was simply a military mutiny and that its object was solely to secure their own downfall. But the fact that Constant, Bocayuva, and others had been let into the inside enabled these republicans to direct the movement so that a permanent change in the form of government was possible.

The troops in the barracks joined the Second Brigade and all together marched through the centre of the city cheering for the army, for Deodoro, and the republic, amid the astonishment of the people, most of whom knew nothing of any trouble until they saw the parade. No resistance was offered, and when the Emperor reached the city at three o'clock in the afternoon the revolution was an accomplished fact. The chiefs of the revolt had met and organised a provisional government, naming themselves ministers. They at once took possession of their different departments and the public buildings. A decree was issued announcing that [Pg 498] henceforth Brazil was to be a federal republic. The feeble old Emperor was visited by a few friends, but there was no one to raise a hand or strike a blow for him or the dynasty. He himself would have shrunk from being the occasion for the shedding of the blood of any of his people.

THE EMPRESS IN 1889.

When night fell, the provisional government formally announced to the Emperor his deposition, and that he and his family would be compelled to leave the country, though their lives would be guaranteed and ample [Pg 499] pecuniary provision be made for them. The palace was guarded and no one allowed to enter, though there were no indications of any counter-revolution. The municipal council of the city promptly gave its adherence to the new order of things, and telegrams were coming in hourly from the provinces to the effect that the latter were universally satisfied and that republican sympathisers were taking possession of the local governments without opposition. During the night of the 16th, the Emperor and his family were placed on board ship and sent off to Lisbon.

The new government was, in fact, a centralised military dictatorship, but the names of most of its members were guarantees that the promises of the establishment of a republic would be carried out. In all the provinces the new situation was accepted peacefully. The Rio government named new governors by telegraph, and the imperial authorities turned things over to them without resistance. Persons known to have been advocates of republican principles were preferred, and a rapid displacement of the old governing classes ensued.

The provisional government continued in power for fourteen months, and in that time promulgated a series of laws touching almost every subject of social or political interest. The provinces were organised into states after the model of the members of the North American Union; universal suffrage was established; Church and State were entirely separated; civil marriage was introduced; a new and humane criminal code was adopted; [Pg 500] the judicial system was reorganised after the American fashion; and, in general, monarchical characteristics were removed from the statutes, and the most modern reforms enacted. A project for a constitution was carefully framed, and this was submitted to a congress, which had been summoned to meet early in 1891. This congress was composed of 205 deputies, elected by states and not by districts, and of three senators from each state. Acting as a constituent assembly, it adopted with few modifications the constitution proposed. The members of the constituent congress had been almost universally selected from among those who had been prominent in connection with the new government, or had given it an enthusiastic adhesion. With few exceptions, the new constitution is a copy of that of the United States. The only important difference is that in Brazil the enactment of general civil and criminal law is a federal and not a state attribute. The revenues of the newly created states were made much larger than those of the imperial provinces, principally by transferring to them the duties on exports.

Though the constitution of February 24, 1891, nominally went into effect at once, as a matter of fact the government continued military. Deodoro was elected president, and Marshal Floriano Peixoto vice-president, and the dictatorship was effective, except so far as it was managed and controlled by a few leaders who had power in the army, navy, or financial world. The provisional government had conceded to banks in every [Pg 501] important centre of the country the right to issue circulating notes. The markets were flooded with money; credit was easy; an extraordinary speculative boom set in; values rose tremendously. The last years of the empire had been prosperous and exchange had gone to par. Within three years after the empire was overthrown, the amount of paper money in circulation was more than tripled, but though exchange had fallen tremendously, no ill effects were yet apparent. The nation was drunk with suddenly acquired wealth. Companies of all sorts were granted government concessions—railroad companies, mining companies, harbour improvement companies, banks, factories, and even sugar and coffee plantation companies. The price of coffee and rubber was rising in gold, while the cost of production was falling with the depreciation of

the currency. The flood of Italian immigration which had been going to the Argentine was largely diverted to Brazil. Rio, Pará, and São Paulo were the centres of the prosperity. Business men from the provinces swarmed into these cities, and the fortunate owners of plantations emigrated to Paris to spend their easily acquired wealth.

