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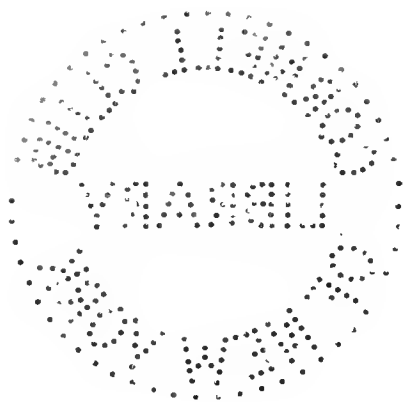
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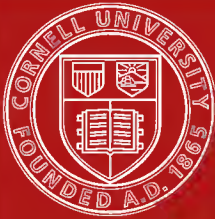
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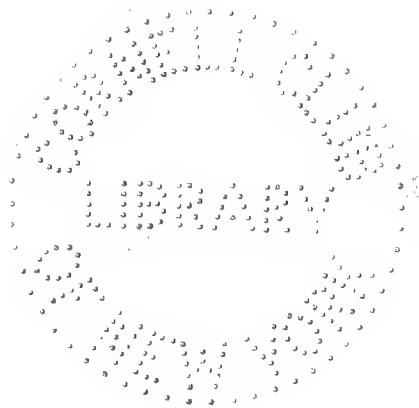
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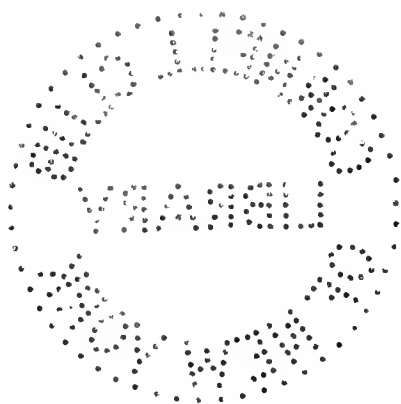
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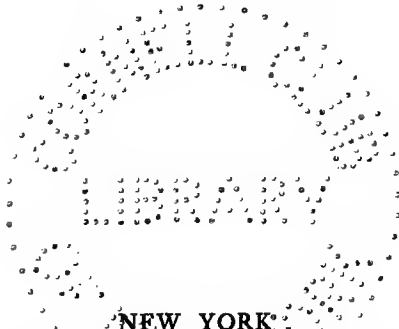
PARAGUAY

BY

W. H. KOEBEL

AUTHOR OF "URUGUAY," "MODERN ARGENTINA," "THE SOUTH AMERICANS,"
"MODERN CHILE," ETC.

WITH 32 ILLUSTRATIONS AND A MAP



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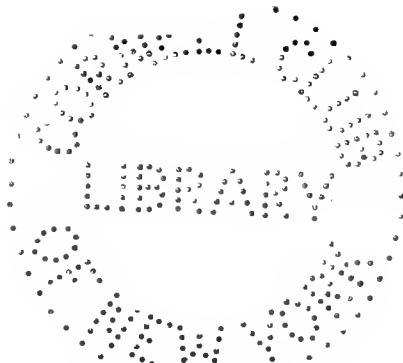
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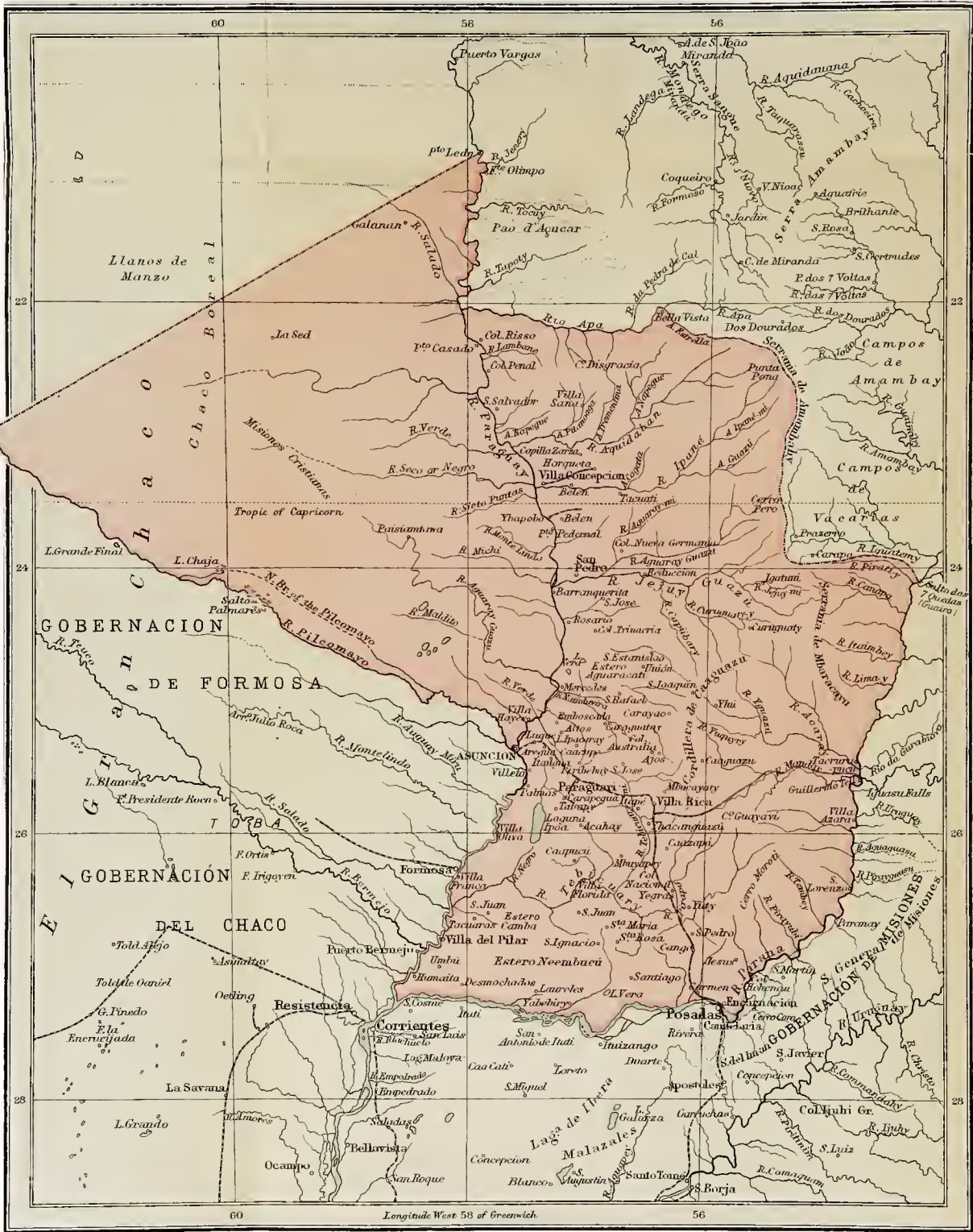
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MAP OF PARAGUAY



Railways thus ———

Scale - 1:5,000,000

English Miles

0 20 40 60 80 100

PARAGUAY

INTRODUCTION

Paraguay as the most romantic State in South America—A comparison with Bolivia—A fortunate Republic—Some political conditions—The original centre of the south-eastern civilization of the continent—Types of men who founded the State—Paraguay as an early political storm-centre—Various natures of the conflicts—The rise of despotism—The “Inland Japan”—Paraguay as a hermit State—Some extraordinary decrees—Reason for the lack of historical detail—The Paraguayan War and the end of the age of tyranny—A cycle of revolution—The intervention of modern enterprise—Railways as extinguishers of political unrest—Incentives to revolution in the past—Some pleasant features of the Republic—Natural boons—The choice of the *conquistadores*—The first up-stream journey—The site of Asuncion—Robert Southey and Paraguay—Variety of products—Some recent departures—The Paraguayan and modern ethics—Promise of development—Influence of the climate.

FROM the point of view of both history and nature Paraguay is in many respects the most romantic State in South America. In common with Bolivia it shares the rather unenviable distinction of being one of the two inland republics of that continent. The disadvantage of this situation has been felt by both. Nevertheless the lot of Paraguay is more fortunate than that of its neighbour to the west.

Paraguay, having never possessed a sea coast, has accommodated her inclinations and industries in conformity with that lack, for which she has always enjoyed ample compensation in the magnificent system of rivers that wash her territories and that afford such wide and serviceable highways to the ocean.

Bolivia, on the other hand, is, so far as the ocean is concerned, in the position of a bereaved nation. She mourns the loss, not only of a seaboard that was once hers, but of a wide frontage on the Paraguay River, which in an unhappy moment she exchanged for other territory which has since proved itself of far less value than she had anticipated.

So much for Bolivia. But if Bolivia can lay claim to sympathy as one of the unlucky nations of this world, Paraguay has no right to any pretension of the kind. In all other respects but that of her politics Paraguay is essentially a fortunate land—a lotus-land if you will, but none the less fortunate for that. It is possible enough that the countries provided with the most bountiful wealth of Nature are responsible for the fewest human feats. It would in any case seem more or less of an axiom that the hot sunlight streaming through palm-leaves and brilliant tropical flowers produces just the same degree of languor as the frosty air of the chilly latitudes does of energy—this latter, moreover, not merely for energy's sake, but rather as the result of the search for warmth.

There may be some who fail to see that Paraguay is to be congratulated on its lot. Doubtless there are many loyal and ambitious Paraguayans who would hotly deny their country's faintest claim to the title of fortunate land. Hemmed in by neighbours now more powerful than herself, all but exterminated just after the middle of the nineteenth century by the combined forces of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay—these, after all, are only a couple of the woeful circumstances which have fallen to the lot of the Paraguayan race. From the first settlement of the land by the Europeans the inland State became, and remained, the sport of despotism, civil war, and revolutions.

None of the great names which are associated

with the founding of the colony.—Pedro de Mendoza, Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, Irala, and the rest of the *conquistadores*—are to be dissociated with deeds of violence, whether worked by themselves upon others or by others upon them. At the dawn of the New World history was necessarily made in a rough-and-ready fashion, and the history which was made in Paraguay could only be compared in importance with that hammered out at white heat in Peru and Bolivia by Pizarro and Almagro.

Upon the early history of Paraguay hung that of the entire south-eastern portion of the continent. From the force of circumstances which are probably unique in the tale of the world Asuncion, the young capital of Paraguay, situated on the banks of its great river at a distance of no less than a thousand miles from the coast, became the first headquarters of Spanish civilization, and from this point the colonizing force radiated outwards in all directions.

As a result of all this, Asuncion became as perturbed as any other vortex. So great was its distance from the mother country that the dreaded might of Spain, by the time that it had filtered across the ocean, along the coast, and up the great river system far inland, had lost much of its terror. The community which comprised the early white population of Paraguay was essentially of a daredevil order, otherwise it had never penetrated to that remote spot. It comprised men sufficiently reckless to flout an Imperial Governor or a Bishop of Rome, both of which acts, undertaken at that period, were eloquent of extreme daring.

Starting from this basis, it is perhaps a matter of little wonder that the early history of the inland State should have been unusually turbulent, and that it should have been marred by a degree of internal conflict against which many of the great and wise

men that the country has produced have struggled in vain. In Paraguay, moreover, the storm-centres of the various contests have tended to shift in a most giddy fashion. The direction of the various antagonisms would seem to have altered almost as rapidly as the level of the great rivers in flood-time or drought. Almost every conceivable kind of struggle occurred between Church and State, governors and bishops, rival clerical orders, and between conflicting civil powers.

So deeply did these elements of discord permeate the social life of Paraguay that even one of the greatest feats of civilization in the history of the world—the organization of the Guaraní Indians in the settlements prepared for them by the Jesuits—was not carried out without considerable opposition, not only on the part of those laymen who were incensed at the withdrawal from their power of so many potential human chattels, but from dignitaries of the Church itself, who relentlessly busied themselves in attempting to destroy an essentially humane work.

In this respect Paraguayan history has been curiously consistent. Even when, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the victorious war of liberation had flung wide open to the outer world the frontiers of the other South American States, the rise of a new despotism in Paraguay shut off her inhabitants completely from her neighbours. At this period for year after year all those foreigners who attempted to pass her forbidden boundaries were excluded with a rigour which gained for the country the name of the "Inland Japan"—a title which is meaningless now but which was sufficiently eloquent then.

For the greater part of the first half of the nineteenth century Paraguay was a hermit State. For some decades after the decay of the Spanish rule

so intense was the despotism that oppressed the country that its inhabitants only dared breathe out the name of the first tyrant, Gaspar Rodriguez Francia, in the muttered whisper of utter dread.

In the Middle Ages themselves what would have been thought and written of a monarch who decreed that all his male subjects, even the most impoverished, should wear a hat—if the headgear were to consist of nothing but a twisted wisp of straw—solely in order that the man might sweep it off with a sufficiently obsequious flourish if the dreaded chief of the State should happen to pass him by in the street ! Yet this—and much that was not in the least humorous and utterly grim—occurred in Paraguay of the early nineteenth century.

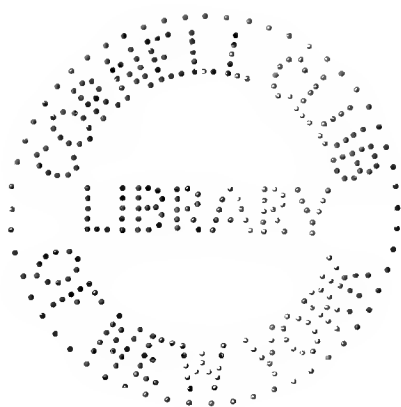
The more intimate records of this period of Paraguayan history are lamentably meagre. But the reasons for this lack are sufficiently explicit. The Paraguayans themselves—haunted by a continual fear of *lèse majesté*—dared not compile any notes or formulate any opinions concerning the events of the day : the foreigners—save for a few favoured exceptions whose impressions are dealt with later on—could not, for the simple reason that the Paraguayan guards along the river banks kept unceasing watch and ward in order to prevent the treading of the hermit soil by an unauthorized and unwelcome foot !

It was not until 1870, at the end of the completely exhausting war with her neighbours, that Paraguay, faint, bleeding at every pore, and incredibly diminished in population, was delivered from the iron rule of the last of her three tyrants. Even then the political troubles of the country were not at an end ; it was scarcely to be expected that after so giddy a career a firm balance could be obtained without a number of preliminary staggerings. A cycle of revolutions followed, a series of internal upheavals that were separated the one from

the other by intervals of a peace sufficiently productive to demonstrate with astonishing clearness the agricultural and industrial possibilities of the country.

It does not necessarily savour of any undue optimism to assert that this period of intermittent revolution may be looked upon as heralding the settled prosperity of the country. It is possible enough that it has served a somewhat drastic purpose in permitting the effervescence which was only natural after so lengthy a condition of unhealthy repression. As it is, moreover, industrial circumstances have now stepped in to play a part which had been denied them before. The railway has been at work, not only to link up Paraguay with its neighbours but to open up communication between many of the interior districts which had before been widely separated by the difficulties of travel. The lines, moreover, are about to extend themselves still farther.

Now, throughout the history of South America it has been proved that the chief enemies of revolution are railways in the first place and prosperity in the second, the second usually being the corollary of the first. From the mere strategic point of view it is beyond question that the intercommunication resulting from the spread of the railway lines tends to render less and less possible the existence of those isolated hotbeds of disaffection which have worked so much mischief—and occasional good!—in the past. A factor which has so greatly favoured many South American revolutions is precisely this want of rapid communications, which, combined with a sparse population, has enabled insurgents to seize a province, hold it, and to establish a new Government within it almost before the central authorities of the State had an inkling that anything out of the usual was happening. With the prosperity, moreover, which has invariably been found to follow in the track of





PLAZA INDEPENDENCIA ; ASUNCION.

the railway lines the more sordid incentive towards political disorder disappears.

These circumstances have held good in the case of all Paraguay's neighbours, and it will be strange if the proof be not forthcoming once again in Paraguay itself.

So far we have been looking on merely the dark side of Paraguayan affairs. Indeed, there is no disguising the fact that from the political point of view the bright side of life undoubtedly lies in the future. Nevertheless, affairs of state, although they carry far, are not all-embracing. The inland Republic is not lacking in consolations. From the domestic and everyday point of view the present amply suffices for its inhabitants. It is in these most important respects that Paraguay shows herself as a most fortunate land.

The average Paraguayan, as a matter of fact, is accustomed to live amid surroundings such as the inhabitants of very few other countries could afford not to envy. His land is one of exquisite natural beauty, of abundant fruits and flowers, and of soft airs. It has a soil that gives with a generosity so lavish as to tend to discourage too violent a human effort or too ambitious an enterprise! The boons of too kind a Nature are inevitably accompanied by a certain process of enervation.

So it is that, in a sense, Paraguay represents the *Midi*, the Riviera of the country of the great southern streams. It is a land where the guitar-strings still thrum, and where the blue cigar smoke floats up dreamily against a far bluer sky from the placid lips of young and old, male and female.

If Paraguay were an important tourist resort—as at some future time it cannot well fail to become—an advertising agent of enterprise could glean one of its finest testimonials from the very earliest Spanish history of the land. For the *conquistadores* of the

Rio de la Plata, after vainly endeavouring to make head against the famine and hostile Indians that haunted the mouth of the great river, toiled for a thousand miles up-stream, doubtless pausing in perplexity a hundred times amid the maze of islands and the complexities of the waters, until they came abreast of the spot where Asuncion, the capital, now stands. During the whole course of their inland voyage the banks had been growing more varied in beauty, richer in woodland, and more brilliant in flowers, birds, and butterflies. The promise of the landscape had called upon the adventurers many times to halt. But they had gone on, hesitating at times, until they came abreast of the site of Asuncion. There they doubted no longer. They hauled their brigantines and caravels to the pleasant bank, landed, and—after an everyday and commonplace victory over the very mild-tempered Indians of the district—they prepared to establish themselves at the beautiful spot they had chosen.

From that day to this Paraguay has never entirely shed its soft glamour. Robert Southey himself must have been keenly appreciative of this. For, though he chose Brazil as a subject for the best history that has ever been written on that country, he selected Paraguay as the most appropriate setting for a romance!

So far the clatter of the Asuncion electric trams and the rumble of the occasional trains which pass through the country, have shaken up very few particles of the sunny and slumberous Paraguayan air, though they will undoubtedly cause an incalculable disturbance before they have done. There can be little doubt, indeed, that Paraguay has already begun to be alive to the value of the industrial and commercial assets which have for so long lain to a large extent latent within her frontiers. For the country is fortunate in that its products already show a considerable variety, which cannot fail to be

increased considerably, further when the full force of modern invention and machinery is brought to bear.

Thus it is that, in addition to its important pastoral and agricultural industries—in both of which notable strides have recently been made—a number of factories have of late years arisen, brought into being, not at the casual command of one of the nation's despots, which in the old days was practically the only species of beginning which an industry was permitted, but by an enterprise brought about by an awakening to the exigencies of supply and demand. There seems no doubt that the trend of this beginning will, apart from its own success, be accelerated by the enormously increased importance of the rôle which South America is now assuredly destined to fill in the affairs of the continents.

It is certain that amidst the hills, valleys, and rivers of her beautiful landscape Paraguay has a sufficiency of material assets to ensure her material wealth. To what extent its light-hearted and temperamentally easy-going populace will themselves enter into the up-to-date, and not invariably pleasant, process of money-making remains to be seen. Clearly such a revolution would entail the shattering of so many comfortable principles that have had their birth and existence under the blue cigar smoke and bluer sky which are themselves part and parcel of Paraguay! All things considered, two circumstances would seem to promise comparative certainties in the inland Republic: in the first place that its resources will be amazingly developed within the next ten years; in the second that this development will be conducted, not necessarily on the hard-and-fast Northern principles, but rather in conformity with the ways of a land that has much history and many traditions behind it, and that has for its everyday use a soft and languorous climate, the influence of which will never consent to be set entirely aside.

CHAPTER I

THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF PARAGUAY

An Indian tradition—The story of Tupí and Guaraní—The Guaraní race—Some characteristics—Various tribes—General Guaraní methods of Government—Evidences of a strong sense of democracy—Diffuseness of the race—Disadvantages of this circumstance in warfare—The Guaraní as a warrior—Intellectual status of the race—Lack of arts and crafts—Matters of religion and medicine—Some results of a want of imagination—Painful ceremonies—Limited advantages enjoyed by the *cacique*—Relation in which he stood towards the tribes—Duties of the primitive Parliaments—Absence of an aristocracy—Physical characteristics—A stoical people—The tribes of the Chaco—Dividing force of the River Paraguay—Distinction between the inhabitants of the Chaco and the Guaranís—Some relics of Inca rule in the Chaco—A lapse into barbarism—Some grim events—A curious spectacle of isolation.

