

IN SOUTHERNMOST BRAZIL

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE SEVENTH ARTICLE IN THE SOUTH AMERICAN SERIES

I—IN RIO GRANDE DO SUL

THE next two days we were in the State of Rio Grande do Sul, the southernmost State of Brazil. For the most part it was rolling prairie, dotted with groves of forest, the climate cool and delicious, evidently very healthy, and with only an occasional palm to show that we were still not very far from the tropics. It was much such a country as the well-watered parts of eastern Texas and Oklahoma. It already has a fair population, but there is much room for growth and increase.

There will eventually be an immense extension of the agricultural land. At present much of this land is still natural pasture under wire fences. Several times we saw parties of South American ostriches—rheas, as they are properly called—running beside the train. These birds add much to the appearance of the prairie, and here they are protected by law. There were herds of cattle, horses, and mules, and also sheep and swine. We passed gauchos guarding the herds; picturesque men in *serapes*, broad hats, and baggy trousers, often each carrying a long gun. They were consummate horsemen, and well mounted. The saddles differ from our stock saddles, particularly in having no horn, but in its place a kind of raised leather ridge on the pommel bent backward, usually embroi-

dered with silver. This ridge or false pommel, by the way, I did not find comfortable nor easy for a long journey.

The country everywhere showed prosperity and growth. There were isolated ranch houses, with trees all around them, some of the houses large and handsome. There were little villages, or stations. There were very attractive towns. At two of these last, Cruz Alta and Santa Maria, we stopped.¹ At the first I was met by the Intendente, a native Brazilian, who could not speak anything but Portuguese, evidently a very good fellow, and by one of the foremost citizens of the town, a German by birth. They took me through the town in their automobile, and it was as picturesque and attractive a place as possible. My German friend spoke Portuguese to the Intendente and German to me, so we held quite a fluent conversation. There was a strong German as well as a strong Italian element in the town, the Italians mixing with the Brazilians almost from the outset, and the Germans beginning the same process after one generation—my German host, for instance, mentioned that his son had married a Brazilian girl. In one shop we had an experience of precisely the kind that is so common in the United States. There was in the shop a pleasant-looking, tall, flaxen-haired

¹ See illustrated section.

girl whom we addressed in German, but she shook her head, explaining that she could talk only "Brazilian." She summoned her mother to speak to us in German. Evidently the position that the German immigrants held was a very good one, and there was the same friendly feeling between the natives and newcomers, or immigrants, that is characteristic of our own Western States.

At Santa Maria also I was taken to drive in an automobile. It is a really beautiful town, picturesquely situated in the neighborhood of bold hills or small mountains, with houses attractively built, and everything as clean as possible. I wish to reiterate how impressed I was by the cleanliness of most of these Brazilian towns, and by the friendly, courteous attitude of the citizens. They often said to me that they wished they had more energy of the kind we have in the United States; but I am bound to say that I saw many evidences of energy both among the native Brazilians and among the immigrants. The climate is delightful in this province—cool, equable, healthy.

In Santa Maria I was much interested in the practical proof given me of the broad toleration of the Brazilians in religious matters. In this respect they behave precisely as we do, and their relations with one another are precisely similar to those which in our own country make it natural for Father Zahn and me to be traveling together. Here in Santa Maria I was received by the Intendente, with whom I spoke in French, and by a colonel of engineers, a fine, soldierly-looking fellow, with whom I spoke in German. He was the son of German immigrants, but was himself a Brazilian pure and simple, who spoke German no better than he did French, if as well. In the course of the drive he showed me the Lutheran Church, mentioning casually that he was a member of the congregation. I mentioned in response that at Cruz Alta I had met a Methodist minister, by birth an Italian, who told me that his congregation was almost exclusively Brazilian, although with one German and one Italian family. The colonel thereupon pointed out to me the Evangelical church, and later I was introduced to the minister, a native Brazilian. He was an Episcopalian. I do not know whether he was only temporarily in charge of the church or not. There were several Catholic churches, of course, for the immense majority of the Christians are Catholics. But there are Protestant congregations throughout

Brazil, of several different denominations; and there are Jewish congregations; and there are also men who are Positivists, or who profess no creed; and all are treated alike.

I dwell purposely on the similarities between us at home and these friends of ours to the south, and the similarities in outlook of the respective countries. There are differences, of course. As I have said before, there are differences even between very closely allied and related peoples, and naturally there must be differences between nations whose founders came from southern Europe, and a nation the great bulk of whose original settlers came from northern Europe. But I feel that the resemblances are far more important than the differences, that the likenesses are greater than the points of unlikeness. Moreover, I feel that between us and them since the days of independence there has been a constant tendency towards, and not away from, one another in ideals and ways of thought and habits of life. The differences that remain are merely the remaining inheritances of different European cultures. Many things have been added to the nations of the North and the South since they have become nations, and since their people have lived on American soil. These things have tended to bring closer together and to make each people more readily able to understand the other and to appreciate its ideals and ways of life.

This whole country, from São Paulo to the Uruguayan line, is already developing with much rapidity, and offers a great chance for further development. There is any amount of fine land: the climate is well adapted for the white race, and as yet there is much vacant space. I do not believe that our people realize in any adequate degree either the great progress that Brazil has already made and is now making, or the great future that lies before it.

II—A SEAPORT OF SOUTHERN BRAZIL.