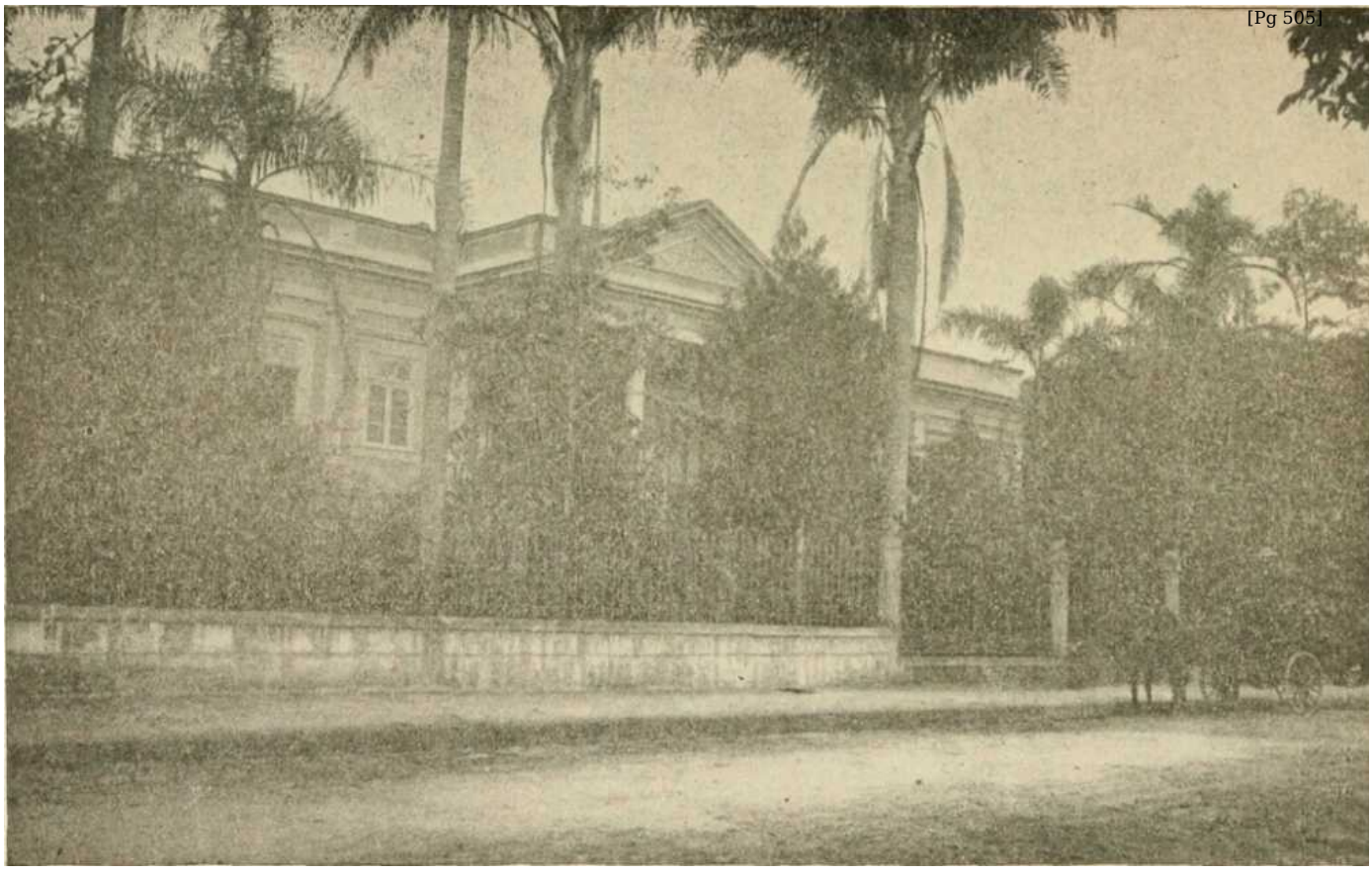
During 1891 and 1892 Deodoro became involved in disputes with republican leaders. To these political difficulties were added quarrels over the government concessions which were expected to make every one rich. Deodoro offended the moneyed powers by not granting such concessions as freely as was desired by many influential persons. Finally Deodoro found that he could no longer count on a majority in Congress, so [Pg 502] he arbitrarily dissolved it. But revolutions broke out in the different states against the governors who stood by the dictator, and he also found that he could not rely upon the unquestioning support of the army. The navy was decidedly disaffected. After some hesitation he yielded to the signed demand of a powerful junta and resigned in favour of the vice-president, whom the speculators and promoters thought they could easily control. They were grievously disappointed in Floriano. The radical republicans found him more to their liking than did the wealthier classes and the bureaucrats. The navy has always been recruited among the aristocrats and looked down upon the army and soon developed a dislike for the plebeian and illiterate president. An effort was made to pass and put into effect a law expelling Floriano from office before the expiration of the four-years' term for which Deodoro and he had been elected, but he flatly announced that he would serve out the term to which he believed himself constitutionally entitled.