VERY little is known of the history of the Guaraní Indians who inhabited Paraguay at the period when the Spaniards first arrived in that country. There is a vague tradition to the effect that the forefathers of two of the great native races of the east of the continent were two brothers who in some mysterious fashion arrived in Brazil from overseas. Taking to themselves wives in the country, their offspring multiplied rapidly.

At length a dispute occurred between the wives of the two brothers who at the time happened to be the leaders of the young race. In consequence of this they resolved to separate. Tupí, the elder brother, remained in Brazil, while Guaraní, the younger, led his people to the south-west, until they came to Paraguay, where they settled, and increased,

until from their descendants sprang the great nation of the Guaranís.

If it possesses no other merits, this legend has at all events that extreme simplicity which was to be expected from so unsophisticated a folk. The ethics of the Guaraní race, as a matter of fact, were crude to a degree when the *conquistadores* first penetrated into their midst. The various nations of this great race occupied not only Paraguay—exclusive of the low-lying stretches of the Chaco country on the right bank of the Paraguay River—but extended through many portions of Brazil, practically as far as the northern shores of the continent.

Occupying so large a tract of territory, it was only natural that the various sections of the great Guaraní family should have developed rather widely differing characteristics. Indeed, at the time of the European advent into South America the main stock of the race had become split up into a countless confusion of lesser tribes, which varied, the one from the other, not only in customs and appearance but in language itself.

Some of these tribes were nomadic. These lived principally upon the abundance of fish with which the rivers were stocked, and to a lesser degree upon the game which their notched, wooden-tipped arrows brought down for them. Other tribes were of the stationary order, and these, occupying their moderate energy with some primitive forms of agriculture, found themselves able to support existence by a far less strenuous fishing and hunting than was the case with the nomadic branches of the race.

In matters of government the Guaranís of Paraguay resembled all the other aboriginal races of South America, with the exception of the imperial Incas and of the more northern Chibchas. As a people they were essentially diffuse. Not only did they recognize no central authority, they yielded a

mere conditional obedience to the chiefs set directly above each tribe. They consented to be governed by a chief only for so long as they were convinced that he was fitted to fill the chieftain's post. An inefficient leader was almost invariably replaced by another. No violence occurred in this change of authority, moreover. It took place by mutual consent, and afforded only one more proof of that very strong inborn sense of democracy which pervaded all the South American races, with the exception of the Incas.

The situation of the Guaraní race had served its own purposes well enough in aboriginal South America. But it was the very diffuseness of the great family that constituted its greatest peril, when menaced by a conquering force from without. This loosely knit collection of tribes was completely unable to offer any effective resistance to the small bands of well-armed and highly trained Spaniards who invaded their lands, and who were able to deal with the various tribes singly, or in twos or threes, in a fashion that to a great extent neutralized the overwhelming masses of the Guaraní population, which in these instances served as a mere dead-weight.

The average Guaraní, moreover—though many of his number proved themselves possessed of admirable courage—was not a natural-born warrior of the type of the unusually fierce Indians of Uruguay, Argentina, and Southern Chile. Had he proved himself so, the influence of climate would have spent itself in vain—a circumstance which does not seem ever yet to have arisen in the history of nations and their natural surroundings.

On the whole, the Guaraní was a primitive and contented person who, being well satisfied with the particular territory in which he happened to find himself, scarcely ever troubled to invade his neigh-

bour's soil or to commit any acts of organized and premeditated aggression. This being so, war was rare among the various Guaraní tribes. But it cannot be said that the benefits of comparative peace had brought about any notable advance in the arts and crafts of civilization. On the contrary, the intellectual development of these natives had remained at a very low ebb.

Music, even of the most barbarous order, was practically unknown among them. Of such crude picture-writings on rock as were discovered by Wallace in the Amazon basin not a trace has, I believe, been met with in Paraguay. Indeed, the Guaranís appear to have been remarkably deficient even in those superstitions which would seem the birthright of almost every savage race. It is true that they were provided with priests of a kind. But the duties of these were very little concerned with worship in any shape or form, and ceremonial ritual was practically unknown to them : they served rather as medicine-men, and their most notable performances lay in the alleged curing of sufferers. Even here their methods were as crude as in all else, one of their most frequent forms of treatment being to apply their lips to the part affected and to endeavour to suck the pain away !

Probably few races have been gifted with a lesser degree of imagination than the original stock of the Guaraní. Among his good qualities, of course, were those of his defects. He was tenacious and patient, and was capable of bearing pain and suffering to a point which very few other mortals could have endured. The mutilations which the men were accustomed to inflict on themselves on attaining to maturity were alone of so severe an order as to be borne only by those of the most resolute nature. Yet these were the common lot, and had to be undergone by every single man before he could be

permitted to enter the state of matrimony or the councils of his tribe.

These tribal councils, as a matter of fact, represented very important institutions. It has already been explained that the power of the various Guaraní chiefs was limited in the extreme. In these naturally democratic communities the *cacique* possessed no insignia. His attire—or his lack of it—was exactly similar to that of all the rest of the people. In the majority of cases the sole advantage he enjoyed over the common tribesmen was the right to order these to till and sow his fields, to gather in his harvests, and to build his primitive hut for him.

This chief's authority, moreover, was at all times subservient to that of the tribal council—to which he seems to have stood much in the same relation as the modern manager of a limited company stands towards his board of directors ! These tribal councils were composed of the various male heads of the families, who would gather together of an evening, when the last rays of the brilliant sun were about to die away, and the first fire-beetles were about to appear, and would discuss the affairs of their primitive State. In the case of war it was this same council which would appoint the commander of the warriors—an office which the chosen leader would hold only for as long as the war lasted, after which he would revert to his status as an ordinary tribesman. It will be seen from all this that an aristocracy of any kind was absolutely wanting in the aboriginal people of Paraguay, a condition of affairs which obtained throughout the continent, with the exception of the Inca and Chibcha races. Since it is the descendants of this original Guaraní race which form so large a part of the present-day Paraguayan nation, they assume an importance which is practically lacking in the almost extinct southern warrior tribes of Argentina and Uruguay, and which justifies a

share of attention which these others—according to the hard-and-fast tragedy of the extinct!—have no longer the right to claim.

In person the Guaraní of Paraguay was of a light brown complexion, of average height, and was almost invariably well built. Indeed, with their small eyes and long, straight, black hair, the aborigines were typical American natives, representatives of the "red-skin" race which once flourished from Hudson's Bay to Cape Horn.

In temperament they were equally true to type. We have already seen that they were stoical in the bearing of pain. Grief and joy they encountered in this same frame of mind. They refused stubbornly to groan at the first, or to laugh aloud at the second. It was their grim pride to maintain an impassive countenance in the face of every happening which their world had in its power to offer them, and among themselves they maintained their conversations in low and monotonous voices.

It may be imagined that this people, blended with that of the fiery, chivalrous, and emotional Spaniard, would be productive of a sufficiently virile race. Such has proved to be the case, and, from the anthropological point of view, none can find themselves disposed to criticize the Paraguayan of to-day unfavourably. But this topic has brought us far in advance of the aboriginal period with which we are at present concerned.

On the right bank of the Paraguay River were the Chaco tribes, nations which differed as much from the Guaranís as does the landscape of one bank from that of the other. As a dividing force there can be few streams which rival the Paraguay. As a barrier between nations, moreover, its influence has remained almost unbroken from the dawn of history to the present day.

Save for a few raiding parties which would cross

the stream from time to time the left bank¹ of the Paraguay River was as unknown to the Chaco tribes as was the right bank to the Guaranís. But the cause of such infrequent and desultory hostilities as occurred must without a doubt be laid at the door of the Tobas, Matacos, Lenguas, and the rest of the Chaco tribes. For these truculent Indians were at all times only too ready to assume the offensive. The Guaraní, when brought into contact with civilization, showed himself willing to take advantage of its benefits. The Chaco tribes, on the other hand, steadily refused to enter into any intercourse with the whites except that provided by ambushes and flights of arrows.

There seems to be no doubt that in the north-west of that strange Chaco district of wood, swamp, and pasture which includes such important territories of Argentina, Paraguay, and Bolivia, many of the Indian tribes are concerned with a tragic romance, of which they themselves probably suspect nothing at all. In the days of the Inca Empire great portions of the Chaco were controlled by these Children of the Sun, and evidence abounds to support the fact that, on the extinction of the Inca rule by the Spaniards, large numbers of these ill-fated people took refuge in the Chaco.

It is this flight on a large scale which accounts for the marked Quichúa features of many of the remoter Chaco tribesmen; for the Incas of Peru and Bolivia were of the Quichúa race. Other traces are to be met with in the headgear of some of the tribes, which is clearly patterned on that of the ancient Incas. But in the present-day habits and customs of these men nothing whatever of the old Inca remains. They have lapsed entirely into the barbarism of the Chaco, and have no idea that any of their ancestors existed in anything more solid than the woodland *toldos*, the huts of branches hastily



THE CHACO LUMBER INDUSTRY.

flung up, or that they had ever lived any other life but that of fishers and hunters in the Chaco plains.

However this may be, the Chaco Indians enter very little into the history of Paraguay. Unlike the Guaranís, they have played no part in the building up of the modern Paraguayan race. The only part contributed by them towards the early history was the grim tale of the murders which they worked upon those clerics, laymen, and soldiers whose ill-fate had caused them to attempt to explore that mysterious land which lay on the other side of the great river.

It is only during the past few years that this isolated condition of affairs has tended to alter. In the beginning and middle of the nineteenth century it was responsible for a complication in the strange political situation of that period. For, whereas Paraguay then shut herself off from the outer world, and became what was known at the time as the "Inland Japan," the Paraguayan Chaco, with its hordes of fierce Indians, kept itself as remote as ever from Paraguay proper on the other side. The spectacle afforded in consequence was unique—that of a hermit State within a hermit State! But at the time these conditions prevailed there were very few foreign spectators on the spot to take disinterested note of these remarkable circumstances.

CHAPTER II

THE ENTRY OF THE SPANIARDS

Juan Diaz de Solis—The first mariner to sail the Rio de la Plata—His fate—Return of the expedition—Magellan—Sebastian Cabot—He explores the Paraná River and finds the settlement of Sancti Spiritus—Origin of the name Rio de la Plata—Cabot sails up the Paraguay River—Unexpected meeting with Diego Garcia—The latter relinquishes the field to Cabot—After prolonged waiting Cabot sails to Spain in order to seek assistance—Fate of the garrison he left behind him—The tragedy of Lucia Miranda and the *caciques*—The few survivors of the garrison eventually reach the island of Santa Catalina—Don Pedro de Mendoza's expedition—The founding of the township of Nuestra Señora de los Buenos Aires—Outbreak of hostilities with the Guaraní Indians—The settlement of Buena Esperanza is founded on the site of Sancti Spiritus—Pedro de Mendoza, leaving Ayolas in charge of the province, dies on the homeward voyage—Ayolas' voyage up the river—The chronicles of Ulrico Schmidel and the commentaries of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca—A comparison between the river systems of the Amazon and of the Rio de la Plata—Animals and tribes seen on the voyage—Relations with the Indians—Landing near the site of Asuncion—Defeat of the local Guaraní Indians—Foundation of the City of Asuncion—Advantages possessed by the spot—Results of its remoteness from the ocean—Situation of the pioneers—Their isolation.

THE earliest chronicles of Spanish Paraguay are inextricably bound up with the history of Argentina and of the territories of the Rio de la Plata in general. It was only in the nature of things that the mouth of the river should have been discovered before the upper reaches! Why it was that a spot a thousand miles from the ocean should have been definitely settled before the lands at the great river's mouth involves some far more complicated reasons.

Juan Diaz de Solis, Grand Pilot of Spain, was

the first mariner to sail the waters of the Rio de la Plata. Setting sail from the port of Sanlucar on the 8th of October, 1515, he went southwards with three ships until he came to the wide and sandy mouth of the Plata. It was his fate to proceed a very short distance up the stream. On one of the low-lying islands in the river, covered with willow, ceibo, and rushes, were a number of fierce Charrúa Indians.

These, staring in amazement at the strange new vessels that were sailing up their stream, made signals for the sailors to come ashore. Solis and his men, anxious to open communications with these inhabitants of a hitherto unsuspected world, rowed in a small boat to the bank. But no sooner had the party landed than it was attacked and massacred by the Charrúas. The dismayed European sailors, who had witnessed the tragedy from their ships, pulled up their anchors, and set sail forthwith for Spain to carry back the melancholy tidings.

On his southward way to the Straits which bear his name, the famous Magellan sailed into the mouth of the Rio de la Plata in 1520, but made no attempt to explore the actual waters of the stream. The next really important feat of this kind was reserved for Sebastian Cabot. As a matter of fact this was brought about in the first place by accidental causes. Cabot, who had set out from Spain bound for the Moluccas, was compelled by the loss of some of his ships and by the scarcity of provisions to alter his plans—a circumstance which was very common in the experience of the early sea-captains! Finding himself off the mouth of the stream which was then known by the name of the River of Solis, he determined to explore its waters.

In the first place he detached a vessel under Juan Alvarez Ramon to sail up the Uruguay branch of the great river system. Ramon's vessel having run ashore, he was making his way back as best

he could, when he was murdered by the Yaros Indians. Enough, however, had been gleaned concerning the Uruguay River to show that, for purposes of navigation, the stretch of waters it offered was comparatively limited.

Cabot himself now determined to investigate the other branch, and, proceeding up the Paraná River as far as the mouth of its tributary stream, the Carcaraña, he established at the spot a settlement and a fort, which he christened by the name of Sancti Spiritus. It was just about this time, it may be said, that the name of the great estuary of the river system became changed. The reason of this was that Cabot was brought into contact with a certain number of natives on the banks of the stream, who were decorated with silver ornaments. Cabot had yet to learn that these pieces of metal had been brought across country, from the mountains hundreds of leagues to the west. At the time he made certain that the silver had emanated from the country through which the river passed. Rejoicing greatly at this supposed discovery of his, he sent the news back to Spain, and thenceforward the Rio de Solis became the Rio de la Plata, or the River of Silver—a metal of which its banks have always remained entirely innocent.

We now arrive at the first cleaving of the waters of the Paraguay by European vessels. It was at the end of December, and consequently midsummer below the equator, of 1527 that Cabot set out from his new settlement of Sancti Spiritus, determined to explore the upper waters. Having arrived at the point where, proceeding up-stream, his path became divided into the Paraguay and the Alto Paraná, he first of all chose the latter, and forced his way up it, the current becoming swifter and the fairylike forests drawing in on either hand, until the rocky bed and the cataracts forbade further progress.

On this, Cabot turned the bows of his ships, and sped down to the junction of the two rivers. Having reached this, he swung his craft round up-stream, and thus found himself sailing up the waters of the Paraguay River. Here he is said to have reached the point where the red and muddy waters of the Bermejo River flow into the main stream to discolour its tide, when Indian messengers brought him the news that the vessels of a second European expedition had made their appearance in the Paraná. This news was as disturbing as any could well be to an explorer in the first flush of his success, loath to share his triumph with any new-comer. Cabot turned his bows down-stream again, and about ninety miles below the junction of the Paraguay and Paraná he met with the ships of Diego Garcia,

Diego Garcia is said to have been an old shipmate of the unfortunate Juan Diaz de Solis. Convinced apparently of the opportunities which lay farther along the river on the banks of which his leader had perished, Garcia had persuaded some Spanish merchants to finance an expedition. Hence his meeting, many hundreds of miles from the mouth, with the man who had forestalled him, and who, in the first instance, had found himself in those latitudes by the merest chance.

The two captains sailed down in company to Sancti Spiritus. At that spot there undoubtedly ensued considerable argument. Cabot's personality was not one to be lightly set aside. The matter was an unfortunate one for Diego Garcia, who had planned what the other had obtained by a stroke of fortune—but it was Diego Garcia who had to go. Yielding the point, he sailed out of sight down the stream on his way to Spain, leaving Cabot in possession of the field of his discoveries.

After this Cabot remained for some time in the neighbourhood of Sancti Spiritus awaiting the assist-

ance for which he had appealed to Spain, and which, as was not altogether unusual in affairs handled by the Castilian Government, was suffering a practically indefinite delay. In 1530 Cabot, weary of waiting for the ships that did not arrive, determined that he himself would seek in Spain the assistance necessary for the success of his colonial plans. Leaving Sancti Spiritus, he sailed down the river, across the ocean, and arrived safely in Spain. Here circumstances intervened to prevent him returning to the Rio de la Plata—a dislocation that was by no means unusual in the affairs of the sixteenth-century founders of States and colonial governors!

Sebastian Cabot left behind him at Sancti Spiritus a garrison of 120 men, under the command of one of his officers, Nuño de Lara. The fate of the majority of this garrison was tragic in the extreme. To all intents and purposes abandoned by the authorities in Spain, they subsisted as best they could, and succeeded in opening up a more or less friendly intercourse with the truculent Indians in the neighbourhood.

Unfortunately for the garrison, the handsome wife of one of the Spanish officers, Sebastian Hurtado, aroused the desire of the *cacique* Mangoré, and this savage eventually led a treacherous attack on the unsuspecting Europeans with the object of securing the person of Lucia Miranda. Mangoré himself was slain in the fight, but his brother Siripo, as victor, took the unfortunate lady prisoner. Beyond this point the accounts are conflicting. Some have it that Lucia Miranda was left in possession of Siripo, others that she and her husband remained together to the end, and died the death of martyrs.

However this may have been, when a small party of the garrison, who had been absent during the Indian attack, returned to Sancti Spiritus, they were horrified to find nothing beyond the corpses of their

companions littering the bloodstained soil. These they buried, after which the remnant of the force made its way to the neighbourhood of the small Portuguese settlement of San Vicente on the Atlantic, from which spot they passed in 1534 to the island of Santa Catalina.

In that same year great preparations were completed for an expedition which should be of sufficient power to undertake in an adequate fashion the colonization of the countries of the Rio de la Plata, the importance of which was now acknowledged. In the late summer an imposing fleet of fourteen vessels sailed from Spain. In supreme command was Don Pedro de Mendoza, a sufficiently gallant and adventurous soldier of fortune, who had bargained with the King, and who, according to the usage of the period, had demonstrated to his Majesty in a pecuniary, as well as a practical fashion his ability to act as Governor of this new district of the Southern world which he had the royal permission to conquer.

Mendoza's bargain, though it was indirectly of considerable use to his successors in South America, turned out to be far less profitable to himself than he had imagined. The expedition was destined to cause him the loss of his money, health, and, eventually, of his life. After a voyage filled with incident he arrived at the mouth of the Rio de la Plata. A tentative landing on the left bank of the estuary determined him to attempt his settlement on the opposite side. Having re-embarked his men and sailed across, he founded a township, Nuestra Señora de los Buenos Aires, on the spot where the present capital of Argentina is situated. Here he landed his people and horses, and erected a stockade about the dwellings.

From its very inception the circumstances of this place were unfavourable. In a very short time hostilities broke out between the Guaraní Indians of

the neighbourhood and the European settlers. As, moreover, the Spaniards were largely dependent upon these Indians for such meat and fish as they could obtain, the outbreak of these quarrels meant the beginning of a serious famine.

After a time it became evident from the straits to which the garrison was reduced that a continuance of the situation must end in complete disaster. Juan de Ayolas, Mendoza's second in command, set sail up the river, and founded a new settlement at the mouth of the Carcaraña on the site of the original stronghold which had been destroyed by the *caciques* Mangoré and Siripo.

This was now christened Buena Esperanza ; but the ray of hope that this new development brought to Pedro de Mendoza was but fleeting. That unfortunate Governor—the *Adelantado* of all these new and difficult lands—was now not only discouraged but seriously ailing. After a stay of some time at Buena Esperanza he departed for Spain, leaving Juan de Ayolas in charge of the enterprise, with Francisco Ruiz Galan as his second in command. Mendoza never reached the coast of Spain. He died on the homeward voyage, doubtless after much bitter wonder as to what he had gained by this arduous adventure, for the privilege of which he had paid so heavily !

We are now at the threshold of the history of Paraguay proper. Juan de Ayolas, whose imagination had been stirred by the tales of the prosperity and abundance to be met with in the lands bordering the upper reaches of the river, now prepared to take an important force up-stream, in order to search for a more genial headquarters for the scheme of colonization which it had now fallen to him to carry on.