We visited Porto Alegre, the capital of the province of Rio Grande do Sul. It is a beautiful little city by the seacoast, between a river and a great lagoon, and as clean as possible, as most of these Brazilian cities are. The houses are of the usual type, painted and rather over-ornate, but very picturesque. There are many parks, a good hotel, and the whole aspect of the city, with its equable, sub-tropical climate, was most inviting. As everywhere, I was treated with the utmost courtesy

and hospitality, and I saw so much to interest me that it is rather difficult to write about it all. For instance, there is a good polytechnical school, with a staff of professors which includes not only Brazilians and Germans, but also a number of Americans; among these are one or two women teachers for the primary classes in the trade school. This polytechnic university has been in existence only a few years. It is already exercising a marked effect, and it will exercise a still greater effect in the future. It is giving the kind of education which is necessary to all peoples at the present day, but peculiarly necessary to Brazil in view both of the great opportunities before her and of the defects in the national character and temperament which she is now so manfully and successfully endeavoring to remove.

I was greeted by the representatives of the local Young Men's Christian Association, by native Brazilian ministers, both Episcopal and Methodist—the former of whom had started an excellent children's school—and by Miss Lamb, who is one of that band of devoted women representing the Methodist Episcopal Church (South) who have formed a chain of girls' schools in Brazil. Here, again, I was struck by the liberality and breadth shown by the Brazilians in religious matters, their attitude being precisely our own in this regard. The Catholic priests have a very high position in the community, and occasionally hold high civil office, to which they are elected precisely as their lay brethren are elected; but there is no discrimination against any creed. An interesting feature, very evident whenever I encountered considerable groups of men of learning, was the influence of the Positivists of the school of Comte. I have met two or three American and English Positivists; but here in Brazil Positivism has a hold which is really noteworthy. I do not know whether or not the same thing is true of other Latin Catholic countries.

Among the gentlemen who gave me much information was the British Consul, Dr. Dillon, a graduate of the Rush School of Medicine in Chicago. He has a position in the Brazilian immigration service, and told me a good deal about the immigrants. For some thirty-five years there has been a substantial and at times a heavy immigration into the State of Rio Grande do Sul. For many years the most numerous immigrants were the Germans and Italians. The Italians rapidly fused with the natives. The Ger-

mans preserved their separate individuality much longer, and where they settled in exclusive colonies have kept it to the present day. Yet the change is already working. It has affected very many, and it will undoubtedly affect the remainder. Practically all born on this side of the water are loyal Brazilians, and in the end they will, like all other citizens of Brazil, speak Portuguese as their mother tongue, and become merged in Brazilian citizenship. They form a most valuable element of that citizenship—as indeed they do in every country to which they come. Many are Catholics, but probably the majority are Lutherans, and an interesting feature of the situation is that their Lutheran church connections are not with the Lutherans of Germany, but with the Lutheran bodies of the United States. Of late years both the German and Italian immigrations have fallen off, the Italians coming here not being much more numerous at the present time than immigrants from Scandinavia and Holland, while there has been a great increase in the Russian immigrants. During the first half of the present year there were some five thousand immigrants, of whom nearly three thousand were Russians. Most of the Russians are Poles, but there are a few Lithuanians and other Russians, and a considerable number of Russian Jews. The latter have been sent out by private benevolence on the part of their compatriots, and I was interested to learn that most of them were established in agricultural colonies, and were working hard as tillers of the soil—a most admirable thing. The general opinion was that the Poles showed themselves to be good colonists, and there was considerable discussion among my various informants as to whether the Poles, the Germans, or the Italians were the best, each nationality having its champions.

There is a foundation of Indian blood in this settlement; although this does not necessarily mean that those having it have much more than have the Virginia families who are so proud of their descent from Pocahontas, though often they bear Indian names. The Intendente, an admirable officer who had served for fourteen years (an example to our own cities in the way of treating their public servants), himself bore an Indian name, although he showed no more trace of Indian blood than do these same families that are descended from Pocahontas. One of the attractive features of this picturesque city was

the way in which the entire families, and especially the pretty girls, of whom there seemed to be many, leaned out of their windows or from high balconies, looking down at the passers-by.

There are certain rumors, occasionally taken seriously, which really it hardly seems that it ought to be necessary to contradict. One of these rumors that I encountered more than once in Brazil was that the United States intended to protect the States around the Amazon in setting up a separate republic by themselves, while Germany was to be allowed to take the Rio Grande do Sul as an offset. It was at first difficult for me to make up my mind to answer such a question seriously; but I finally assured my questioners that I did not believe that in the entire one hundred million people of the United States there could be found one individual so foolish as to back up such a proposition. The Germans, the Americans, and all other colonists who come to Brazil bring up children who are Brazilians, and not citizens of their fathers' country. The United States could no more "protect" the Amazon countries against Brazil, and Germany could no more take and keep Rio Grande do Sul, than either of them could take and keep one of the Australian states or the Transvaal—or any other state wholly impossible of attack. I added that I was certain I expressed the unanimous feeling of my countrymen when I said that our most earnest and cordial wish was that Brazil should remain united and undisturbed by any

revolutionist or separatist outbreak; that I believed that such would be the case; and that, if such was the case, that this united Brazil had before her during the twentieth century a career of progress and prosperity which very few other nations during that century could hope to parallel.

In temperate Brazil there is already a considerable settlement. The national type of the country has been definitely determined. There is no opportunity for any foreign power to take any of the land. But there is room for an enormous number of new immigrants. It cannot be too often repeated, however, that the immigrants who do best in this new country, as in all other new countries, are the farmers, the mechanics, the men prepared to work hard with their hands, and who are not afraid to live hard for a year or two. The Brazilian Government and its agents and representatives are desirous to do all they can for the immigrants. But the dislocation of home ties when men leave one country and settle in another is such that some hardship is inevitable, and in many cases there is very much hardship. Even where the great majority do well, there are certain to be some who suffer deservedly and others who suffer undeservedly. All these things should be taken into account by intending immigrants. Nevertheless, I feel that there are many millions of industrious and honest people in the Old World to whom it would be the greatest possible piece of good fortune to cast in their lot with twentieth-century Brazil.