In the meantime a rebellion had broken out in Rio Grande do Sul against Julio de Castilhos, the radical republican governor. Gaspar Silveira Martims, the local leader of the old Liberal party, had been banished, but from Montevideo he organised the insurrection. The adherents of the two historical imperial parties and the gauchos of the southern part of the state joined the movement enthusiastically. Presently the pampas were swept from one end to the other by bands of federalists, under dreaded leaders like Gomercindo [Pg 503] Saraiva, a ranchman from near the Uruguayan border. The republicans stood firm, and Pinheiro Machado and other gaucho chiefs showed that they, too, possessed the fighting qualities which have always distinguished the hard-riding, meat-eating Rio Grandenses. With the aid of federal troops the republicans had decidedly the upper hand, but the federalists kept the field for three years, while the country was harried and the most frightful destruction of life and property took place.

Meanwhile the intriguers against Floriano at Rio took advantage of this formidable complication. The mercantile classes, the Conservatives, the moderate republicans, and those who regretted the empire were opposed to him. The navy was ready to revolt at any time. A number of powerful men had bluffed Deodoro into resigning, and they thought that they could easily do the same with Floriano. A majority in Congress was against him and he seemed to be almost isolated. But he had no thought of yielding or withdrawing. His subsequent actions show that he certainly was not actuated by any vaulting personal ambition. His was rather the instinct of a soldier who stands where he is and fights to the last without reasoning why. The real crisis in the establishment of the Republic had, in fact, arrived. Floriano's overthrow would have meant anarchy and disintegration, government by pronunciamento, short-lived administrations established and overthrown by military force.

Early in September, 1893, the entire navy, under the lead of Admiral Mello, revolted. The guns of the fleet [Pg 504] commanded the harbour and seemed to make the city untenable. Floriano acted with great energy. The army stood by him and he recruited vigorously. The fleet would not seriously bombard the city, full of sympathisers with the revolt, and Floriano held the fortifications around the bay so that it was difficult for Mello to obtain supplies. Though the European naval forces, which quickly assembled, sympathised with the insurgents, they could hardly give any efficient help so long as Floriano held the capital. Mello hesitated about attempting to establish a blockade. At first the insurgents disclaimed any intention of re-establishing the empire, but soon the revolt began to take on a frankly monarchical character. The friends of the old régime, however, nowhere showed the same energy and conviction as the republicans who stood by Floriano.

[Pg 505]



In Rio harbour matters came to a stand. Neither side could deal a decisive blow to the other, but in the end Floriano and the land forces were sure to win, because without a base of supplies the fleet could not maintain itself indefinitely. It was necessary for Mello to start a fire in the rear and to open communication with the Rio Grande federalists. He escaped through the harbour entrance with one of his ironclads, and went to Santa Catharina, where he established the seat of the revolutionary government. Gomercindo Saraiva, the able federalist chief, eluded the superior republican forces in the north of Rio Grande and attempted an invasion of Santa Catharina, Paraná, and São Paulo, where it was hoped that the monarchical plantation owners would [Pg 506] rise. But he was vigorously pursued and his forces defeated and scattered. The failure of this daring expedition was the death-knell of the revolt. Mello returned to Rio and there his position fast became untenable. The final crisis came with the refusal of the American admiral to permit him to establish a commercial blockade. This took away his last hope of being able to coerce Floriano to terms. The naval revolt collapsed in March, 1894: some of the ironclads escaped from Rio harbour and fled to Santa Catharina, where they were captured by the republicans. The Rio Grande federalists kept up a partisan warfare for a few months longer, but by 1895 they were completely stamped out.

Floriano was supreme, but instead of establishing a permanent military dictatorship he declined to be a candidate for re-election, and selected Prudente Moraes as his successor for the term beginning in 1894. Prudente had been one of the two republican deputies elected from São Paulo in 1886, and had acted as president of the Constitutional Assembly which framed the new constitution. Moderate and conservative in his opinions and methods, his selection was a recognition of the advisability of civil government and an abandonment of the system of military dictatorship. With his assumption of office the Republic may be said to have been at last definitely established.