The fullest account of this momentous voyage has been given by a certain Ulrich Schmidt, known to the Spaniards as Ulrico Schmidel, who accompanied Mendoza as the representative of some merchants

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who must have been of a decidedly enterprising turn of mind.

Schmidel's chronicles, together with the Commentaries of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, have been translated from the original Spanish into English by that fine Argentine scholar the late Don Luis L. Dominguez, formerly Argentine Minister Plenipotentiary in London. The value of these works is not to be over-estimated, since they throw into strong relief a branch of South American history which had failed until then to receive anything like its proper share of attention.

There is, unfortunately, no space available here for the full details of this notable inland voyage. As an experience, few events of the kind could have been more thrilling, quite apart from the added excitement caused by the occasional Indian attacks. There is no doubt that, from the explorer's point of view, the River Plate system compared favourably with that of the Amazon. In the first place the great breadth of the latter gigantic stream suggests a turbid sea rather than a river, and discourages any really intimate acquaintance with the banks. Even in the narrower stretches, too, the monotony of the landscape very soon tends to destroy all appreciation of a nearer view. The Amazon landscape has been justly described as of three unending colours, yellow, green, and blue. The yellow paints the stream, the green the interminable forest walls, and the blue, of course, the sky. There is nothing to break the monotony, save an occasional thunderstorm.

It is altogether different with the mounting of the Rio de la Plata system, and with the passage from the Paraná River into the Paraguay. Here, ascending little by little from the temperate latitudes into the sub-tropical, every score of miles adds just a little to the richness and to the variety of the scene. Surely there can be nothing more enchanting than

entering into the full brilliancy and wealth of the realms of the most abundant Nature in this deliberate and leisurely fashion.

The Spaniards found much to wonder at on their upward journey. They noticed, not only the growing beauty of the blossoms and birds, but the increasing variety of the curious creatures which abounded on the shore and in the stream. After a time they became accustomed to the innumerable small alligators that dozed sluggishly on the exposed sand-banks, although they never ceased to wonder at the far rarer sight of a giant boa-constrictor coiling his brown and yellow length in the lassitude of repletion or in the alert expectancy that preceded a meal.

The names of the various tribes with which the expedition came into contact on its voyage up-stream need not be given here. As rendered by Schmidel, who, with the best of intentions, could not be expected to be accurate in the matter of nomenclature, very few of these are in any way recognizable, from the point of view of modern knowledge. When he refers to such people as the Guaycurús, Timbués, and other known tribes of the kind, the affair becomes plain sailing ; but more often the old chronicler's designations are more or less untraceable.

Putting all such details aside, it is quite certain that Ayolas' ships, on going up the river, had the various Guaraní tribes on their right and the natives of the Chaco on their left. The most important and most highly organized resistance with which the expedition met was from the Mepenes, who are said to have mustered no fewer than five hundred canoes in order to oppose his progress up the river. Nevertheless, the disparity in arms and vessels very soon told its tale. When the action was over a number of capsized canoes and brown corpses went floating down the stream, while the heavy craft of the Spaniards, undamaged, continued their way slowly up the current.

The relations of Ayolas' men with the Indians were not invariably of a bellicose nature. Occasionally, the intercourse was friendly enough. Sometimes, indeed, the Indians proved themselves willing, not only to barter, but to make presents of fish, beans, and liquors to these lighter-skinned strangers. As the Spaniards proceeded farther into the more bountiful land, and as the bows of the vessels drove into the clear waters above where the muddy red torrent of the Bermejo poured itself into the main river, the docility of the Indians on the right hand became more marked.

At length on this side of the river appeared a mountain, the first real mountain on which the adventurers had set their eyes since they had entered the great river system! Red, verdure-covered cliffs now bordered the stream, to fall away just beyond the mountain, giving way to a delightful little bay.

Here it was determined to effect a landing. The anchors splashed down with a new sense of finality into the stream, and the small boats bore the pioneers to the shore. Scarcely was the disembarkation at an end when it was discovered that there were Indians in the neighbourhood who had to be reckoned with. At the sight of the strangers two local *caciques*, Lambaré and Nanduá, had gathered together a formidable Guaraní army. An engagement ensued between the Europeans and these, in which the latter were signally worsted. The mauled Guaraní host fled in dismay to the wooded slopes of the mountain— itself subsequently known as Lambaré—where they took refuge in a primitive stockaded fort.

The virile Ayolas, determined to force a decision at all costs, followed on the heels of the Guaranís, and closely besieged them in their stronghold. These energetic measures produced just that result for which the Spanish leader had hoped. Within three days the Guaranís, dismayed at the organization and

efficiency of the force opposed to them—qualities which were in themselves a revelation to the untutored Indians—surrendered within three days, and a compact of peace was for the first time drawn up between the two nations. After this Ayolas and his men returned to the pleasant little bay, and on the shore laid the first foundation of the city of Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay.

Had the river been explored for years, instead of having been ascended for the first time amid so many distracting incidents, it is doubtful whether a more favourable site could have been lit upon for a centre from which the eddies of civilization should flow outwards in Paraguay. In this respect chance favoured this bold company of *conquistadores* to an unusual degree. As it happened, Asuncion lay at the end of that stretch of the river system which was conveniently navigable for the ocean-going sailing craft of the sixteenth century. In addition to this, and to numerous other strategic advantages which it enjoyed, the climate of the place was distinctly healthy, being practically innocent of the malarial fevers common to many of the more swampy districts. Further, the advantages of the neighbourhood itself were not confined to a remarkably pleasant landscape. The soil was peculiarly fruitful, and, beyond the native flora, it soon demonstrated its wonderful fertility in the growth of many of the Southern European fruits and vegetables introduced into it.

So much for the advantages offered by Asuncion in the first half of the sixteenth century. It must be admitted that these were counterbalanced by many circumstances of an adverse order. The small and precarious establishments on the great rivers of the south-east of the Continent of South America were entirely dependent on Europe for their maintenance in all else but actual food—and even this

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latter commodity had to be included in the case of the settlements at the mouth of the river. The remoteness of Asuncion's situation from Europe was a matter of less consequence so long as these latter ports continued. But when the force of circumstances—the chief of which were famine and continuous Indian hostility—forced the abandonment of the Settlements of Buenos Aires and Buena Esperanza, and the transfer of their garrisons to Asuncion, the position became changed very much for the worse, and the remoteness of the daring Paraguayan town-ship infinitely increased.

Indeed, few pioneers can ever have been so completely cut off from their countrymen as were those of Asuncion at one period. Between them and the sea ran a thousand miles of river, the current of which was beset by a maze of islands, sandbanks, and shifting shoals. Along this whole distance, moreover, existed no single European upon the banks who could give aid to a party in need of assistance. On the other hand, every danger point along the stream was infested by natives only too anxious to render utterly complete any misfortune which the intricate moods of the river might have in store for the navigators. Finally, once arrived even at the mouth of the great river, Spain was still on the wrong side of the equator, many thousands of miles away!

Such was the almost overwhelming isolation with which the first colonists of Paraguay had to contend.

CHAPTER III

THE FOUNDING OF THE COLONY

Relations between the Spaniards and Guaraní at Asuncion—The friendly and hostile tribes of Indians—Principal object of the Spanish *conquistadores*—The fame of the Peruvian mines—Various routes to the mineral districts—Real significance of the ascent of the Paraguay River—Ayolas proceeds farther up-stream—He undertakes an overland expedition to Peru—Massacre of the party by the Indians—Domingo Martinez de Irala—Arrival of Juan de Salazar de Espinosa—Permanent dwellings constructed at Asuncion—Episode between Ruiz Galan and Irala—Details received of the end of Ayolas and his men—Some eloquent coins—Abandonment of the lower river settlements—Asuncion as the sole centre of Spanish civilization—Irala becomes *Adelantado* of the colony—His popularity—Administrative gifts displayed by him—Some circumstances of Guaraní servitude—Characteristics of the natives—The establishment of *encomiendas*—*Yanaconas* and *mitayos*—Regulations applying to slave ownership—Development of Asuncion—Defences of the town and election of officials—The urban arms—Circumstances of the colonists—The birth of the modern Paraguayan nation.

THE energetic temperament of Juan de Ayolas did not permit him to rest for any length of time on his laurels at Asuncion. At this latter spot it soon became evident that the prospects of a permanent settlement were favourable in the extreme. In the first place, the relations of the Spaniards with the Indians were far more satisfactory than had been their experience at any of the lower reaches of the river.

This, of course, is regarding the matter from the Spanish point of view. From the purely native standpoint the prospects were less bright, since there was no doubt that the docile character of these Indians

was already giving the Spaniards an ascendancy over them which was rapidly preparing the way for a complete European domination of the district. Starting from the initial triumph of the *conquistadores* on the mountain slopes of Lambaré, the policy of the new-comers, as it developed, involved the Indians more and more in the state of inferior allies, whose business it was, not only to fetch and carry for the Spaniard, but to render him military assistance in his campaigns against the less docile of their dusky brethren.

These latter were almost entirely met with on the opposite bank of the river. The fierce inhabitants of the Chaco took every opportunity of displaying their resentment at the presence of the white man, and the result was many fierce brushes with the tribes of the Lenguas, Tobas and others. Indeed, during his brief stay at Asuncion, Ayolas found leisure to take a force down-stream, and inflict a severe lesson on the tribe of the Agazes that had attacked his ships on their upward way. Another hostile tribe, it may be said, was that of the Guaycurús, considerably to the north of Asuncion.

At the end of six months Ayolas prepared himself for a further journey. His restlessness was not without its object. In the mind of a sixteenth-century *conquistador* townships such as Asuncion were merely a means to an end. An *Adelantado* who sailed out from Spain at that period to conquer and administer the great stretch of territory allotted to him was very little concerned with such prosaic matters as spadework and agricultural development—so little, indeed, that the Imperial Council of the Indies found it necessary after a time to bind him by covenant to take out with him a specified number of agricultural and pastoral assets in order to ensure the solidity of his venture.

It was usually with some reluctance that an *Adelantado* complied with such conditions. That

which was before his eyes when he sailed from his Spanish port for the far south was gold, and it was this gold that continued as his sole eventual aim and object all the time, until, occasionally fabulously rich, but more often impoverished and disillusioned, he returned to Europe, or laid his bones in some corner or other of the gilded continent of mystery.

Thanks to Pizarro, Almagro, and their doughty colleagues, the fame of the Peruvian mines had been spread widely abroad. To approach this dazzling country from the west and the north was an impossibility. Every route in that direction had been secured by the grim and determined *conquistadores* who had first boldly challenged the force of the Inca Empire. There remained the approach from the south-east, and, it was supposed, the discovery of lands adjoining that of the Inca—lands as rich in precious metals as the other.

In the early sixteenth century all the South American roads led to Peru and to its mountains of metal! Hence the great importance of the ascent of this Paraguay River, whose source, the Spaniards of this expedition felt assured, rose in those very highlands among some of which the *conquistadores* of the north-west were reaping rich yellow harvests.

With a mental picture such as this floating entrancingly before him, it was out of the question for a man of Ayolas' temperament to remain quietly at Asuncion and to superintend the steady growth of the new settlement. Once again he assembled his men and his ships, and, after six months' stay at Asuncion he set out once more up-stream in search of the route to Pāraguay, and to all those mountains that he pictured, each as rich as Potosi.

On this occasion the navigation was still more complicated than before, and the comparatively shallow waters of the upper reaches were a ceaseless source of anxiety. Nevertheless, on the 2nd of February,

1537, the expedition arrived safely at a little natural river port which Ayolas christened by the name of La Candelaria.

The site of this place does not appear on any modern map, nor on any ancient one with which I am acquainted. But it was certainly on the Chaco bank of the stream, and its aspect must have promised a favourable starting-off point for the mountains—for it had now become clear to the explorers that the promise of the river had been specious, and that, after all, its upper waters were fringed by no metal-bearing hills. It was at this point, at all events, that Ayolas decided that the river expedition should end and the journey by land should begin.

He left his ships in the care of that stout and trusty Biscayan, Domingo Martinez de Irala, and, accompanied by 250 Spaniards and 100 Indians, he struck out boldly to the west through the woodlands and swamps of the Chaco. Another account has it that before he plunged inland Ayolas married the daughter of the local *cacique*—more as a precautionary measure in the way of securing an alliance than for any other reason—and set out with 127 men, leaving 33 in charge of Irala.

Neither Ayolas nor any of his men were ever seen by Europeans again. There is no doubt that this resolute *conquistador*, after suffering intense privations in common with his men, did actually succeed in reaching the eastern borders of the mountainous land of Peru, and, having secured many specimens of minerals, was returning with such of his men as had survived the intense hardships of the voyage, when the party was treacherously set upon by the Indians, and a massacre ensued which left not a single white man alive.

Up to this point the history of these colonizing ventures of the south-east has been simple enough; but within half a year after Ayolas and his men had

disappeared into the forest of the Chaco arose the first of those complications of State and of those jealousies between leaders from which Paraguay was destined to suffer, not only for generations but for centuries.

Irala, having waited for several months at La Candelaria, and having in vain maintained a vigilant watch on the Chaco bank, found that he had practically come to an end of his provisions. In order to revictual his vessels he determined to sail down to Asuncion, where the Indians were friendly and where the fruits of the earth were plentiful.

His departure was delayed by the totally unexpected appearance of Juan de Salazar de Espinosa, a royal official who had sailed up the river to render what assistance he could to Ayolas. This meeting occurred at a point a little to the north of La Candelaria on the 23rd of June, and was naturally the occasion of great rejoicing. After having remained for a time in Irala's company, Juan de Salazar dropped down in his vessels to Asuncion, where on the 15th of August he began to build the fort and the first permanent houses at this spot.

When, in the continued absence of Ayolas, Irala in his turn sailed down the stream to Asuncion, in order to revictual his vessels, he was amazed to find a far more numerous body of Spaniards than the followers of Juan de Salazar established at that place.

Ruiz Galan, who had originally been appointed by Pedro de Mendoza as second in command to Ayolas, had now come up-stream to the spot with a number of his followers. Galan, anxious to assert his authority, charged Irala with having deserted his post — a ludicrously unsound accusation — and detained him for a time at Asuncion on this charge.

Presently, however, Irala was free again to return to his thankless station of expectancy at La Candelaria, while Ruiz Galan went down-stream from Asuncion to

attend to the affairs of the few Spaniards who remained to the south of the Paraguayan settlement.

Irala waited in vain in the neighbourhood of La Candelaria. The relations with the Indians in the neighbourhood of the river appear to have been entirely broken off at this period. Such intercourse as existed appears to have been almost entirely limited to the taunting cries of the natives, who, from their places of concealment in the dense vegetation which fringed the river, yelled out cries of defiance, and shouted the news of a triumph which, they said, had been obtained over the white men who had dared to enter the Chaco.

At length two Payaguá Indians were captured, and, in accordance with the callous procedure of the age, they were put to the torture in order that the truth of what had occurred might be wrung from them—a process which as often as not resulted in the extraction of a number of details invented by the sufferer on the spur of the moment in the hope of putting an end to his agonies. In this case the circumstances were clear enough. The end of Ayolas and his men had come about just as, utterly spent, they were wearily passing through a thick forest patch. All at once the leaves and lianas on either side had become alive with dusky faces, and a horde of savages had crashed through the undergrowth and slaughtered the surprised and helpless Spaniards until not one was left alive.

In connection with this massacre it is worth while to branch off for a few lines into some circumstances which are only indirectly concerned with this part of the history of Paraguay. They are, at all events, eloquent of the strange manner in which the almost forgotten facts of one age are apt to be linked with those of another. As late as the end of the nineteenth century those travellers who dared—occasionally at the risk of their lives—to penetrate

into parts of the Chaco have frequently met with a strange collection of Spanish coins used as ornaments by certain tribes of Indians, some of them bearing dates which carry back very nearly to the first ages of the Spanish colonization in South America. It is not only possible, but probable, that these coins were first spread abroad in the Chaco, and, bloodstained, were taken from the bodies of the Spaniards on the occasions of massacres such as that of Ayolas and his men.

When Irala, doubt no longer existing^t concerning the death of his chief, returned to Asuncion, it was to find the place now definitely accepted as the headquarters of the Spanish colonization in the south-east of the continent, and shortly after his return from that place the surviving Spaniards were brought up to it from the harassed settlement of Buenos Aires, thus leaving, as has been previously remarked, no link of civilization in all the thousand miles that intervened between Asuncion and the ocean.

In the meantime a struggle for supremacy among the leaders had ensued in which Irala had proved himself the victor. His rivals for the post of *Adelantado* were Ruiz Galan, Alonso Cabrera, and Juan de Salazar. The fact that he succeeded in upholding his cause in the face of such candidates as these is eloquent of the strength of Irala's personality. For Salazar, as we have seen, was an important imperial official; Ruiz Galan had been definitely picked out by Pedro de Mendoza before his departure from South America; and Alonso Cabrera, who had come out from Spain with reinforcements, had actually in his possession a royal document appointing him *Adelantado* of the new colonies and licensing him to hold this post in any eventuality save that of the return of Ayolas, supposed dead, in which case Cabrera was to hand over his offices and titles to Ayolas.

The rank and file of the Spaniards, however, were almost to a man devoted to the cause of Irala, and Asuncion was sufficiently remote from the Court of Spain for popular clamour of this kind to be a thing of importance. Thus we see Irala established by the vote of the people as the first Governor of Paraguay—or at all events as the first Governor who was in a position actually to administer his province.

Irala lost little time in proving himself a born administrator. It is true that his methods were those of the age, and that the means he employed were wont to be utterly relentless so long as the object he had in view was achieved. But he possessed all the qualities of a leader of men and a builder of empire.

The forces which he had at his command at the beginning of his governorship were far from impressive. Out of the two thousand Spaniards which Pedro de Mendoza had brought with him from Europe no more than six hundred remained.

These, however, were now tried men, veterans in colonial experience who had become inured to the hardships of the pioneer, and who had become accustomed to the climate and circumstances of the new land. They were now to enjoy the reward of their fortitude, according to the simple views and easy morality of those days. Irala was determined that there should be no doubt as to which race was the dominating one on the banks of the Paraguay River. To this end he instituted a species of servitude which tended towards turning the docile Guaranís into little beyond the chattels of the white men.

It is true that this servitude differed widely from the species of slave trade which was carried on elsewhere in the case of the African, who was bought and sold and consigned from any one part of the world to another in accordance with the circumstances

connected with the labour markets and the price of slaves. It is true that at one time there was a tendency to ship Guaranís as slaves to Spain. But this traffic never attained to any important proportions. In Paraguay the basis of the Indian servitude was that each native should take part in the development of his country—incidentally, to the benefit of the white man, at whose disposal the riches of the country now lay.

It must be admitted that from the Spaniard's point of view this solution of a formidable difficulty was the simplest and most practical of all. Left to his own devices, the labour of the Guaraní Indian would have been too trivial to affect the face of the country in any noticeable fashion. The native had no intention of straining his muscles in any uncomfortable fashion, so long as the fruits of a bountiful Nature fell into his mouth, so long as the rivers continued to give out fish, and so long as his wife had strength to cook for him and to carry out the simple menial offices which her lord and master demanded of her.

But now came the Spaniard, dominant, and completely unsympathetic in his determination that the land of Paraguay should be made productive—even if for no other reason than for the sustenance of the European at one of his rallying-points in his quest after gold, although, so far as Paraguay was concerned, the spot was rapidly developing a separate importance of its own.

The steps taken by Irala in order to bring the native labour into force were simple enough. *Encomiendas*, or settlements, were established, into which numbers of the Guaranís were brought. Here they were made amenable to discipline, and were taught an industry which they accepted only with the deepest reluctance.

It was natural that the first establishment of these

encomiendas should have been carried out in a tentative and somewhat rough-and-ready fashion. The main result was that Irala's men, the majority sufficiently humble soldiers of fortune, found themselves in a position of employers of unpaid labour, such as could not fail to appeal to the material side of adventurers such as they.

As the rule of the European developed and his hold grew stronger upon the land two distinct kind of *encomiendas* were brought into being, known respectively as the *yanaconas* and the *mitayos*. Concerning these settlements, I may repeat here the description I have given of them in a previous book dealing with the Jesuit missions of a later age.

