

SÃO PAULO: AN OLD CITY THAT IS CARVING NEW WAYS

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FROM Rio we came down to São Paulo. This is one of the most prosperous and rapidly advancing cities in Brazil, and it shows the special characteristic of so many South American cities: for it is a city with a very old past which has made an extraordinary development in the last few decades. We in the United States are accustomed to the extraordinary growth of cities which are absolutely new—such cities as those of the State of Washington, for instance—but we are not accustomed to seeing that kind of growth occur in cities which are older than Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Charleston. São Paulo has played a prominent part in the colonial history of Brazil. Its people were exceptionally adventurous frontiersmen, half Spanish and half Indian, whose bands of pioneer explorers wandered through the vast Indian-haunted regions of interior Brazil, much as the Rocky Mountain trappers and traders three-quarters of a century ago wandered over the Far West. The city thus early achieved a peculiar character and played a peculiar part.

Some three centuries went by before there was any vital change. Then, with the cultivation of coffee on a large scale by modern methods, the city and the province suddenly found themselves swept into the current of industrial and civilized progress. There has been a large immigration. Not only tens of thousands of good workers but hundreds of capable and energetic business men and engineers have come. The native population has responded eagerly to the stimulus, and industrial and material development have been the order of the day. The old life has been pushed aside, but not destroyed, and as yet not completely absorbed. There has been a great development of railways, a great development of tramways in the towns. Automobiles are plentiful. The school system is being spread rapidly. There is a capital normal school at São Paulo itself. Moreover, São Paulo is an unusually attractive and well-built city, and the smaller towns also are responding to the new thrill. The whole life of the province has been profoundly affected for good. Yet enough of the old life remains to add color and charm

and the pleasure of vivid contrast. On broad roads with automobiles passing and repassing we also meet great carts precisely such as have been used in this land for four centuries. They may be drawn by six or eight or ten oxen. The huge wheels are of solid wood, and on the ungreased axles they groan and creak so as to drown the noise of the automobiles themselves. They say that the oxen will stop at once if the noise ceases. I have not seen such carts or heard them since thirty-three years ago when I met a band of Red River half-breeds going to a buffalo hunt in North Dakota. The pack-animals still swarm in the streets of São Paulo, and in the outlying districts one comes across mounted pig drovers, their big dogs herding the scores of wild-looking swine. All this goes side by side with bacteriological institutes, with improved stock farms, with light and power plants, with modern methods of education for both boys and girls. Of course the old life will gradually pass completely out of existence, but before it does so pass I hope it will have left a stamp of individuality on the new life that is taking its place.

In São Paulo I visited the excellent museum, and I visited the very remarkable institution where dangerous snakes are being studied and practical measures for the reduction of mortality by them devised. I visited some of the great industrial enterprises. I also made an address in the Normal School, where I felt just as much at home as if I had been in the United States and had listened to a speech in English by one of the girls of the graduating class. After reading the books of Brazil of sixty and seventy years ago, it is astounding to see the change that has taken place; and in no way has the change been greater or more beneficial than in the education of women, and indeed as regards woman's general position. The women missionaries from the South Branch of the American Methodist Church have done invaluable work towards this end.

It was my good fortune to visit a typical town of the interior agricultural districts, Pirajú, distant from São Paulo a dozen hours by rail. It is right in the heart of the coffee district,

coffee and pigs being the two staple commodities of the neighborhood. It is on the borders of the tropical country, and there are plenty of palms and banana trees; but the spirit of enterprise which we tend to associate only with colder regions was as much in evidence as if we were in Maine or Oregon. The town's whole growth has been a matter of the last twenty-five years. There were electric lights and a good water supply, and a trolley line is about to be inaugurated. There was a capital school, the classes being taught by graduates of the São Paulo Normal School. Moreover, together with these symptoms of business energy and of practical adaptability which are familiar in our own country, there was attention to other matters which we of the north sometimes neglect. There was, for instance, a handsome little

park, and here, as elsewhere, I was struck by the courtesy of the inhabitants. As usual, the municipal authorities entertained us, this time at breakfast—lunch we in our country would probably call it—and one dish, a kind of soup of chicken and flaked rice, called *coxido*, is so delicious that I much wish we could introduce it into the United States. If fortune favors me, I shall certainly try to get it into my own household!

After this we traveled on by railway southward toward the Uruguayan border. The train was comfortable, the stations neat and attractive and well kept, and the country interesting. Hand in hand with the new industrial development we saw on every side the old-time picturesqueness of buildings and peasant ways; and, as always, the mixture had an attractive flavor of its own.