The state governments were now functioning regularly, and their governors soon began to assume a great [Pg 507] importance in the political system. These executives are selected by local cliques instead of by the central government, as in imperial times; their command of the police and state patronage enables them to control elections, name their own successors, and exercise a predominant influence in the choice of deputies and senators to the national Congress. They are the chief instruments through which the president's control of politics is exercised.

The majority in Congress, composed of the leaders of the republican movement, and known as the Federal Republican party, supported Prudente in the early part of his administration, but he was too liberal to suit the Radicals in drawing into participation in public affairs capable Brazilians of other antecedents. This policy and the jealousies that always arise in a dominant party brought about a rupture between him and the leader of the House majority. In the trial of strength which followed, the Federal Republican party was split, and though the president was victorious by a small margin, his position became very precarious.

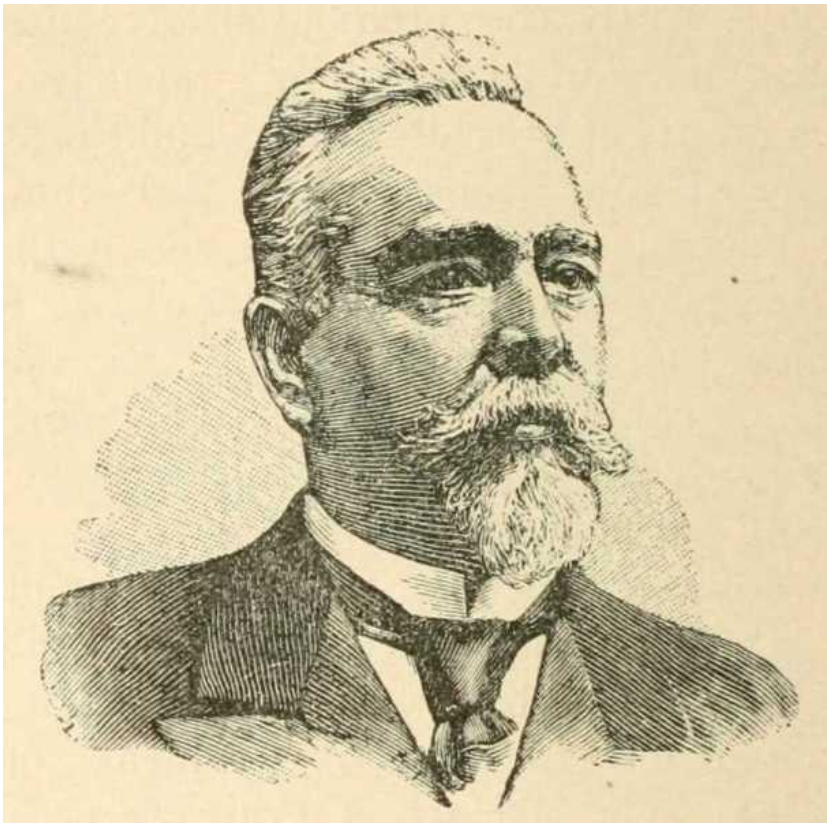
The Republic had started out on a scale of unprecedented extravagance. The old provincial governments had been given only the fragments from the imperial table, but the republican constitution multiplied the revenues of the new states many fold. The issues of paper money, the high prices of coffee and rubber, and the speculative boom gave both state and federal government for a while plenty of money to spend. The Union and the states vied with each other in multiplying employees, in making loans, in spending money on public [Pg 508] edifices, and in building and guaranteeing railroads. The larger the deficits grew the more paper money was issued, and exchange fell with sickening rapidity. A larger and larger proportion of the paper revenue had to be devoted to the purchase of gold bills for the payment of the interest on the foreign debt. The deficits increased in geometrical progression. By 1895 signs of the coming trouble were apparent, though the business of the country was still prosperous. In 1896 came an outbreak of religious fanaticism in the interior of Bahia, which grew into an armed revolt—small, it is true, but which cost much money to suppress. The necessity for retrenchment was evident; railroad building was interrupted; schemes to rehabilitate the currency were brought forward and discussed.