By the name of *yanaconas* were known those collections of Indians who had been subjugated by private warlike enterprise, a term which doubtless euphemistically covered slave-raiding in neighbouring countries. These were to all intents and purposes slaves. According to the laws, their masters were obliged to protect them and to teach them Christianity. These owners were also forbidden by the authorities to sell, maltreat, or abandon their Indians on account of bad conduct, illness, or old age. It must be admitted that these regulations were excellent in themselves. At the same time, it is evident enough that the men to whom they applied, and who were undisputed lords of all they surveyed, were in an ideal position to take their responsibilities just as lightly as happened to suit their convenience.

The *mitayos* were made up of those tribes who had submitted voluntarily or who had been conquered by the royal forces. Their lot, compared with that of the *yanaconas*, was favourable, and they were supposed to enjoy not a few privileges. For instance, each native company of the kind was permitted to choose the site it desired for its settlement. Its members, moreover, were divided into various

sections, each of which was governed by a chief of its own selection. Every male here between the ages of eighteen and fifty was obliged to labour for two months of the year for the benefit of the proprietor of the *mitayo*, and to each settlement of the kind a teacher of the Christian faith was appointed. In the interests of the natives each province was visited annually by an official whose duty it was to hear complaints and to remedy abuses.

So much for a first glimpse into the Indian settlements of Paraguay—settlements which are of great historical importance, since on more than one occasion they proved themselves bound up with the destinies of the inland State itself.

One of the first tasks of a chosen number of these Guaranís was to assist in the building of Asuncion, which was now beginning to take to itself the character of a regular town. Irala watched over this urban venture with all the energetic care of which his temperament was capable, and he did not rest until the spot was strongly fortified with stockades and placed in an efficient condition of defence against an improbable rising of Guaranís, or a surprise attack by hordes of Chaco Indians who might cross the river in their canoes—a contingency, which was by far the more likely of the two.

After this Irala himself named the *Alcaldes* and the other officials of the very youthful city, which was soon to receive its coat-of-arms from Charles V, a compliment which, if often entirely overlooked now, was of the greatest importance then. The emblems of these arms seem to have been the figures of St. Blaise and the Assumption, as well as a castle and a coconut-tree. This latter, by the way, appears subsequently to have been changed for the figure of a European lion, sitting in a natural and perfectly unheraldic attitude in the shade of an ordinary tree!

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With this firm establishment of Asuncion began the founding of a number of small townships in various spots. Clergy now arrived from Spain, and churches were established in these places as well as in the capital. As for the majority of the Spaniards, though it was occasionally necessary to take to arms and to set out on the march to punish some truculent and hostile tribe, their character as soldiers tended slowly, but surely to merge itself into that of the colonist.

Almost to a man they took to themselves Guaraní wives, and the union was celebrated by the rising generation of tawny young sons of the soil who scampered under the brilliant forest blossoms that the country had always known, and by the side of the crops which now were sprouting where before none had been. It was this which marked the first birth of the modern Paraguayan nation.

CHAPTER IV

THE GOVERNORSHIP OF ALVAR NUÑEZ CABEZA DE VACA

Some methods of Spanish colonial government—Difficulties in legislation from a distance—Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca is made *Adelantado* of Paraguay—Having landed at Santa Catalina, he receives news of the abandonment of Buenos Aires—Effect of this on Alvar Nuñez' plans—He determines to make his way overland from the coast to Asuncion—Discovery made by the crews of his ships on the site of Buenos Aires—Alvar Nuñez' march to the west—His methods with the Indians—Incidents of the journey—The party arrives in Asuncion—Attitude of the colonists—Varying versions of events—First signs of a split in the ranks—Colonizing methods adopted by Alvar Nuñez—Alvar Nuñez sets out with a considerable force for Peru—Dealings with Indians—How the Payaguás deceived the *Adelantado*—Small results of the expedition—Return to Asuncion—A condition of discontent culminates in a rising of the Spaniards—Alvar Nuñez is imprisoned and placed in irons—Hostilities in the town—Harsh treatment of Alvar Nuñez—His character and circumstances—Influences at work—Irala is again elected *Adelantado*—How Alvar Nuñez was put on board the ship which was to take him to Spain—A contemporary account—Incidents of a dramatic departure.

IT was altogether in accordance with the uneasy destiny of Asuncion that only a few years after the foundation of the city the first of the many political storm-clouds which were destined to burst over the city was already gathering. From the point of view of Spain there was decidedly nothing in the acts which initiated the later troubles in Paraguay which could in any way have been considered as ill-omened. On the contrary, when in 1540 so gallant a nobleman and so experienced a pioneer as Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, who had already distinguished himself in Florida, was entrusted with the governorship of the

great river country on the south-east of South America, it was generally held in Madrid and in the ports of Southern Spain that the prospects of the appointment were bright both for Alvar Nuñez himself and for Paraguay.

Had Paraguay lain next door to Spain no doubt all would have been as well as the most optimistic member of the Court of the Indies predicted. It was the thousands of miles which intervened between Spain and her colonies that alone were at fault on countless occasions in upsetting plans which at the time of their making in Spain appeared essentially wise and reasonable. The Royal Council had a persistent and unfortunate habit of failing to take into consideration the fact that by the time their leisurely deliberations had been concluded, the situation in distant South America to which they referred had probably changed altogether! In this circumstance undoubtedly lay one of the greatest disadvantages of Spanish colonial government, and it was here that lurked the greatest enemy of that jealous central rule which insisted on letting no other authority but itself control the executive decisions of a colony which might have been supposed to be at a distance of a few days' journey from Seville instead of that of a voyage of many months!

Alvar Nuñez left the port of Sanlucar in Spain in 1840, bearing the royal authority which appointed him *Adelantado* of Paraguay. In this instrument there occurred again the stipulation that, should Ayolas prove to be still alive and should he return to Paraguay, Alvar Nuñez himself and all his men and ships should be at the disposal of Ayolas.

Alvar Nuñez proceeded to Santa Catalina in Southern Brazil. Here he landed, and took possession of the spot in the name of his imperial master. This he had been authorized to do, as at that time the Spaniards maintained that the Santos River

constituted the southern frontier of the Portuguese possessions in the continent.

The new *Adelantado* then made preparations to proceed southwards to Buenos Aires, when a boat arrived at Santa Catalina. In it were nine Spaniards who had deserted from the ill-provisioned settlement of Buenos Aires just before its abandonment, and who had since learned of the complete desertion of the place by their comrades.

In the face of this news it was necessary for Alvar Nuñez to revise his plans. He had expected to find the frontiers of his province washed by the salt waves ; now he learned for the first time in this unceremonious fashion that they had been spirited away many hundreds of miles inland ! The altered state of affairs on the banks of the great rivers made him all the more anxious to reach the headquarters of the Spanish colonization with as little delay as possible. To effect the journey from Santa Catalina by way of the ocean and of the rivers would be in the first place to cover two sides of a triangle, since he would have to proceed southwards to the abandoned settlement of Buenos Aires, whence, after a short westerly stretch, he would have to turn his vessels' heads due north. Beyond these considerations of actual distance, the thousand miles of toil against the great stream would swallow months of effort before the buildings of Asuncion could be expected to heave in sight.

At his halting-place of Santa Catalina Alvar Nuñez found himself very little to the south of the latitude of Asuncion. It was clear to him that if he struck out to the west across the intervening and unknown stretch of country which separated him from Asuncion, he would arrive at that remote spot in a far shorter space of time than would be possible in the case of a voyage by ocean and river—all this, of course, provided that no unusually serious obstacle should

crop up out of the unexplored to lie across his path.

Alvar Nuñez determined to take the risk of this latter possibility, and he prepared himself to undertake the long land journey from Santa Catalina to Asuncion, the second important expedition of the kind ever attempted in Spanish South-Eastern America, the first, of course, having been the daring but disastrous march of Ayolas from La Candelaria to the borders of Peru, in the course of which every man of the force was slain.

The new *Adelantado* left 140 of his men at Santa Catalina, under the command of Pedro Estropiñan Cabeza de Vaca. These were given charge of the ships, which they were ordered to bring on to Asuncion. They set out in due course, and arrived at the abandoned settlement of Buenos Aires, on the site of which they found a ship's mast sticking upright out of the deserted soil. Closer inspection revealed the legend carved in Spanish on the wood, "Here is a letter." The promised letter, hidden in a hole in the mast, explained the circumstances of the abandonment of Buenos Aires, and told how the Spaniards had proceeded up-stream to Asuncion—a fact with which, as it happened, these crews of Alvar Nuñez' ships were already acquainted. These latter then began their long journey up the river, and eventually arrived at Asuncion many months after the *Adelantado* had reached the young city.

Having sent out an advance party, who explored the most promising and feasible routes to the west, and returned with fairly encouraging accounts, Alvar Nuñez himself set out on his momentous journey, accompanied by all his men with the exception of those who had been left at the sea coast in charge of the ships. Authorities would seem to differ as to whether the date of his departure from the coast

was the 18th of October or the 2nd of November, 1841. In any case it is a matter of small consequence. A very full account of this journey has been given by Pedro Hernandez, Alvar Nuñez' secretary, who conscientiously and minutely describes the chief events of the expedition and the various Guaraní tribes through whose country the march to the west took the Spanish force.

Decidedly the circumstances of the expedition must have been such as to cause an amazement in the breasts of the majority of the Spaniards as lively as that which their appearance evoked in the electrified collections of dusky folk who for the first time set eyes on the white man, and that terrifying servant of his—or part of himself, as it was frequently supposed—the horse!

Seeing that Hernandez was a devoted secretary, it is but natural that Alvar Nuñez' character, as portrayed by his pen, should shine forth—occasionally in a way that suggests a heavenly temperament rather than one attached to a mere human body! The *Adelantado*, on the other hand, has by no means been without his detractors, and, were it possible to strike a mean between the verdicts of the two opposing camps, no doubt a tolerably accurate estimate of Alvar Nuñez' character would result.

One thing would seem certain enough: his methods with the Indians were admirable. From the day when he and his men climbed up through the dense forest that covers the coast range to that other day, more than half a year later, when he came in sight of the modest buildings of Asuncion by the side of the bay just beyond where the red cliffs jutted out into the stream, he appears to have undertaken no aggressive measures whatever towards the Guaranís, and, moreover, to have taken genuine pains to restrain the more turbulent of his followers from unnecessary violence.

As a result of this humane policy the greater part of the *Adelantado's* march partook of the nature of a peaceful progress. Presents were exchanged between the Europeans and the Guaranís ; crude and rustic feastings were arranged ; endeavours were made to explain the might of the Spanish Empire and the benefits from it that its Guaraní subjects might now expect, while now and again the shuddering natives were persuaded to approach the horses, in order that their minds might be impressed by a sight of these dreaded animals. As a matter of fact, a peaceable journey of the kind was essential for the success of an expedition such as that which Alvar Nuñez had undertaken. The natural difficulties of the march were quite sufficient in themselves to demand all the energies of the most resolute *conquistador*, without the added difficulties entailed by the presence of hostile tribes. The passage of untracked mountains, forests, plains and rivers and swamps is by no means a mere matter of history to this day in many of the remote portions of South America. But the modern pioneers in these remaining tracts, with the inventions and instruments of modern science at their disposal, have an easy task compared with that which confronted Alvar Nuñez and his men, bearing their crude paraphernalia and their cumbrous armour and weapons.

As a set-off against these hardships might have been placed the fact that the country through which the expedition passed was one of the most beautiful in the world. But very soon the Spaniards took to regarding this with a comparatively jaded eye. It was not for the sake of landscape that they had left their native country and had voyaged over so many watery miles ! There was sufficient of that in Castile and Andalusia : it was in quest of more material benefits that the pioneers were now tramping resolutely inland.

After rather more than a couple of months of travel the party reached the banks of the Iguazú River, which ultimately gives into the Alto Paraná, and thus leads the way to the river communication with Paraguay. Alvar Nuñez, of course, had no means of knowing this, but, hoping for the best, he followed the stream, until the amazed pioneers came upon the vast and thundering cataract of the Iguazú. Having carried their canoes round, and embarked on the lower stream, his men were now well upon the river high-road to Paraguay.

It was a curious circumstance, and doubtless not without a certain significance of its own, that it was only as the expedition began to draw within the influence of the new Spanish settlements in Paraguay that attacks on the part of the Indians occurred. These, however, were repulsed with little difficulty, and Alvar Nuñez safely completed the remaining stages of his journey, arriving at his capital of Asuncion on the 11th of March, 1542.

It was a very long time since the colonists of Asuncion had received news of any kind from Spain. Although their position as settlers had become firmly established, this total break in the intercourse with the mother country had had the effect, not only of depriving them of many of the conveniences of civilization, but also of creating a certain mental depression such as cannot fail to be the lot of those who imagine themselves abandoned, or at least neglected, by the men of their own race. The advent of Alvar Nuñez and his men, therefore, was the signal for great rejoicing. The men of Asuncion ransacked the neighbourhood for the wherewithal to feast the new-comers with all the modest splendour that they could contrive, and as for the members of the *Adelantado's* party, they were openly thankful to have arrived at their journey's end.

The ceremonies of welcome once at an end, it was

necessary to take in hand the State business of Asuncion. Here it became clear from the start that the position of Alvar Nuñez was an invidious one. At the first meeting of the representatives of the old and the new governorships Irala acknowledged the *Adelantado's* authority, although it has been said that he conceded this point only on the condition that Alvar Nuñez should produce the full proofs of his appointment. In the first instance, indeed, no friction whatever was perceptible between the pair. Nevertheless the colonists themselves, ardent admirers of the sturdy and resolute Irala, that born leader of men whom their own insistent vote had raised to his position of power, could not fail to see in Alvar Nuñez an interloper whose arrival bade fair to introduce numberless complications, to say nothing of an unwelcome clashing with their own interests. This attitude became more and more perceptible as time went on, and it was this alone which was responsible for the subsequent outburst of anarchy in Asuncion.

It is, indeed, no easy matter to obtain an unbiased picture of the Paraguayan history of this period. The contemporary chroniclers have shown themselves partisans either of Alvar Nuñez or of his opponents to an enthusiastic degree sufficient to render doubtful the accuracy of their testimony. One or the other of these opposing causes, however, would seem to have been espoused even by later historians, with the result that the confusion, instead of becoming cleared, has tended to grow yet more involved. How difficult it is to arrive at the truth in this matter may be judged from one single example of the host of conflicting statements. Irala's adherents protested that the *Adelantado* had earned the hatred of the Indians through the unnecessarily cruel measures he employed towards them: Alvar Nuñez' supporters protested that their chief's unpopularity among many of the Spaniards was owing to the fact that he

protected the natives against the harsh oppression of the colonists !

The latter solution would seem by far the more probable of the two ; but however this may have been, Irala gave no open sign of discontent for a considerable time after the arrival of Alvar Nuñez. The *Adelantado* first of all occupied himself in endeavouring to cement the relations between the Spaniards and some of the outlying tribes of the Indians. Finding the Guaycurús irreconcilable, he undertook a campaign against these tribesmen, and, his European troops supported by numerous companies of friendly Guaranís, he totally defeated the fierce hostile warriors in a pitched battle, the victory gaining him the allegiance of several tribes that had been awaiting its result in order to decide which cause to espouse.

Alvar Nuñez now sent various parties of Spaniards to explore the banks of the great rivers to the south and north. Among these was a company who set out in three brigantines under the command of Irala. It was the latter's mission to proceed as far as he could up the Paraguay River, and to take notes of all the tribes and natural features of the country he should meet with. Here again the chief incentive of the journey seems to have been the desire to find the nearest road to Peru.

On the 20th of October, 1542, Irala set out, and when he had arrived at a spot that he christened Las Piedras, some 210 miles above Asuncion, he sent an embassy accompanied by about eight hundred Indians to ask information of Aracaré, a powerful chief of the neighbourhood. But Aracaré proved himself hostile. Not only did he refuse his assistance, but he endeavoured to stir up animosity against the Spaniards by every means in his power, causing fire to be set to the dry summer vegetation of the country through which the pioneers had to pass.

As a result of this the chief was executed by the orders of Alvar Nuñez, an act which subsequently caused an uprising of this tribe, led by two *caciques* named respectively Guarambaré and Tabaré.

Irala, however, succeeded in quelling this rising in July 1543. Soon after this he returned to Asuncion, having penetrated inland for a considerable distance, and brought back much information concerning the nature of the country to the west of the Upper Paraguay River.

Alvar Nuñez, encouraged by this preliminary feat of exploration, now determined to take up the great quest himself. The force he organized for this purpose was a sufficiently formidable one, including, it is said, some four hundred arquebusiers and twelve hundred bowmen. These latter, of course, comprised the Guaraní auxiliaries, many of whom were resplendent in their crude and barbaric pomp of war, brilliant in war-paint, and "adorned with plumes and feathers, and wearing on their brows plates of metal, so that when the sun shone they glittered marvellously."

The expedition set out up-stream in September 1543. The rapidity with which the conquest had been effected is proved clearly enough by this date alone. Scarcely six years had elapsed since the Spaniards had definitely founded the little settlement of Asuncion—a pin-point of civilization in the midst of a vast stretch of totally unknown country, inhabited by many scores of tribes who at the time were almost equally unknown. Now, after this short space of time, here was the *Adelantado* starting on a journey which would occupy many weeks before the now comparatively familiar country would be passed over—a Governor who left behind him Juan de Salazar as deputy with a whole hierarchy of officials beneath him, and who was about to be accompanied in his travels by European and native forces such as might

have furnished a suitable escort for a Viceroy ! For it was not ships and river-craft alone which on this occasion conveyed Alvar Nuñez' small army. Armed horsemen now forced their steeds along the difficult country in the neighbourhood of the banks, and either plunged on their way parallel with the fleet, or pricked ahead of the craft that laboured against the current.

Arrived at La Candelaria, Alvar Nuñez called a halt. The reason for this would in modern days be termed a strict matter of business. La Candelaria had been Ayolas' headquarters on his last expedition. It was to La Candelaria that that ill-fated *conquistador* was returning when he and his men had been massacred. Report, moreover, had it very confidently that Ayolas' party had been laden with precious metals. It was clear, then, that this treasure, if it existed at all, must be in the hands of the Payaguá Indians in the neighbourhood of La Candelaria, who, it was now known, had been chiefly responsible for the attack on the Europeans.

It was on this account that Alvar Nuñez decided to treat the Payaguás with all the courtesy due to capitalists ! There were undoubtedly times when this *conquistador* was moved by lofty ideals—but this was not one of them. He was fully prepared to waive any justice towards the murderers of the dead Ayolas, at the price of the dead Ayolas' gold ! This he signified to the tribe, in as dignified a fashion as could be managed, and to his delight it seemed that the Payaguá Indians were quite ready to come to business on these terms. In their apparently artless fashion they spoke of sixty-six loads of treasure, which they professed themselves prepared to hand over in exchange for immunity from such unpleasant things as European bullets and steel swords. Alvar Nuñez eagerly awaited the delivery of these valuable loads, until he discovered, after lingering for an unreasonable time, that he had been hoaxed, and that

the tempting offer had been made merely in order to allow the tribe to move quietly away from the neighbourhood of La Candelaria without being molested.

Disillusioned, the *Adelantado* continued on his way, after some vain attempts had been made to come up with the disingenuous Payaguás. The expedition then proceeded northwards as far as Los Reyes, a spot which had already been explored by Irala. From this point many excursions were made among the surrounding tribes of Indians, whose sentiments varied from the friendly and the neutral to an actively hostile state of mind.

Towards the end of March 1544 the *Adelantado* decided to return to Asuncion. The expedition had been productive of very little that was good, and of much that was unfavourable. Their wanderings among so many of the northern swamps had seriously impaired the health of a large number of the Spaniards. The sufferings of fever had seriously added to the natural discontent engendered by a series of journeys which had caused intense hardships without any visible proportionate gain. Alvar Nuñez, moreover, had intervened in the intercourse between his men and the Indian women in a fashion which, amply justified though it probably was, turned out to be the cause of a deep irritation on the part of his followers.

It was, indeed, a mortified and embittered company that glided down with the current between the enchanting banks of the stream to Asuncion. Had the voyage occupied the two months that the upstream navigation had demanded, an outburst would probably have occurred before the journey's end; but as, going with the tide, they were swept to their destination in eight days, the threatened explosion was postponed until the houses of Asuncion itself could witness the disturbance.

As a matter of fact, no sooner had the men of the expedition stepped ashore than the atmosphere of plot and counterplot enveloped the capital of Paraguay—a town that was altogether too young to be placed at the mercy of such hardened intrigues! So far we have dealt almost entirely with the salient personalities of Irala and Alvar Nuñez, but now a number of others intervene, and take up a large share of the canvas.

The chief of these are Salazar de Espinosa, who has already been referred to; Garcia Venegas, Royal Treasurer, a native of Córdoba and an especially violent opponent of Alvar Nuñez; Felipe de Cáceres, an intriguing and treacherous official; and Francisco de Mendoza, who was apparently a natural son of Pedro de Mendoza, the first Governor of the new provinces.

The vigorous individualities of all these men, save the first, were bitterly opposed to the rule of Alvar Nuñez, and as the latter lay ill in bed a *coup de main* was arranged. A body of armed men burst without warning into the house of the *Adelantado*, dragged him from his couch, and proclaimed the unfortunate official a prisoner of State. After this Alvar Nuñez was placed in irons, and a company of revolutionists marched along the few streets of the town, proclaiming the downfall of the Governor, and terrorizing those who showed any inclination to espouse his cause.

It was in this way that occurred the first revolution in Paraguay—the fierce herald of a tragically long list of similar events to come! But the insurgents were by no means destined to have matters all their own way. When the confusion attending the first rising diminished to the extent of permitting the strength of the rival parties to be seen, it became evident that the adherents of Alvar Nuñez were practically as numerous as the insurgents. But the

strategic advantage of the situation lay with the latter, since they had in their power the person of the Governor, and had control of the greater part of the available arms.

Some skirmishes occurred in the streets of Asuncion ; but the partisans of the imprisoned Governor failed to rescue him from his confinement. The unfortunate man was now detained in a small and gloomy fort which had been especially erected for this purpose, and his captors amply demonstrated the lengths they were prepared to go by their harsh treatment of the prisoner, and by their vows that his body should never be rescued alive by his friends.

As has already been said, the details of this period of Paraguayan history are so confused and contradictory that it is unusually difficult to come to any definite conclusion concerning the rival claims of the respective parties. Perhaps the best method of obtaining any comprehension of the whirlpool of events will be to analyse the situation itself and the personalities of the chief actors.

There seems no doubt that the temperament of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca was too finely constituted for the task which he had in hand—save at such moments as when he was tempted by Ayolas' gold ! If his ideals were not too lofty for the age, they would, at all events, seem to have been out of place in the latitudes to which he had brought them ! Although his courage and energy were undoubted, he appears to have been a man of theories rather than of those rough-and-ready and opportunist precepts which were characteristic of the typical *conquistador*.

It was against the nature of things that a personality of this sort could maintain its authority in the circumstances in which Alvar Nuñez found himself in Paraguay. The reckless set of officials with which he was surrounded fiercely resented these views of the *Adelantado's*, more especially on those

occasions when his theories gave birth to regulations which threatened the liberty of action of those officials—who, almost to a man, had axes of their own to grind. The rank and file of the Spaniards, even those who were loyally prepared to uphold the legitimate Governor's cause, were vastly impressed by the personality of Irala, whose gallant figure resolutely dominated the horizon of Paraguay. As to Irala himself, until the discontent flamed out into open revolt he appears to have given no sign. Perhaps he knew that none was necessary, and that the trend of affairs was turning in his direction as inevitably as the sturdy sunflower turns towards the sun.

If this were so, Irala's expectations had been fulfilled. He was now again elected to the post of *Adelantado* by the acclamation of the inhabitants of Asuncion, and Alvar Nuñez was confined in his cell by the condemnation of a certain number of these. In this noisome spot the unfortunate *Adelantado* was kept for some twelve months before the new authorities saw fit to put an end to his captivity. Even then his release was only affected in the midst of scenes of violence, in the course of which Alvar Nuñez was dragged in secret to the bank of the river lest his appearance among the people of Asuncion should arouse an inconvenient sympathy.

I have already had occasion in another place to quote Hernandez' account of the manner in which the ex-*Adelantado* was placed on board ship to be conveyed to Spain in the charge of his implacable enemy Garcia Venegas, but the matter is well worthy of introduction here:—

“ One night, towards midnight, Alonso Cabrera, the supervisor, and Pedro Dorantes, his factor, accompanied by a large number of arquebusiers, presented themselves before the Governor's prison; each arquebusier carried three lighted fuses in his hand, so as to make their number appear greater

than it was in reality. Then Alonso Cabrera and Pedro Dorantes entered the room in which he lay; they seized him by the arm and lifted him out of the bed with the chains round his feet; he was very ill, almost unto death. They carried him in this state to the gate leading into the street, and when he saw the sky, which he had not seen till then, he entreated them to let him render thanks to God. When he rose from his knees, two soldiers placed their arms under his and carried him on board the brigantine, for he was extremely weak and crippled. When he saw himself in the midst of these people, he said to them: 'Sirs, be my witnesses that I appoint, as my deputy, Juan de Salazar de Espinosa, that he may govern this province in the name of his Majesty instead of me, maintaining order and justice till the King shall have been pleased to make other dispositions.' Hardly had he finished speaking when Garcia Vanegas, deputy treasurer, rushed upon him with dagger in hand, saying, 'I do not recognize what you say; retract, or I will tear your soul from your body!' But the Governor had been advised not to speak as he did, because they were determined to kill him, and these words might have occasioned a great disturbance among them, and the party of the King might have snatched him from the hands of the others, as everybody was then in the street. Garcia Vanegas withdrew a little, and the Governor repeated the same words; then Garcia sprang upon him with great fury, and placed a dagger to his temple, saying as before: 'Withdraw what you say, or I will tear your soul from your body!' At the same time he inflicted a slight wound on his temple, and pushed the people who were carrying the Governor with so much violence that they fell with him, and one of them dropped his cap. After this they quickly raised him again, and carried him precipitately on board the brigantine. They closed

the poop of the vessel with planks, and put chains on the Governor, which prevented him from moving. Then they unmoored and descended the river."

This description of the dramatic departure of poor Alvar Nuñez from the scene of what had once been his governorship is, of course, from the pen of a devoted adherent who was unlikely in the extreme to make the least of any wrongs suffered by the *Adelantado*. Nevertheless it is probable that this account, though a little coloured, is accurate enough in the main.

It was in this fashion, then, that Alvar Nuñez set out on his voyage to Spain, where he arrived after many sufferings, and where he was first imprisoned and subsequently released, without, however, receiving any compensation for his wrongs.

CHAPTER V

THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF DOMINGO MARTINEZ DE IRALA

Political unrest in Asuncion—The Indians take advantage of the situation to rise in insurrection—Irala defeats a combined force of Guaranís and Agaces—A period of peace follows the subduing of the natives—Asuncion is made the seat of a bishopric—Solitary situation of the Province of Paraguay—The rumours of Peruvian gold—Irala contemplates a journey to Peru—His followers receive the proposal with enthusiasm—Irala sets out with a chosen party—Encounter with the Indian tribe that had massacred Ayolas and his people—Difficulties and hardships of the journey—Arrived at the borders of Peru, the expedition receives a communication from Lima forbidding a farther advance—Irala sends an embassy to Lima, begging official confirmation of his governorship—Negotiations with Peru—Irala's strategic precautions—The party reluctantly retraces its steps—Happenings in Asuncion during the absence of the *Adelantado*—Francisco de Mendoza's attempts to obtain the governorship lead to his execution—Diego de Abreu is elected as temporary *Adelantado* by the people—Abreu refuses to resign his post on Irala's arrival—The majority of the townspeople join Irala—Abreu and his remnant of followers flee to the woods—Arrival of Nuflo de Chaves with men and livestock from Lima—Irala quells an insurrection fomented by the intrigues of La Gasca—Death of Abreu and the dispersal of his followers—Some failures and successes in colonization—Official appointments made by the Court of Spain—Salazar arrives in Paraguay, bringing with him seven cows and a bull—Irala is officially nominated *Adelantado*—Colonizing achievements of Nuflo de Chaves—Death of Irala.

IRALA was now again at the helm of this young ship of State that had plunged into tormented waters so early in its voyage. As has already been seen, he had a brusque way of dealing with rivals, and was troubled with few scruples concerning the order of their going. So a couple of days after the de-

parture of the ex-Governor two of the latter's friends, Juan de Salazar and Pedro de Estropiñan Cabeza de Vaca, were seized in their turn, and were sent in chains down the river to overtake the vessel which was carrying Alvar Nuñez.

But all Irala's resolution could not slay that spirit of unrest which the arbitrary deposing of the late *Adelantado* had called into being. Neither was the spirit of opposition to the new state of affairs perceptibly weakened by the further banishing of Salazar and Pedro de Estropiñan Cabeza de Vaca. The smiling surroundings of Asuncion now resounded to the clashing of intermittent civil war, a condition of affairs which endured for a couple of years. Needless to say that during this time the new agricultural ventures suffered from neglect, and that the rapid growth of the subtropical vegetation swept again in green triumph over many of the toilsomly cleared fields.

As to the Indians, they remained for a time in passive amazement at the spectacle of these strange white foreigners who, having swooped down upon the land and taken possession of it, had suddenly taken to fighting among themselves, and thus to expending on the persons of their brethren that force of theirs which had seemed so irresistible. The sight of this fratricidal struggle in which the motive did not seem to be even the conquest of land but was concerned rather with the efforts to attain the chieftainship, was one which the aborigines did not in the least understand. Their own democratic communities would never have troubled themselves to waste a single ounce of energy in a fight for one of those posts of leadership, which to them conveyed no more of honour, glory, or profit than they would have sold to the first comer for a very modest bowlful of their native spirit.

As a natural result their respect for the wisdom of

the *conquistador* fell as rapidly as the mercury in a barometer before a tropical tornado—and with very similar consequences. As preparation for a storm of their own brewing they began to busy themselves with their war pigments and ornamentations, and with their bows, arrows, slings, and spears. If ever there was a time to rid themselves of these newcomers, they argued not without reason, it was surely now, when every nerve of the one-half of these amazing people was being strained to work mischief to the other.

Messengers, gallant in feathers and ambassadorial decorations, passed between the tribes of the Guaranís and the Agaces. A treaty of aggression followed, and very soon a large army of hostile Indians had gathered in the woods near Asuncion, and from their point of vantage threatened the disturbed young capital of Paraguay. But they had counted without Irala's resolution and power of initiative. When once the situation had become plain to him, that able leader made haste to utilize the peril from without to destroy the dissensions which were eating into the life of the settlement from within.

Throwing himself into the breach, Irala, having persuaded the Spaniards to abandon their differences for the time being, rapidly infused fresh discipline and order into the demoralized force, and then led his men out against the Indians. In the neighbourhood of the woodlands of Areguá he met the combined armies of the Guaranís and the Agaces. The combat that ensued was very brief. The Indians had only time to hurl a few spears and let fly a few volleys of arrows before the mailed Europeans were upon them, sword in hand.

The Indian forces were quite unable to withstand the shock. In a few minutes those who had escaped death or hampering wounds were fleeing for their lives, their flimsy finery bedraggled and bloody, the

heavily equipped Spaniards straining in pursuit after them.

The pursuit was continued across league after league of the fair Paraguayan country until the survivors of the fugitives, at the end of their resources and strength, found themselves in the remote territory of the chief Tabaré. This Tabaré had been a friend of Aracaré, the chief who had been slain some years before by command of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca. Having inherited his dead comrade's hostility towards the Spaniards, Tabaré welcomed the fugitives, and withdrew with them and his own men into the shelter of his most distant glades.

On this the Spaniards had no choice but to abandon the pursuit. Irala's object had been completely served by now, as a matter of fact, and the recent aggressive mood of the Indians had been thoroughly chastened into the humility born of terror. So in the winter of 1546 he returned in triumph to Asuncion at the head of his men, where he once again took up the reins of government.

After this occurred one of those rare lulls which it was the fate of Asuncion at this stage of its existence to enjoy only between tremendous intervals of turmoil and strife. For two years an absence of discord in the city itself and a practical truce with the outlying and hostile tribes of Indians gave the young town the opportunity of thrusting its roots more deeply into the soil. The number of houses increased by the side of the broad river, and the crops multiplied in the spreading agricultural land.

A number of priests had been residing at the spot from the time of the governorship of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca, and, indeed, the city of Asuncion had been raised to the dignity of a bishopric in 1539. But the first ecclesiastic nominated to the see, Juan Barrios, did not once put in an appearance within the boundaries of his diocese,

which quite possibly he may have considered as being altogether too remote from the world to expect the actual presence of so exalted a dignitary as a bishop. So he contented himself with sending an order that the status of the Asuncion church should be raised to that of a cathedral. This was done, and Juan Barrios appears to have remained thoroughly content with the result of his vicarious labours, continuing to let the hearts of the inhabitants of Asuncion grow fonder by an absence which continued unbroken to the end!

During the two years of peace which ensued after Irala's victory over the Guaranís and the Agaces, not only did no bishop arrive, but neither priest nor even layman of any kind came to the spot from Spain. Not a single vessel from Europe was blown, poled, or hauled up the current of the great river. It appeared very much as though the Paraguayan province were destined to sink into an eternal slumber, for which, as a matter of fact, its soft and languorous climate fitted it most admirably.

But, whether forgotten by Spain or not, the temperament of Irala was far too energetic to permit him to let this condition of affairs continue indefinitely. The call of the Peruvian mountains had penetrated again to the beautiful valleys of Paraguay. It is true that no news concerning the *conquistadores* of the north-west had come for a very long time from Spain, the centre of the Empire. But accurate intelligence, as well as chance rumour, has always had a habit of travelling across aboriginal South America at a pace which, even in these days, seems little short of marvellous, considering the enormous distances and the primitive methods and appliances of the Indians.

Thus report came down from the rarefied atmosphere of the lofty and bare Peruvian and Brazilian mountains, and, travelling east with the headwaters

of the great rivers below through the forests, went from tribe to tribe across the vast expanse of the lowlands, and, emerging from the mysterious Chaco upon the river bank, swept across the stream and thus into Paraguay. These told of the drama that was being played on the sunburned and windswept highlands, where lay the mines that had provided the aboriginal inhabitants with the glittering armour and ornaments that proved their ruin. They hinted, too, of the tragedy of the Incas, and of the stream of gold and silver that was being poured out from that suffering empire with an abundance which even the mind of the most credulous and optimistic *conquistador* knew could not continue for ever.

It was doubtless this state of anxious uncertainty that urged Irala to link up his efforts with those of the *conquistadores* of the north-west before the richest sheaves of the golden harvest had been torn away by the eager and avaricious hands of his distant rivals. So, rising one morning and gazing with gratuitous discontent on the broad river running smoothly between its green banks, on the palms of the copses, and the glowing blossoms and butterflies of the clearings, he decided to abandon this soft and sluggish peace and to make a more determined effort than ever before to gain the bleak, fortune-bearing heights of Peru. But before definitely embarking on this enterprise Irala thought it well to test his men's opinions on the subject ; for among the *Adelantado's* numerous good points was his custom of treating his followers as comrades and friends rather than as mere subordinates told off to come and go with the precision of soulless automatons. So Irala summoned a gathering of his people in the shade of the flowering trees, and fairly and squarely put the question to them : Would they prefer to start upon an expedition to Peru or to remain in this Paraguay which had now become their home?

The enthusiasm with which the men of Asuncion received the first suggestion plainly showed their leader that they might be relied on to stand by him to the last in his venture. How arduous and perilous was the nature of this had been amply proved by those who had previously attempted it. But, not in the least discouraged by the prospect before them, a picked party of men made preparations for the voyage, and in August 1548 Irala set out at the head of these, having left the governorship of Asuncion during his absence in the hands of Don Francisco de Mendoza.

Irala made his way up-stream until he arrived at a spot—which seems to appear in no modern maps—known at the time as San Fernando. Here he left the two ships which had carried his force, leaving orders with their commanders to wait for him at that spot for two years. From this circumstance alone something of the nature of these early journeys across the Chaco may be gleaned. Although they have made so small a stir in history, they are only comparable with the nineteenth-century expeditions through the heart of Africa or with polar exploration of all ages. Sometimes the men who made them returned to civilization; at other times they failed—but in a journey such as that on which Irala was setting out nothing short of two years would leave a reasonable margin of safety.

In one point at least Irala's conduct of his expedition compares favourably with that of Alvar Nuñez when in the same neighbourhood. Irala seems to have made no attempt to traffic with the slayers of Ayolas. These latter, as a matter of fact, lay in ambush for him; but he defeated the tribesmen utterly in their own forest haunts, thus avenging the death of his old leader. As he proceeded on his westward way he encountered other tribes, some hostile and others with whom he succeeded in making friends. As Irala, however, drew farther from the neigh-

bourhood of the great streams the natural difficulties which beset his path tended to increase. The swamps and rivulets died away, water became scarce, and at one period it failed altogether, a number of men perishing from thirst as the result.

In the end, pushing his way resolutely forward, Irala arrived at the frontiers of Peru. As was invariably the case, the report of his coming, borne from one Indian tribe to another, had long preceded him. As he and his men were resting on the bank of a river, a messenger came to him from Lima, bearing a letter from the Licentiate La Gasca. This ordered him not to advance any farther into Peru, but to remain where he was and to await further orders.

A welcome so completely lacking in warmth might well have dismayed a leader less resolute than Irala. As a matter of fact, a man of his force of character was the very last person whom the distracted authorities of Peru wished to see in their dominion just then, fearing much lest the advent of a personality of that kind should stir up again the smouldering embers of the rebellion from which the State had suffered. It is even alleged by some that La Gasca sent a heavy bribe to the *conquistador* from the east, in order to induce him to remain absent from the land of the Incas.

Whether this was the case or not, Irala's circumstances must have made him sufficiently anxious not to offend the powers at Lima, without the extra incentive of a bribe being necessary. If the vision of gold now seemed to recede a little, there was a second, and very practical, object of his expedition which might now well be established. The high colonial authorities had tacitly agreed to his election by the local Spanish inhabitants to the post of *Adelantado* of Paraguay. But they had never confirmed this officially, and from the legal point of

view Irala was left at the mercy of any adventurer sent out by the Court of Spain with a proper licence to take charge of affairs in Paraguay. We may emphasize the fact that this is regarding the matter from the legal point of view, since in actual practice the power of the colonists had shown itself clearly enough in the case of the unfortunate Alvar Nuñez !

At the same time, Irala was well aware that his position would be greatly strengthened by a regular imperial licence. He now sent an embassy to Lima, bearing this petition in his name. The mission consisted of Nuflo de Chaves—of whom more will be heard later—Miguel de Rutia, Agustin de Ocampo, and Ruy Garcia. The four Spaniards succeeded in reaching Lima in safety. The wily La Gasca, however, showed himself little disposed to forward the interests of a *conquistador* whose waxing power he imagined he had reason to dread. In the light of after events, moreover, it is extremely doubtful if Irala's cause was supported with ardour by any of his four messengers—one of whom, at all events, subsequently proved himself hostile to the *Adelantado*.

Owing to this, the official reply from Lima, sent to Irala by other hands than those of his own followers, was purposely framed in a non-committal and vague style. Indeed, the only really definite matter it contained was a still more urgent injunction that Irala should advance no farther into Peru.

In those wild days of early adventure he who was incapable of pursuing a policy of reckless opportunism was lost. No one appreciated this more than Irala, though he would seem to have been originally fashioned by Nature in a sufficiently bluff and straightforward mould. As it happened, Irala placed just that same amount of trust in La Gasca as did La Gasca in him. Irala had anticipated

this second epistle from La Gasca, and, after reviewing the contents of the first, he felt himself scarcely justified in speculating in an optimistic fashion concerning its tenor.

So Irala had taken his precautions. He organized a gang of supposedly hostile Indians, who lay in wait for La Gasca's messengers. At a given moment they sprang out upon these, seized the letter, and it is highly improbable that any of these unfortunate folk were left alive. It was a simple but cunning stroke. Had La Gasca's letter contained any peculiarly inconvenient commands or the news of any adverse decision, Irala could convincingly demonstrate to the Peruvian authorities that, since the messengers had been waylaid by hostile Indians, he had never received it—a sufficiently weighty official excuse for the steps which he might subsequently feel himself forced to take! As the epistle was found to contain no awkward matter of the kind, Irala's striking precautionary measure proved superfluous. But it affords a sufficiently eloquent instance of the methods employed by these cynically adventurous *conquistadores* in their dealings among themselves.

As it was, Irala now recognized with some reluctance that no purpose would be served by his dallying any longer on the borders of Peru. It became plain to him that all that would result to his credit out of the long and very strenuous journey was the important geographical knowledge and the honour and glory of the feat. His men were even less interested than he in such abstract gains, as Irala discovered for himself when he permitted them to obtain some insight into the situation, and proposed that the party should now turn its steps towards Paraguay again.