The governments of the poorer states looked for help to the impoverished federal treasury, and some of the stronger states showed impatience at being hampered by an unprofitable connection with their weak sisters. The president was not on sympathetic terms with the victorious Radicals in Rio Grande, and the uncompromising republicans all over the Union felt that they were not sufficiently favoured. In the fall of 1897 an attempt was made in broad daylight to assassinate Prudente, and prominent opposition politicians were strongly suspected of complicity in the plot. A state of siege was declared, but the country remained quiet, and no serious opposition was apparent when Prudente announced that his support would be given to Campos Salles as his successor in office and presumably the continuer of his policies. [Pg 509]

A great drop in the price of coffee began, and the financial situation of the government grew worse and worse. Brazil grows about two-thirds of the world's coffee and her crop was enormously increasing. Consequently the production of coffee was outrunning the world's consuming capacity. The enormous profits of preceding years and the abundant supply of good Italian labour had stimulated planting beyond all reason. New and fertile districts were opened up in the interior of São Paulo, with which the older plantations of Rio and the coast regions could not compete. The poorer districts were reduced to poverty, while even the more fertile could not hold their own.

In government finances the lowest point was reached in 1898. The paper money had fallen to seventy-nine per cent. below par and it had become clearly impossible to continue payments on the foreign debt. The last act of Prudente's administration was to make an agreement by which the foreign creditors consented to waive the receipt of their interest for three years and the government pledged itself to reduce the volume of paper currency and to accumulate a fund for the resumption of interest payments.

No contest was made against Campos Salles's election in the spring of 1898. He took office finding an empty treasury, a government without financial credit, and the country in the midst of a severe commercial crisis. He showed great shrewdness in maintaining an ascendancy over the politicians and controlling a [Pg 510] majority in both branches of Congress, and, through his minister of finance, relentlessly followed the policy of contracting the currency and increasing taxes. In 1901 the payment of interest on the foreign debt was resumed, and though that debt had been increased fifty million dollars the currency had doubled in value and become relatively stable. The state governments are more dependent on the Union than in the days of their wealth; there is little present danger of disintegration; no real sentiment for the re-establishment of the empire exists. The same habits of political subordination which have kept Brazil together so long are increasing rather than diminishing in force.



CAMPOS SALLES.
[From a wood-cut.]

The commercial crisis and the high taxes have created great discontent among merchants. Coffee-planters and rubber-gatherers have still further suffered by the rise of the currency. Immigration has practically ceased, and there is little water left in speculative enterprises. The great Bank of the Republic failed in 1900, dragging down many industrial concerns and ruining thousands of small investors, and the government's connection with the bank caused much scandal. Other banks, which had too much extended their agricultural and industrial credits, have also failed, and there is great want of confidence among investors. However, capital is slowly accumulating, and a healthful tendency toward industrious habits and the employment of reasonable and moderate methods in exploiting the great untouched natural resources of the country is evident. [Pg 511]

Rodrigues Alves, the third civil president of the Republic, was peaceably elected in the spring of 1902, and took his seat on November 15th, the thirteenth anniversary of the Republic. Like both his predecessors he is from São Paulo, and was virtually named by his immediate predecessor. His policy is expected to be the same as Campos Salles's—that is, to keep expenses within revenue and to maintain the political *status quo*.

Leaving out immigration, the Brazilian people have shown a steady natural increase of nearly two per cent. per annum during this century. The total population has multiplied from less than three to more than eighteen millions. Not a fiftieth part of the territory is cultivated; its resources have never been studied, much less developed; the positive checks hardly exist; the preventive checks are yet indefinitely remote. Modern altruism makes wars of extermination unthinkable; the colonial experiences of the last century have demonstrated that races possessing a reasonably efficient industrial organisation do not tend to disappear, even though nations whose physical force is greater may reduce them to political subordination. The Brazilians have the additional advantage of inheriting directly a European civilisation. They are too firmly established, too numerous and prolific, and possess a too highly organised and deeply rooted civilisation to be in danger of expulsion or political absorption. Immense immigration into South America is inevitable, as soon as the pressure of population is strongly felt in Western Europe and North America. This may transform Brazil economically, but the new conditions will have to fit themselves into the political and social framework already in existence. [Pg 512]

MAP OF SOUTH AMERICA
SHOWING THE PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT AND PRESENT POPULATED AREA

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3. The following misprints have been corrected:

"completly" corrected to "completely" (page 81)
"int rests" corrected to "interests" (page 87)
"equilibriumin" corrected to "equilibrium in" (page 160)
"it ecame" corrected to "it became" (page 251)
"county" corrected to "country" (page 294)
"though" corrected to "thought" (page 297)
"commerical" corrected to "commercial" (page 374)
"municpalities" corrected to "municipalities" (page 454)
"in creased" corrected to "increased" (page 508)

4. Other than the corrections listed above, printer's inconsistencies in spelling, punctuation, hyphenation, and ligature usage have been retained.

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