When they received this news an uproar arose among the *Adelantado's* followers. It must be admitted that, from their point of view, they had

every reason to be incensed. For day after day, week after week, and month after month they had forced their way through the tearing spikes of the tropical jungle and the clinging mud and stagnant waters of the swamps and pools. They had forded rivers, toiled across waterless deserts, fought with fever and the sun's great heat—they had done all this, and much beyond, only to be turned back when once they had gained the outskirts of the promised land!

The resolute men from Paraguay, were not in the least inclined to submit tamely to this chilling rebuff which came down across the bare mountains into the land of forests and young streams, where they lay recuperating after the wearing toil of their marches. They clamoured to go on in the face of any official prohibition. They were strong enough to play their part like men in Paraguay, they urged. Let them go on, and, if necessary, assert by the sword their right to take their share in the great game of gain that was proceeding at such a pace in Peru!

Under any other leader but Irala these wild and resolute spirits would undoubtedly have had their way. It was one of the clearest proofs of the powerful influence over his people enjoyed by this consummate leader of men that he was able to reconcile them to the disappointment of having this much-desired cup snatched from their lips. Then he led them back by the way they had come, and the expedition arrived in sight of San Fernando, where the vessels were awaiting it, at the end of 1549, having been absent very nearly eighteen months.

The men left in charge of the two ships had some fragments of news to tell which might well have destroyed the equanimity of a less seasoned *conquistador* than the one who had just led his force to the borders of Peru and back. Lacking

his firm control, the affairs in Asuncion had become tangled into a confusion of violence and blood. It appeared that, when twelve months had elapsed without any news of Irala having penetrated to Asuncion, Francisco de Mendoza, the deputy Governor, grew restive. He may actually have believed in the probability of the news, which he gave out to the inhabitants of Asuncion in the light of a certainty, that Irala and his people had perished. In any case, whether this was so or not, he judged the moment a propitious one to obtain for himself the permanent power of the governorship.

Before committing himself to any definite action he conferred with a number of his intimates, who assured him, not only of their own support but of that of the general populace of the town in addition. Thus convinced of the certain success of his plans, Francisco de Mendoza called a meeting of the townspeople, repeated to them the assurances concerning the death of Irala and his men, and announced that the time had now arrived for the election of a new Governor, which was to be the work of the suffrage of Paraguay's Spanish inhabitants.

Having prepared the way for his accession to the post of *Adelantado*, he awaited with confidence the result of the voting. This was by no means as he had anticipated. It is doubtful to what extent his own intimates had misled the temporary Governor concerning their promised support ; but it is certain enough that many of the lesser officials, resenting the election in the absence of any satisfactory proof of Irala's death, had made up their minds that, if a ballot were forced upon them, Francisco de Mendoza should, at all events, not have the benefit of their votes.

It was owing largely to this adverse current of sentiment that Francisco de Mendoza, the natural son of the first *Adelantado* of the provinces of the Rio de la Plata, found in due course, much to his

surprise and dismay, that the unappreciative inhabitants of Asuncion had not elected him as their Governor after all. The votes of the Spaniards had given that much-coveted honour to a sufficiently bold and resourceful man, Diego de Abreu, or Abrego as it was sometimes rendered.

According to the methods of reckless opportunism which were characteristic of the age, only one course remained to Francisco de Mendoza—to declare the election illegal, and, having thus ignored its verdict, to hoist himself boldly into the *Adelantado's* chair by the force of arms. This he was preparing to do, when he found for the second, and last, time that he had misjudged the power of initiative of those opposed to him. While Mendoza's plans were still in the act of maturing, Diego de Abreu struck! A number of armed men poured into the house of the official whom Irala had appointed his deputy. Francisco de Mendoza was arrested, led away, and executed without an instant's unnecessary delay—all this at the instance of Diego de Abreu, the new *Adelantado* elected by the people.

In order that this act of poetic justice should be followed by appropriate developments, there is no doubt that Diego de Abreu, having played an honest, if bloodthirsty, part up to this point, should have governed in the spirit of Irala, and that he should have handed over his authority with a loyal alacrity when in due course the news of that notable *conquistador's* safe return reached Asuncion.

Diego de Abreu, however, having tasted power, was determined that he would not abandon its joys without a struggle. When a letter, sent down-stream to him by Irala, pointed out the illegality of his election, and demanded that he should resign his post, Abreu's only reply was to strengthen the fortifications and palisades of Asuncion.

As Abreu might well have foreseen, Irala was the

last man to submit tamely to this attempt to shut him out from his own dominion. Very soon he and his force came down the river, and their landing abreast of Asuncion was a very grim reminder that Irala's letter had evoked no satisfactory reply. The returned *Adelantado* had no intention of wasting his force in a general attack on the town. He merely set up an encampment just outside its closed gates, and waited. Doubtless he knew his people well, and in any case this policy of waiting proved the simplest and most efficacious means of success.

In little groups of twos and threes the townsmen slipped out through the defences of the place, and joined the popular *conquistador*. Every day, as Abreu's garrison grew less, Irala's forces increased steadily in proportion. Every day that passed, moreover, without a blow being struck, assisted to consolidate the remarkable triumph of the man who had brought his followers safely back from the borders of Peru.

At length no more than some fifty men remained to Abreu within the walls of Asuncion. These were stalwarts, bound to the cause of their dismayed leader by blood or by closer ties of friendship than the rest. Sallying out suddenly one day, they fled in a body to the woods, where they prepared to maintain a desultory warfare against the powerful *conquistador*, who now celebrated his delayed entrance into Asuncion.

Although Irala had now fully recovered his power so far as Asuncion itself was concerned, the situation was less satisfactory in the surrounding country, where Abreu and his men remained lurking in their forest refuges, to spring out upon any small party that might incautiously venture within their reach. Some fresh developments, however, were destined to put this state of affairs into the background for the time being.

These developments were heralded by the arrival of Nuflo de Chaves from Lima. This enterprising official brought in his train some sheep and goats, and thus provided the new country with the first heads of domestic livestock that it had ever known. With Chaves' party, too, came forty soldiers, sent from Lima by La Gasca ostensibly as an escort for the travellers, and as an addition to the Asunción garrison, but in reality to undermine Irala's authority and to stir up a rebellion against him. It is sufficiently obvious that a man who might object to the opposing of such crafty and unscrupulous methods as these by such casual delinquencies as the way-laying of occasional messengers and other counter-strokes of the kind would very speedily have gone down beneath the grim wiles of the jealous and intriguing La Gasca !

The military party began its appointed and sinister work within a few days of its arrival at Asunción. Secretly approaching those whom they suspected of being least well disposed towards the *Adelantado*, they broached their plan for a conspiracy which was to include the murder of Irala. Accustomed as these new-comers were to the endless cabals and bitter-nesses of Lima, they had failed to reckon with the genuine respect and affection with which the personality of the chief of Paraguay had inspired his followers. The plot had barely time to hatch itself into a definite conspiracy, when word was brought to Irala of what was occurring.

The *Adelantado* acted with the promptness and resolution that had never failed him. Taken by surprise, the heads of the movement found themselves seized and imprisoned, while measures were taken to render harmless their humbler followers. These latter, indeed, were granted a free pardon ; for Irala had no desire to stain the soil of his province with the blood of those who had been dragged into the

affair merely as the dupes of others. The only two who suffered death as a consequence of the conspiracy were the ringleaders, a certain Captain Camargo, and that Miguel Rutia who had made one of the four messengers originally sent by the *Adelantado* from the borders of Peru to Lima. Nuflo de Chaves himself appears to have been innocent of any complicity in the plot. Soon after the disturbance attending this had died down he married the daughter of Francisco de Mendoza. On this, the influence of his new family ties caused him to petition Irala that justice should be done to the murderers of his father-in-law—that is to say, to Diego de Abreu and the remnants of his followers who were still lurking without in the forest.

From Irala's own point of view there can have been little to choose between the past conduct of Abreu and Mendoza. Nevertheless, probably from the combined motives of obliging Nuflo de Chaves and of stamping out the discordant elements in his province, he sent out various armed forces into the forest country, and pursued Abreu's band from point to point, until the desperate leader himself was left almost without followers. While this was occurring Irala continued his policy of strict moderation. Not only did he pardon the rank and file of the rebels; but he married his daughters to those leaders—one account gives their number as two, another increases it to four—who surrendered with a good grace, and showed themselves really desirous of securing his friendship.

While this was occurring Diego de Abreu, defiant to the last, was slain by his pursuers in one of his woodland retreats. Although one or two of his followers endeavoured in vain for a short time to keep the embers of strife at red heat, this to all intents and purposes ended the revolt.

Irala now had leisure to attend to the practical

development of his State. Realizing the great advantages which must accrue from the possession of a port nearer the ocean, at the beginning of 1553 he founded the settlement of San Juan at a strategic point admirably chosen in the neighbourhood of the confluence of the Uruguay and Paraná rivers. Here, however, he met with the same difficulty that had confronted the original *Adelantado*, Pedro de Mendoza, when he had founded the township of Buenos Aires nearly twenty years before. The fierce and intractable Indians of the open plains near the great estuary were very different folk to deal with from the comparatively docile Guaranís of the upper reaches. These warriors, moreover, treated the arrival of the Spaniards at San Juan with the same implacable hostility that they had demonstrated towards the ill-fated settlement of Buenos Aires, still nearer the river's mouth. So incessant were their attacks that in less than two years' time San Juan had to be abandoned. After this Irala reluctantly yielded to the necessity of postponing any enterprise of the kind, and, instead, employed his energies in opening up some of the country in the Province of La Guaira—through which Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca had passed on his famous journey from the sea—and on the banks of the Alto Paraná River he founded the town of Ontiveros.

While all this was occurring the Court of Spain had not suffered the affairs of the remote province of Paraguay to slip entirely from its mind. Undoubtedly one of the salient faults of the Spanish Empire was the too conscientious manner in which it insisted on regulating the details of the government of a number of its colonies, of the circumstances and inclinations of which it was profoundly ignorant. This was now exemplified in the case of Paraguay.

As early as 1547, when that far-away State was enjoying its first interlude of peace under the wise

governorship of Irala, the authorities in Madrid and Seville were already occupying themselves with the question of appointing another *Adelantado*. In the first place their choice fell on Jaime Resquin. This official, indeed, had actually been nominated for the post, when a more powerful rival appeared on the scene in the person of Juan de Sanabria. To undertake the governorship of a colony in those days was in a sense to enter into a partnership with His Majesty the King. No salary entered into the bargain; the appointment depended largely on the amount of hard cash and the nature of the promises which the applicant was in a position to offer in exchange for the right to exploit the new country. Thus, of the two partners, the *conquistador* was wont to have considerably more at stake than the King.

It was this system which induced Juan de Sanabria to come forward with offers which finally extinguished Jaime Resquin's chances for the governorship of Paraguay. On the 27th of July, 1547, the title of *Adelantado* was conferred on him; but, although he received the distinction, he was unable to avail himself of its material benefits, for he died very shortly after the appointment was made. His son, who claimed the reversion of his father's post, was officially granted this in 1549. It will be evident from this, and from the sequel, that matters were not accustomed to be hurried in Spain of the sixteenth century.

The younger Sanabria, as a matter of fact, appears to have been far less attracted by the prospects of a residence in South America than had been his father. After much deliberation he decided on sending, in the light of an advance guard, no other than that Juan de Salazar de Espinosa who had opposed Irala in Asuncion in the course of the turmoil which marked the unfortunate Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca's short term of governorship. It was his intention, the

younger Sanabria announced, to follow Juan de Salazar in due course ; but this he never did.

The proceedings of Salazar himself appear to have been fairly leisurely. He set out from Sanlucar in 1552. Arriving at San Vicente, in the neighbourhood of where the Brazilian town of Santos now stands, he occupied himself with the settlement and colonization of this place. It was not until the beginning of 1555 that he set out with his men on the over-land journey to Paraguay, arriving safely in Asuncion, where he was amicably received by Irala, who appears to have been generously willing to bury the hatchet, and to reciprocate the friendship which Salazar was now anxious to extend to him.

If Salazar brought friendship on this occasion, he was at least accompanied in addition by something more material. He had brought with him from Spain seven cows and a bull—or perhaps it would be more accurate to say, that seven cows and a bull were safely introduced into Paraguay as the survivors of the body of cattle with which Salazar had embarked at Sanlucar. Few cattle can ever have undertaken a more momentous journey than this. Indeed, it is not a little curious to remark the fashion in which the various varieties of domestic livestock were introduced into Paraguay. The first sheep and goats, as we have seen, came from Peru in the west ; these first cattle came from the east by way of Brazil ; and the first horses were destined to come from the south, making their way northwards from the enormous stretches of pasture-land which now comprise a part of Argentina. The north alone sent Paraguay nothing, and this for the simple reason that from that direction there lay no road—an absence that continues to this day—by which man or beast could travel to or from the outside centres of civilization.

This year, 1555, was a notable one in the early

history of Paraguay. In that year arrived two vessels from Spain, one of which bore Bishop Latorre, nominally the second Bishop of Paraguay, but in reality the first to enter within the frontiers of the province. These ships also bore the Royal decree appointing Irala as *Adelantado* of Paraguay, thus at length endowing him with the official sanction for the office which he had actually held for so many years.

Among the other measures which Irala now took was that of sending Nuflo de Chaves, whom he regarded as one of his most capable lieutenants, on an expedition to the La Guaira Province, where a number of new townships were founded. After this Nuflo de Chaves was sent to the north-west, in order to establish in the country which he had already travelled a settlement that should serve as a link between Paraguay and Peru.

To the south there still remained much to be done, and, had Irala lived, he would undoubtedly have seen to it that fresh efforts were made in this direction. But old age had crept on that *conquistador*, though his energies remained unimpaired to the end, and at the beginning of the year 1557 he died at the age of seventy.

CHAPTER VI

SOME EARLY GOVERNORS AND COLONIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Irala's qualities as a Governor—A South American writer on the Spanish *conquistador*—Gonzalo de Mendoza becomes *Adelantado*—Death of Gonzalo de Mendoza—He is succeeded by Francisco Ortiz de Vergara—Indian trouble—The ambitions of Nuño de Chaves—He determines to found a new province—His meeting with a rival *conquistador*, Andres Manso—The decision of the Peruvian authorities secures the advantage to Nuño de Chaves—The latter founds the town of Santa Cruz de la Sierra—The first permanent link between Paraguay and Peru—Vergara sets out for Peru—After having been detained by Nuño de Chaves he arrives in Lima—Vergara's post is given by the Peruvian authorities to Juan Ortiz de Zárate—Zárate appoints Felipe de Caceres as his deputy—Unpopularity of Caceres in Asuncion—He is opposed by Bishop Latorre—Caceres is imprisoned and deprived of his office—Martin Suárez de Toledo becomes temporary Governor—Colonizing feats of Juan de Garay—Zárate, on arriving at the mouth of the River Plate after a calamitous voyage, is attacked by the Charrúa Indians—His force is rescued by Juan de Garay—Zárate arrives in Asuncion and takes charge of the Government—His death—Zárate's daughter as heiress of the province—Mendieta appointed temporary Governor—Mendieta, having failed in his office, is sent back to Spain by the colonists—His death on the voyage—Claimants for the hand of Doña Juana—Events which lead up to Juan de Garay's governorship of Paraguay—His arrival in Asuncion.

IN the minds of the majority of the Paraguayans Irala stands as the first national hero of that country. The majority of such Latin-American historians as have dealt with his personality have ascribed his faults to the age in which he lived, and have thus caused him to emerge from the Paraguayan historical dust of the sixteenth century as a magnificent and almost immaculate figure.

Although a certain amount of inevitable exaggeration

tion has accompanied this process, there seems little doubt that Irala deserves in the main the praises that have been showered on him. The great strides which the youthful State of Paraguay made under his governorship were due to his unaided vigour and foresight ; for during the greater part of his term of office the help which he received from the Court of Spain was of the passive—and frequently, negative—order. Irala, in short, worked as a freelance for the benefit of Paraguay, and his powerful lead was followed by the people of his own province, and in the end by the Spanish Imperial authorities themselves.

Many of his measures, of course, will not bear the light of twentieth-century criticism. Here again we are brought face to face with the claim of the Latin-American historians, who assert that Irala's faults were merely those of his age. And concerning this age, no one, I think, has written with a more eloquent lucidity than Dr. Lugones, who, a South American himself, has had much to say that is valuable on this subject. Two or three of his paragraphs will suffice to demonstrate this. Dr. Lugones has it that—

“The sixteenth century was the century of the *conquistador*. He it was who, when the modern period began, continued in the spirit of the Middle Ages. His obligation was merely to be brave, since he was the defender of society, which worked beneath the protection of his arms. Exempt as he was from all other effort or contribution save that of his blood, for the spilling of which the labourers and artisans were only too glad to pay, all things worked together to render him a privileged being. . . . His cult was that fierce bravery, on which his undertakings were based and on which their success depended, and this fierceness easily degenerated into cruelty. . . .

“ In order to open up the New World *conquistadores* were necessary—adventurers, that is to say, who would accomplish in a single year that which the phlegmatic colonist would have taken a century to bring about. And Spain alone produced *conquistadores*. The other countries, becoming industrial and commercial, produced colonists, colonies and representative institutions being the natural results of an industrial age. It is thus explained how it came about that, although it was Spain that opened up the continent, it was the other nations that attained the actual fruits of its riches.”

Judged by his surroundings of this reckless age, when almost any means were held to justify the end, and when the sword was the only weapon understood by the strong and deceit the only defence of the weak, Irala's character does, indeed, seem to stand out far above that of the average man of his time.

The absence of his strong hand from the helm of State was felt almost at once. It is true that in the first instance the man whom the *conquistador's* testament had appointed as his successor, his son-in-law Gonzalo de Mendoza, met with the general approval of the Spaniards in Paraguay. Gonzalo de Mendoza displayed considerable energy. He conducted a successful campaign against the Agaces, and, indeed, began in a most promising fashion a career which was cut short by his death in July 1558, rather more than a year after he had assumed the post of *Adelantado*.

Francisco Ortiz de Vergara, another son-in-law of Irala's, was then elected by common consent to the governorship. This Vergara, as a matter of fact, had been one of the supporters of Irala's rival Diego de Abreu, and his eventual submission had been rewarded by the hand of one of Irala's daughters. From the very beginning of his governorship Vergara

found himself faced with Indian trouble. Risings occurred among the Guaranís both in Paraguay proper and in the new province of La Guairá to the east.

Vergara succeeded in suppressing these revolts without very much trouble ; but in the meantime affairs in the west had been moving at a considerable pace. The attitude of Nuflo de Chaves, for one, had completely changed since Irala's death. In the great stretch of almost untrodden country that lay between Paraguay and Peru he had served Irala with a loyalty which he did not feel himself in the least bound to hand on to Irala's successors—least of all to Vergara, between whom and himself there existed sufficient cause for a feud. For Nuflo de Chaves seems to have played a leading part in the pursuit and death of Abreu—a fact that he supposed would still be actively resented by Vergara, notwithstanding the circumstances which had since arisen to make the latter the son-in-law of the great *conquistador*.

So Nuflo de Chaves, who considered, not without reason, that his work as a pioneer had been second only to that of Irala himself, determined to separate himself from the control of Paraguay and to found a State of his own in these strategically important territories between Peru and Paraguay. It was a conception that in its daring was worthy of any *conquistador*. Such a man as Irala, having once taken the plunge, would undoubtedly have swept all before him. But, unfortunately for himself, Nuflo de Chaves, though he yielded to none in audacity, lacked that broad spark of magnetism which had been so marked a feature in Irala's personality. No doubt, when he announced his intention, the conduct of his men proved a bitter disappointment to Nuflo de Chaves. The great majority refused to see in him an inspired leader: in their eyes he was merely a rebel, to follow whom would be not only perilous

but distinctly unprofitable. So the greater part of Chaves' men made their way back to Asuncion, leaving him with no more than seventy followers.

But in those days seventy Spaniards counted for something, even when apparently stranded in the remote wilds of Central South America, surrounded on all hands by hordes of Indians that only awaited the first definite sign of weakness to fall upon them and slay them to a man, just as they had slain Ayolas' men rather more than twenty years before. As it happened, Nuflo de Chaves soon discovered that he was not to be permitted to work undisturbed even in this remote field which he had selected for his pioneering enterprise. To his surprise and disgust he found himself presently face to face with Andres Manso, a *conquistador* who had arrived from the west with a full licence, granted by no less a personage than Hurtado de Mendoza, Viceroy of Peru, to colonize these very territories. Whether Nuflo de Chaves or Andres Manso were the more disconcerted by this meeting is difficult to determine. Neither would consent to give way to the other, and for a time it looked as though an armed collision might ensue between these two companies of pioneers who had met in this strange fashion so far from the borders of civilization. As good fortune would have it, sober councils prevailed. The leaders, leaving their men on the spot, hastened to Lima to set their respective claims before the Viceroy.

Once arrived at the Viceregal palace, Nuflo de Chaves laid his case before the highest colonial powers with so much ability that in the end—although the result was only arrived at by slow and devious methods—a compromise was arrived at which practically gave him the advantage over Andres Manso's more regular claims. Then with the few men remaining to him Nuflo de Chaves established himself on the spot, and in 1560 founded the town of Santa Cruz

de la Sierra—a city which, according to the geography of the present day, now finds itself in the centre of Bolivia.

The founding of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, although it was effected in this casual and somewhat haphazard fashion, in reality constituted the most important event which had occurred in the south-eastern tide of South American colonization since the establishment of the town of Asuncion. It was the first real link that connected the work of the Spaniards who had entered the continent by way of the River Plate with that of those others who had descended from the north along the Pacific coast. From the point of view of the practical traveller its existence meant the possibility of passing for the first time across the centre of South America without the suffering of all the difficulties, dangers, and uncertainties which had inevitably accompanied every previous journey.

All this, of course, was taking it for granted that the occupants of the new township of Santa Cruz de la Sierra were amicably disposed towards any such travellers. If this were not so, the case of these latter would undoubtedly be considerably worse even than before. A problem connected with questions of this kind now confronted Francisco Ortiz de Vergara. Realizing the need of official support for his post, he determined to make the journey to Lima in person in order that he might obtain the confirmation of his office from the Viceroy. Leaving Asuncion in charge of Juan Ortega and La Guairá in that of Alonso Riquelme, Vergara set out on his mission, accompanied by Bishop Latorre, and Felipe de Caceres, a wily official of intriguing propensities.

Vergara was at first accompanied by an important force of his men; but he would seem to have approached Nuflo de Chaves' new headquarters with

nothing beyond a small escort, for Chaves, doubtless meditating some wild *coup* in his restless mind, caused him to be detained. It was only a sharp command from Peru which set the *Adelantado* of Paraguay free, and on the road to continue his journey.

Judging from the precedent set by Ayolas and Irala, those who journeyed from Paraguay to Peru in the middle of the sixteenth century were destined to meet with ill-fortune. Vergara's experience went to confirm this. Arrived in Lima, the welcome he received there after his long and strenuous journey was unsympathetic. His petition, moreover, concerning his governorship was so coldly regarded that he soon found out that there were other candidates besides himself in the field for that office. After a certain delay, this was handed over to a wealthy nobleman, Juan Ortiz de Zárate, a connection of the Viceroy's, and the unfortunate Vergara found that all that his journey had done for him was to hasten his dismissal from his post, a proceeding that would otherwise have come about in a far more leisurely and roundabout fashion.

After this Vergara figured no longer in the affairs of Paraguay. Zárate, who was destined to play a considerable part in the history of that country, immediately departed for Spain in order that his nomination should be confirmed by the King himself. He appointed as his deputy until he should arrive in person the same Felipe de Caceres who had accompanied Vergara on his westward journey, and who seems to have played a subterranean but not unimportant part in the intrigues which ended in the discomfiture of Vergara. It was perhaps largely as a result of this that he was now returning to Asuncion, having greatly waxed in importance, while his former chief was making his way in dejected abandonment to Spain. Bishop Latorre, who does not seem to have taken an active share in these

secular affairs, was again of the party, among which, it should be said, was a nephew of Zárate's, whose name was fated to become familiar throughout all the south-east of the continent, Juan de Garay.

There seems no doubt that the returning officials and their escort would have had to do with Nuflo de Chaves on their homeward journey, for the ambitions of this lonely *conquistador* were mounting rapidly, and, as they grew, his methods became more reckless. Fate intervened in the shape of marauding Indians, and Nuflo de Chaves met his death in the course of a punitive expedition. But for this it is quite possible that Felipe de Caceres might not have returned safely to Asuncion, as he did at the beginning of 1569, when he took over the governorship of that place.

Even now Asuncion was not destined to enjoy the peace that it might have expected. The undercurrents of intrigue which had been set in motion were easier to start than to arrest. This triumphant return of Felipe de Caceres was bitterly resented by a large number of the settlers who had reason to suspect the rôle of betrayer which that astute functionary had played in Peru, and which was responsible for his occupation of the banished Vergara's post. Bishop Latorre now seems to have entered the arena of material politics for the first time. Being doubtless fully convinced of Caceres' duplicity, he gave his support to the party opposed to the deputy Governor, and Caceres thus found himself opposed, not only by an important number of the inhabitants of Asuncion, but by the secular power of the Church as well, a force which in the sixteenth century no ruler of any kind could afford to overlook.

Asuncion, in fact, was once more entirely given up to faction warfare. It would be wearisome to attempt to follow the various vicissitudes of the

struggle, the details of which so closely resembled those of too many others of the kind from which the youthful State of Paraguay suffered. Bishop Latorre excommunicated Caceres ; Caceres retorted by seizing the cathedral and closing its doors. But the current of public opinion ran with ever-increasing strength against Caceres, until at length his unpopularity attained to such a pitch that he dared not trust himself out of doors without a guard of fifty men.

Even this precaution did not avail him in the end. One day in 1572 as he was on his way to Mass in the midst of his escort 150 of the opposing party set upon his men, who, after a brisk resistance, were routed, leaving Caceres a prisoner in the hands of his enemies. The deputy *Adelantado* was hurried off to prison, where he was chained and closely guarded. Thus was the drama of Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca repeated, with this difference, that, whereas the former was the victim of circumstances which had arisen through no fault of his own, the latter found himself caught in one of the meshes of that net which he had laid for others. The treatment accorded to Caceres, as a matter of fact, appears to have been lenient compared with that which was meted out to the unfortunate Alvar Nuñez ; nevertheless, he was forced to submit to taunts and jeers and a sufficiency of harsh measures.

It will be seen from all this that the inhabitants of Asuncion would seem to have been infected already by the independence-loving atmosphere of the Americas ; for this was the second time that they had intervened in the affairs of Governors appointed by the constituted authorities from without. They demonstrated their views once again when Martin Suárez de Toledo, who at the beginning of the deputy *Adelantado's* rule had been appointed by Caceres as second-in-command, came forward to

take up his post. They then pointed out to him that, although they accepted him as Governor of Paraguay, it was only as a *locum tenens* for Zárate, to whom, on his arrival from Spain, the office must be immediately surrendered.

On this understanding Suárez took charge of the government of Paraguay, and one of his first acts was to rid himself of the imprisoned Caceres, sending that disappointed official back to Spain.

There was now leisure to extend the ramifications of colonization, and in this Zárate's nephew, Juan de Garay, rapidly proved himself an unusually able pioneer. The trend was now towards the south again, and in the middle of the year 1573 this *conquistador* founded the city of Santa Fé de la Vera Cruz, which now finds itself in Argentina. By a curious coincidence on the very day that witnessed the establishment of this town, another pioneer, Geronimo Luis Cabrera, was founding that of Córdoba del Tucumán to the west.

This latter pioneer, who represented the Spanish stream of invasion from the north-west, now came boldly down to the banks of the Paraná itself, and began to establish a new settlement at Sancti Spiritus on the ruins of the old fort which had been constructed by the *conquistadores* of the south-east, and had been maintained by them until their abandonment of the lower settlements and their retreat upstream to Paraguay. Juan de Garay, however, who had likewise made his way to the south, protested energetically against this move, claiming that Sancti Spiritus was in the province of Rio de la Plata, and that therefore its occupation by any others than those concerned in the colonization of the great river lands was an act of aggression. The dispute was referred to the royal audience in Peru, who eventually decided in favour of Juan de Garay, as representing the colonists of the Rio de la Plata.

It was a fortunate circumstance for Juan Ortiz de Zárate that on his return from Spain to his province his nephew, Juan de Garay, happened to be within reasonable distance of the great estuary. Zárate's mission to the Court of Spain had been entirely successful. Not so his subsequent voyage to South America. In the course of this so battered and driven were his ships by the sea that out of the six hundred men that the *Adelantado* was bringing with him as reinforcements no fewer than three hundred perished before the remnants of his fleet caught sight of the low alluvial shores of the River Plate.

There was no respite for the men even when, worn out by the hardships and terrors of the voyage, they betook themselves on shore. Here they were immediately beset by the implacable Charrúa Indians, and the numbers which the unfortunate expedition lost in the course of these attacks has been estimated at between 80 and 120. Indeed, but for the timely arrival of Juan de Garay with his force of seasoned men, it is likely enough that Zárate and his followers would have left their bones on the level pastures of the estuary, as many a Spaniard had done before them.

As it was, the combined Spanish parties inflicted a severe defeat on the hostile Indians, and, with the assistance of Garay, Zárate eventually arrived in safety at his capital after a journey from Europe which rivalled in hardship any of those undertaken by his predecessors in the days when the waters of the Southern Atlantic and of the Rio de la Plata had only been cloven by a few of the most daring Spanish keels.

With the arrival in Asuncion of Zárate, the royal *Adelantado* himself, it might have been thought that all would now be smooth sailing in connection with the development of Paraguay. But this was far

from proving the case. In many respects Zárate was sufficiently able. It was, for instance, undoubtedly a wise stroke of policy to send that most efficient *conquistador* Juan de Garay to take full charge of the region he had settled at Santa Fé. But in some other respects he appears to have shown less judgment, and a radical measure which he undertook in 1575, cancelling all the decrees and arrangements of Suárez, appears to have rendered him unpopular—so much so, indeed, in some quarters that his death, which occurred in 1576, is said to have been the result of poisoning. Decidedly, with the notable exception of Irala, the rule of the *Adelantados* of Paraguay, appeared destined to be short!

So far as the affairs of its Government were concerned, the outlook for Paraguay was more gloomy than ever. When the terms of Zárate's will came to be spread abroad, they revealed a degree of family affection in the late Governor which had overcome any grain of political foresight that he might have possessed. The governorship of Paraguay was vested in his only daughter, Doña Juana, who was at the time residing in Peru. A clause in her father's will, that is to say, appointed as Governor the man who should succeed in winning her hand.

Doña Juana, on her mother's side, was a descendant of the famous Inca, Atahualpa, and Zárate in his last testament had made it plain enough that no suitor would be acceptable unless his lineage were reasonably exalted. In the meantime Juan de Garay and another of Zárate's nephews, Diego Ortiz de Zárate y Mendieta, were appointed as the girl's guardians. Until her marriage had appointed the regular *Adelantado*, moreover, the governorship of Paraguay was to be left in the hands of Mendieta, who was to be assisted in his task by a certain Martín Duré.

No choice of a temporary Governor could have been more unfortunate. The only reasonable action committed by Mendieta during his short but eventful tenure of office was the confirmation of Garay's governorship of Santa Fé. With the exception of this, the conduct of this utterly vain, vicious, and foolish person very soon aroused the active resentment of the Spanish inhabitants of Paraguay. Having dismissed Martin Duré from his advisory post, his arrogance and misgovernment provoked into active rebellion a people who had never shown themselves backward in asserting their own views. The result was short and sharp, since Mendieta had so alienated the sympathies of his people that practically no following whatever was left to him. Mendieta, having been made prisoner, was sent back to Spain to be judged by the Court of the Indies—the third Governor, it should be remarked, who had already been thus sent away from the country in the short history of Paraguay.

Mendieta's predecessors in misfortune, however, had at least reached Spain in safety, if not in comfort. Such was not Mendieta's fate. The behaviour of this unfortunate young man appears so to have incensed the sailors of the ship which was bearing him to Spain that they landed him on the Brazilian coast—where he was discovered and slain by the Indians—and continued their voyage. I have no record of what explanation the sailors gave, after their arrival in Spain, concerning the absence of their passenger. In those days of perilous travel the matter would have been considerably easier than now!

All this occurred in the absence of Juan de Garay, who, as one of his cousin Doña Juana's guardians, had proceeded to Peru in order to be at hand to watch over her interests in the fateful position in which she found herself. It was as well for the

lady's sake that so staunch a champion was on the spot ; for numberless claimants were sprouting up from all sides for the hand of a lady whose dowry was a land which was known to be more or less the size of half Europe ! There was scarcely a *conquistador* or official in all Peru, of whatever age or degree, who did not prink himself with care and rack his brain with toil to win the admiration of an heiress such as this. The Viceroy himself entered the lists, to throw in his overwhelming weight in favour of one of his intimate friends. Having written a letter to Garay acquainting him with his desires, which were in reality commands, he awaited the maturing of his plans with a confidence that was destined to be rudely shattered.

Indeed, when the Viceroy learned that, in flagrant contempt of his wishes, Doña Juana had been quietly married to the man of her choice, Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón, his anger knew no bounds. His wrath, moreover, was not diminished when he heard how Juan de Garay had graced the ceremony with his approval and his presence, and how the grateful Aragón had voluntarily handed over to Juan de Garay the governorship of Paraguay.

A genuine love match of this kind had not entered in the least into the calculations of the highest imperial official in South America. The marriage had now taken place—an unalterable fact. But the mortified Viceroy was determined to teach Juan de Garay a lesson. So he sent a body of men to arrest the official who had been bold enough to oppose the Viceroy's will. Garay, however, was not to be caught napping. He was already well on his way home when the officials came up with him. The result was that he arrested them—thus reversing the intended process—and eventually sent them back to the still more deeply mortified Viceroy.

As fate would have it, Juan de Garay arrived at

Santa Fé only a few days after the ill-fated Mendieta had been sent down the river and out of the country. On hearing this news he proceeded at once to Asuncion, where the ovation with which the inhabitants received him set the public seal of approval on his nomination as *Adelantado* at the hands of Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón.

CHAPTER VII

EVENTS PRECEDING THE SEPARATION OF PARAGUAY FROM RIO DE LA PLATA

Situation of Paraguay when Juan de Garay became Governor—Nature and influence of the various settlements—Relations with the Guaranís—Melgarejo assists Garay in the development of the country—Attempts in the Chaco—Early mission work among the Indians—The founding of Buenos Aires—Significance of that centre—Death of Juan de Garay—He is succeeded by Alonso de Vera y Aragón—Arrival in Paraguay of Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón—Hernando Arias de Saavedra, a Paraguayan by birth, becomes *Adelantado*—An able administrator and notable warrior—Fernando de Zárate arrives from Spain to take up the governorship—A succession of *Adelantados*—Hernandarias is at length officially appointed to the post—His colonizing enterprise—Warlike feats—A shrewd move in Uruguay—Hernandarias, after his government has been interrupted by the appointment of Diego Martínez Negrón, resumes the post of *Adelantado*—Difficulties in the administration of the great territory—The province of Paraguay is divided into two—Death of Hernandarias—Geography of the provinces of Paraguay and Rio de la Plata—Respective physical and industrial characteristics—Amenities of Paraguay—Distinctions between the inhabitants of the northern and southern stretches of the great river system—Docility of the Guaraní—The *encomiendas*.

WITH the advent to power of Juan de Garay the Spanish colonization in the south-east of the continent received an extraordinary impulse. No man, indeed, could have been better fitted to carry on the work which Irala had begun, and which had been interrupted by the innumerable jealousies and intrigues of those subordinates which less determined hands had been unable to control.

Juan de Garay, indeed, possessed a resolution equal to that of Irala, and a colonizing genius that was

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probably even greater. In one sense, moreover, he had an easier field to work, as when he assumed the governorship of Paraguay the map of great forests and stretches of open country was no longer totally unknown and a complete blank so far as Spanish settlements were concerned. With the assistance of his bold lieutenant, Nuflo de Chaves, Irala is said to have founded no fewer than thirteen townships both to the east and north-west of Asuncion in the course of his governorship.

It may well be difficult to understand how all this was effected when the ridiculously small number of men at the disposal of Irala is taken into consideration. There is no doubt that these sixteenth-century Paraguayan centres of civilization would have made small appeal in the way of urban importance to critical twentieth-century eyes. The settlements that sprang up in the natural clearings of the forest seldom consisted of anything beyond a few primitive huts, inhabited by some half-dozen Spaniards with their Guaraní wives and children.

Each of these settlements, however, represented an influence that rapidly had its effect on the surrounding country. Whatever might be the sentiments of the tribes to the west of the great river, the Guaranís, as a whole, were no longer hostile. The mere flourishing of such remote and tiny Spanish centres in their midst is sufficient proof of this. As time went on, and the numbers of these small townships increased, the Guaranís began to accept the presence of the European as a matter of course, and to regard him first of all in the light of a protector and subsequently in the duller glow of a somewhat severe taskmaster.

It has already been seen that when Garay began to govern the province some more important centres had already come into being, such as that of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, founded by Nuflo de Chaves,

and Santa Fé, that he himself had established. Thus sufficient had already been achieved to afford an admirable basis of action for a man who was determined to attain to still greater things.

Juan de Garay lost no time in starting on the work that lay before him. He found an able assistant in Melgarejo, a brother of that Vergara who had once temporarily held the governorship of Paraguay. Melgarejo was now to Juan de Garay what Nuflo de Chaves had been to Irala, and what Garay himself had been to Zárate. Setting out to the east and crossing the mountain range of the Caáguazu, Melgarejo founded in 1576 the town of Villa Rica del Espíritu Santo, which is described as being two leagues from the eastern bank of the Alto Paraná River, and was thus far removed from the site of the modern Paraguayan town of Villa Rica.

At this period, too, some less successful attempts at settlements were made in the Chaco, whose forests, swamps, and hostile Indians resisted the approach of the white man with characteristic obstinacy. Thus, although the banks of the mysterious and elusive River Pilcomayo were explored up to a certain point, no material result was obtained from the expedition. The failure of such attempts as these, however, did not in the least affect the progress in Paraguay proper—that is to say, on the left bank of the river, where lived the various tribes of the less vindictive Guaranís.

It is at this period that we first hear of some material results of the labours of the priests who, with their headquarters at Asuncion, had begun a certain amount of mission work among the Guaranís. It is said that in 1880, in the neighbourhood of the Alto Paraná River, two towns were constructed in which were collected a large number of Indians who had been induced to accept the Christian religion by Fathers Alonso and Bolanos. In view of the

later important events of this kind, the move was a sufficiently important one. But at the time it created comparatively little notice, largely owing to an enterprise on a very much larger scale, which came to a head at just about the same period.

It had long been clear to Garay's mind that for the proper development of this great colony of his a port on the shores of the estuary itself of the great river system was essential. Irala in his day had been equally convinced of this necessity, and had bequeathed to his successors emphatic advice on the subject. Juan de Garay, as a matter of fact, seeing eye to eye with his great predecessor, had no need of any such stimulus. It was with the idea of establishing strategical ramifications on the lower reaches of the stream that he was journeying in the south at the time of his uncle Zárate's arrival at the shores of the Rio de la Plata—a circumstance that, as has been explained, was fortunate for Zárate.

With this object in view, he had been extending his influence little by little towards the south, until he decided that the time had arrived for him to strike out boldly. Then, sailing down-stream with a powerful force of men to a point on the right bank, below the confluence of the Paraná and the Uruguay, he founded the town of Buenos Aires in 1580.

The importance of this move was realized and applauded at the time. Nevertheless there were very few inhabitants of Asuncion in the sixteenth century—or in the seventeenth either, for the matter of that—who could foresee the enormous influence which this port on the southern side of the estuary was to wield over the entire river system. At the time of its founding Buenos Aires was naturally regarded by Asuncion as a most useful subsidiary town that should supply that link between Paraguay, the ocean, and Europe, the absence of which had been so acutely

felt. None dreamed that by the remorseless and unbreakable laws of development this small new urban venture, plumped down in the midst of the treeless pastures among the hostile Indians, would one day swell to a size and importance that could not fail to stand between Asuncion itself and the light of the outer world, thus overshadowing the first capital of the south-east of the continent. To the Spaniards of the sixteenth century in these regions Asuncion, their centre, meant all things. But, had they hesitated from reasons of sixteenth-century sentiment, the stupendous growth on the banks of the estuary, though it might have begun later, would have been as certain and inevitable!

Having seen that Buenos Aires was firmly established, Juan de Garay remained for a considerable time in the south, busily occupied with the opening up of the vast stretches of pasture on which were found grazing many thousands of the descendants of those few horses which Pedro de Mendoza had brought with him on his original expedition and which had been turned loose on the plain. Unfortunately for the provinces of the Rio de la Plata, his career was cut short. In 1584 he was surprised by the Minuanes Indians, and, together with forty of his men, was slain.

Had Juan de Garay lived for a score of years longer there is little doubt that the early history of Paraguay would have had to be written very differently, and that many pages of disorder would have been altered to a story of active progress. As it was, his loss proved practically irreparable. Once again in the course of its short but tormented history Paraguay found itself faced with the problem of who should govern it, and, incidentally, of how it should be governed.

The matter was referred to Spain, where resided Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón, who all this time,

although he had handed over the governorship to Garay, had actually retained the title of *Adelantado*. Appealed to to indicate a successor, he appointed his nephew, Alonso de Vera y Aragón. The governorship of this latter was signalled by some attempts at forming settlements in the Chaco, ventures which were undertaken at the instigation of Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón, but which proved as fruitless as any of the previous enterprises in this direction. In 1587, the *Adelantado* himself, Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón, came out from Spain, apparently with considerable reluctance. His principal achievement was the founding of the town of San Juan de Vera de las Siete Corrientes at a point just to the south of the confluence of the Paraguay and the Alto Paraná rivers. His foresight in this is fully justified by the importance of the modern Argentine city of Corrientes, now just to the south of the Paraguayan frontier.

Four years, however, sufficed to prove to Juan Torres de Vera y Aragón that the cares and hardships of the personal governorship of a State as new as that of Paraguay were little to his taste. He would seem to have been an amiable personage of sufficiently easy-going tendencies, so it was doubtless with some relief that in 1591 he bade farewell to the ruddy soil, palms, and trackless forests of Paraguay, to set sail for the ease and olives of the older and statelier Spain.

It was left to the inhabitants of Paraguay to choose their own *Adelantado*—a procedure in which they were probably sufficiently well versed by this time. Their choice was a significant one, for the man whom they elected to be their Governor was Hernando Arias de Saavedra, who, the son of Suárez de Toledo, was a Paraguayan by birth. This occurred in 1591, and it is a little curious to remark that, although the centenary of the discovery of America was already

at hand, this was the first occasion in the course of all this time that one of the governorships of the Spanish provinces throughout the two continents, from Mexico southwards, had been held by an American-born man, one moreover, who knew practically nothing of the Court of Spain, and was thus debarred from its favours.

Nevertheless, the electors of Paraguay had chosen wisely. Hernando Arias de Saavedra ranks as the third great man to govern that province. His fortune and circumstances resembled those of Irala rather than those of Garay. As the chosen of the people, Hernandarias, by which name the new *Adelantado* was popularly known, enjoyed the support of the Paraguayans throughout. On the other hand, possessing no influence at Court, he was subject, just as Irala in his time had been, to those acts of neglect and slights which were frequently enough the lot of one not in favour with the grandees of Spain.

Hernandarias very soon proved himself to be not only an able administrator but a most notable warrior. His personal prowess in the field has been the subject of innumerable stories, and of a wealth of legend, of a kind which has frequently approached the fantastic. It seems certain enough, however, that during his first period of government he performed some notable feats in subduing an uprising of the Indians. Among these was a single combat with a gigantic and far-famed *cacique*, whom Hernandarias, after a fierce duel, slew.

But Hernandarias' gifts were not only of a war-like order. Before his governorship had been in being for many months he had founded several townships to the east of Asuncion, including Tarei and Caáguazú. He paid keen attention, too, to the new industry which had now sprung up in Paraguayan tea—the yerba maté which grew in the virgin forests, and of which more will be heard later. His firm

hand, indeed, was steering a smooth course, and the future once again began to grow rose-coloured.

Nevertheless, at the end of two years Hernandarias had to stand aside, and watch another occupy his place, and govern with far less wisdom than he. Fernando de Zárate had arrived upon the scene, bearing his royal nomination as *Adelantado* of Paraguay. Zárate died in 1595, and was succeeded by his lieutenant, Bartolomé Sandoval Ocampo. Very shortly after his accession to the post this officer was killed while leading an expedition against the Guaycurús, and he in his turn was succeeded by Juan Ramirez de Velasco. This latter's uneventful period of government came to an end in 1598, and, after Hernandarias had been called to power to act as stopgap, Diego Rodríguez Valdez de la Banda became *Adelantado* in July 1599.

Even now this extraordinarily rapid succession of Governors was not at an end. Valdez de la Banda had scarcely had time to do more than grasp the reins of his office—and, incidentally, to fall foul of the ecclesiastical body, represented by Bishop Vazquez de Liaño—when he died in the town of Santa Fé. His second in command, Francés de Beaumont y Navarra, stepped into the breach, and had governed for eighteen months or so, when word was brought to Paraguay that the royal authorities in Spain had at length confirmed the people's election of Hernandarias as *Adelantado* of Paraguay.

For the third time Hernandarias assumed this office, and on this occasion he acted with even greater energy than before. His judgment, indeed, would seem to have yielded to his enthusiasm; for he daringly sailed down with a force of men right through the "roaring forties" to the Straits of Magellan.

Attacked by the Indians, every man of his expedition who remained alive fell a prisoner into the hands of the southern savages. Hernandarias had

been captured with the rest, but that resourceful leader succeeded in making his escape and in bringing to the spot a second force of Spaniards, who liberated their comrades, and returned with them to the sunnier regions of the Rio de la Plata.

It will be seen from all this that Hernandarias was no ordinary man. Undismayed by the ill-success of this southern venture, he next led his men into the country of the Banda Oriental, or Uruguay, where the fierce tribesmen of the Charrúas had, until then, resisted all intercourse with the white man. Here Hernandarias met with foemen even more worthy of his metal. In the first fight with these formidable savages he lost a great number of his followers, and in the second he would appear to have been practically the only survivor out of a company of five hundred. This, although it did not lower Hernandarias' spirit by one jot, had the effect of steadying his policy. After much reflection he came to the conclusion that the conquest of Uruguay by force of arms would cost him far more men than he could afford to lose, since it was clear now that the Charrúas of Uruguay were among the bravest even of the indomitable warrior tribes of the great estuary.

This fact once acknowledged, the measures undertaken by the *Adelantado* reveal the remarkable elasticity of his mind. He determined that Uruguay should be conquered in quite another fashion—by far surer, if slower, methods. With this aim he introduced into the country two widely differing sets of allies—missionaries and cattle! The missionaries were to tame the minds of the fierce Charrúas, and the cattle were to run free on the rich pastures of the Banda Oriental and to multiply—just as horses and cattle were multiplying in the neighbourhood of Buenos Aires—in order that their herds might be in readiness for the colonist when the time arrived for him to enter the country. In the end both these

measures proved eminently successful ; but of course much water flowed down the Uruguay River before their full development was brought about. In the meantime Hernandarias was perfectly content to plant the seed, even if the fruits were to be reaped only by his successors.

This great *Adelantado*, as a matter of fact, was destined to have one more successor during the term of his own frequently interrupted governorship. In 1609 the Spanish authorities—who apparently had a rooted prejudice against leaving well alone—appointed Diego Martinez Negrón to be *Adelantado* of Paraguay. In the sturdy character of Hernandarias there seems to have been no room for that selfish and rebellious spirit which was characteristic in the disappointed of that violent age. Again he stood back, and with admirable fortitude took up his modest position in the background while Negrón ruled.

But Hernandarias' turn was to come again, and with it some of the greatest opportunities of his career. The shortness of life, or at all events of the tenure of office, was somewhat remarkable in those whose governmental interventions continually interrupted Hernandarias' rule. At the beginning of 1615 Negrón died at Buenos Aires, and, although he was succeeded for a few months by his lieutenant, Francisco Gonzalez de Santa Cruz, the Court of Spain appointed Hernandarias to be *Adelantado* in that same year.

This time the appointment was definite and permanent, and Hernandarias was at last permitted to give his uninterrupted energies to the province of which he was in charge. Under his wise guardianship its development proceeded. Nevertheless, its rate of progress, the *Adelantado* urged, was not so rapid as it should be. Hernandarias represented strongly to the Court of Spain that this progress was hampered by the mere bulk of Paraguay.

How much truth there was in this contention the most cursory glance at a map will show. Paraguay of the early seventeenth century comprised the entire south-eastern portion of South America. Explained by the geographical divisions of the twentieth century, this included all Argentina, Uruguay, and nearly all Paraguay, and in addition to this, parts of Bolivia and Brazil. It is true that at the beginning of the seventeenth century a very small part of this vast region had been explored, and that, of course, only a much smaller part had been settled. Towns were few, and the distances which separated them may be judged from the fact that Asuncion is a thousand miles by river from Buenos Aires! And the stretch of country that extends in Paraguay to the north of Asuncion, and in Argentina to the south of Buenos Aires, is more than three times as great as the distance which separates the two towns!

That all these thousands of leagues, sparsely populated as they were, should be politically lumped together into a single province was clearly unreasonable. Had Hernandarias been a less conscientious Governor, he might have been expected to leave affairs as they were, since it is reasonable to suppose that, the larger the territory governed, the greater were the opportunities of profit. But Hernandarias was swayed by no considerations of that kind. So strongly did he urge the cutting in twain of this gigantic and unwieldy infant of empire that the authorities in Spain were eventually induced to agree to this.

Thus in '1617 it was decreed that the Province of Paraguay should be divided into two, and that the southern half should be known as the Province of the Rio de la Plata. Shortly after this had been effected Hernandarias resigned his office, and went to live in retirement at Santa Fé, where he died in 1634, as a modern Paraguayan historian has it, "poor, but with much glory." Glory was a mode-

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rately common possession in those days ; but it was a rare occurrence for one who had governed a Spanish South American province for as long as Hernandarias had ruled Paraguay to die poor !

The provinces of Rio de la Plata and Paraguay were now entirely distinct the one from the other. Nevertheless, the frontiers which divided the two would seem to have been seldom understood by English writers, even down to a period as late as the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹ The result was a confusing amount of very loose nomenclature, the term Rio de la Plata frequently being made to serve for Southern Paraguay, and that of Paraguay being held to cover the northern parts of the province of Rio de la Plata, which latter, of course, is to-day the Argentine Republic. Very roughly speaking, the frontiers which divided the province of the Rio de la Plata from that of Paraguay, or Guairá, as it was then also called, were the same as those which now separate Argentina from Paraguay.

This readjustment of territory, as a matter of fact, was one of the most important of the colonizing steps of the south-east of the continent. The move, after all, was only in conformity with the physical and climatic conditions of the two provinces. Regarded from these important points of view, the two were never intended to form a single country, although, as neighbours, the one was admirably adapted to supply that which the other lacked.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the province of the Rio de la Plata had already come to be acknowledged as one of the finest pastoral countries in the world. Countless herds of cattle, companies of horses, and flocks of sheep wandered across the face of its level green stretches, having multiplied in the most amazing fashion from out of the few head which had been originally turned

¹ See Appendix.

loose on the plains. And as these continually increased, the race of wild riders, the virile gauchos, came into existence, to dominate this new wealth of livestock and to gallop across the flat *campo*, on which they might ride for league after league without seeing so much as a single tree. Sun-swept and wind-swept, moreover, the climate of the Rio de la Plata province was what might have been expected from the nature of the gaucho. There the summer's heat was wont to be tempered by the winter's frost, and a biting blast would invigorate the jaded plainsman when autumn gave way to the short winter of the Pampa.

Very different from this was the landscape of Parāguay, where one half of the country was dense forest, and where, in the other, alternate woodland glades and open stretches marked a land that was generally undulating, and here and there mountainous. The soft Paraguayan air and the rich Paraguayan soil, moreover, readily gave back a most surprising return for the seeds that had been entrusted to the land from abroad. Once introduced, the oranges and subtropical plants and fruits flourished in so marked a fashion that very soon such towns as Asuncion, Ciudad Real, Villa Rica, and Jerez—the four principal urban centres at the beginning of the seventeenth century—became most delightfully embowered in orchards, vineyards, fields of sugarcane and banana, and all the remainder of such abundant growths. In the River Plata mankind had to gallop for its living; in Paraguay a few seeds, carelessly flung, raised a harvest of fruit that was generously ready to drop into the outstretched hand.

From the time of the first advent of the Spaniard into the south-east of the continent, the great difference between the countries of Paraguay and Rio de la Plata had been evidenced by the types of aboriginal humanity, by which they were respectively

inhabited. Thus, while the fierce Indians of the south seized the horses which the Spaniards allowed to roam over the plains, and made themselves among the most expert horsemen in the world, chiefly in order that they might attack the intruders with still greater fury than before, the Guaraní, after the first struggle to preserve his land from the invader, consented to dwell in peace side by side with the white man, and even to assist him in his labours to open up the country.

So tractable, indeed, did the Guaraní prove in this respect that it was not long before he began to pay the price of the human imperfections and greed of the new-comers. The system of the *encomienda* introduced by Irala has already been referred to. But this, although unpleasant enough, was in the first instance by no means the most severe hardship to be suffered by the unfortunate natives of Paraguay. Even as far back as 1526 Diego Garcia, in his expedition up the great rivers, is said to have captured a number of Guaranís, whom he carried away with him as slaves. This procedure, moreover, had been repeated at intervals on a larger scale, until the horrors of a regularly organized slave-trade seemed to threaten the Guaranís.

All this, of course, was in addition to the inevitable wrongs inflicted by the establishment of the *encomiendas* in Paraguay itself. It was in Hernandarias' rule that an active intervention in these matters was undertaken by the Jesuits, who sent out to Paraguay a number of missionaries with the view of opening up relations with the Guaranís in their own forests. The ultimate consequences of this move were so momentous, and had so much influence on the general history of Paraguay that a separate chapter must be devoted to the Jesuit Missions.

CHAPTER VIII

THE JESUIT MISSION ESTABLISHMENTS

A subject of much controversy—Events which led up to the founding of the Jesuit Government—Early Franciscan missionaries—Arrival of the first Jesuits—Hardships experienced by the pioneers—Constitution of the State—Rigid seclusion of the community—Situation of the mission country—Features of its thirty towns—Uniformity of their pattern—General plan of each—Description of the main buildings—The Tacurú stone—Method of fortification—Administration of the Jesuit towns—Guaraní officials—Their titles and duties—Matters of costume—The doctrine of equality—Questions of labour—Health of the Guaranís—Administrative ability of the missionaries—Yerba maté gathering and cattle-breeding—Numbers of the livestock on the Jesuit farms—Agricultural pursuits—How labour was made attractive—Various industries—Guaraní craftsmen and artists—Astonishing scope of their occupations—Actual status of the Jesuits as Governors—The division of property—Economic success of the missionary establishments—How the Guaraní's day was mapped out—Description of some religious ceremonies—The procession of Corpus—Allegations against the Jesuits—Practical results achieved by their missions—Their justification—The industrial side of the enterprise—Importance of the mission produce—The Jesuits as a commercial force—The *Mamelucos* and the mission settlements—Successful resistance of the Indian militia—Relations of the Jesuits with their neighbours—Expulsion of the Jesuits—Fruitless attempts to continue their settlements by others—End of the State.

THE Jesuit missionary settlements in Paraguay have for some centuries now been the subject of discussion, which has from time to time waxed sufficiently bitter. Curiously enough, these arguments have been concerned, not only with the ethics of colonization, and with the rights and wrongs of the Jesuit Fathers, the Indians, and the Spanish colonists. Many questions of actual fact have been in dispute, and as many

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more remain only dimly solved to this day. Briefly the contending claims were these. The Jesuits maintained that their work in Paraguay was for the benefit of the Guaranís, whom they desired to protect from the harsh oppression they suffered at the hands of the Spaniards. The Spanish colonists, on the other hand, alleged that this was merely a pretext snatched by the Jesuits in order that they might arrogate to themselves the labour of the Guaranís, and thus grow fat upon those services which by right ought to have been at the disposal of the *conquistadores*.

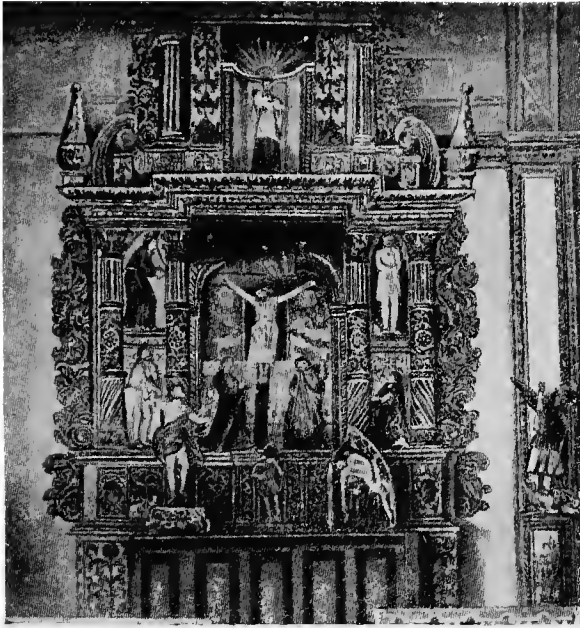
Before attempting, however, to enter into any of these controversial points it would be as well to glance hurriedly at the events which led up to the establishment of the Jesuit Government and to the founding of the famous thirty towns on which the Guaraní converts lived their rigidly ordered lives.

The Jesuits, as a matter of fact, were by no means the first missionaries to enter the Paraguayan field. Various priests had come out in the train of the earliest *conquistadores*, and from out of the groups of the subsequent clergy a certain number of daring and devoted men had ventured among the Indians, laying here and there foundations of a future civilization. The first missionaries who went out into the forests to preach among the Guaranís are said to have been the Franciscan Fathers Armenta and Lebrón (which latter name is probably a Spanish rendering of the French patronymic Lebrun), whom Alvar Nuñez Cabeza de Vaca seems to have found already established in Santa Catalina in 1541. But such efforts, noteworthy as they were, occurred on a scale that was entirely diminutive compared with the extraordinary developments of the subsequent missionary scheme of the Jesuits.

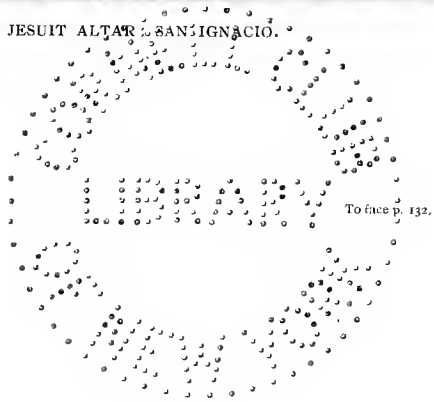
It was in 1588 that the first Jesuits arrived in

Paraguay, where they met with a warm welcome at the hands of the colonists, between whom and the missionary Fathers a bitter feud was eventually destined to spring up. These early workers made a cosmopolitan company, counting among their number Spaniards, Portuguese, Italians, and Scots, besides other nationalities. Setting dauntlessly out into the forests of Paraguay, they passed from tribe to tribe, making converts of the Indians in a fashion sufficiently wholesale to receive some condemnation at the hands of their detractors. However much or however little the average Guaraní may have understood of his actual reception into the Christian faith, the perils and hardships of the early missionaries remained the same, and these were undoubtedly sufficient to tax the resolution of any but the most single-hearted pioneer.

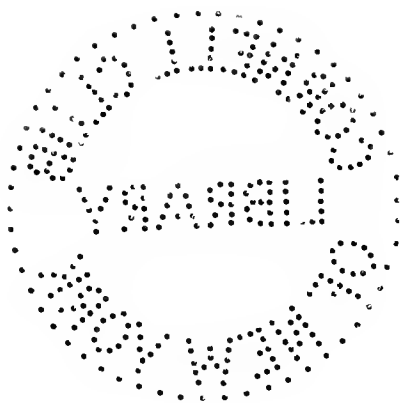
Little by little, as more Jesuits arrived from abroad to assist in the work, and as the numbers of the Guaraní converts grew, began the definite foundations of that society of the Paraguayan missions which was feared and hated by those Spaniards outside its borders who imagined, rightly or wrongly, that its presence was the cause of much material wrong to themselves. This country of the Jesuits had every right to be known as a State. It administered its own laws and authority, and was subject to none of the local colonial officials, a circumstance that undoubtedly gave rise to numerous outbursts of jealousy. It was, moreover, rigidly shut off from the outer world, and, although travellers were permitted to pass, closely watched, from one of its towns to another, none but the Jesuit administrators were in the least conversant with the affairs of the community, and with the events which were happening in the State. It is this latter circumstance, of course, which has been responsible for so many of the disputes concerning actual facts—arguments



JESUIT ALTAR OF SAN IGNACIO.



To face p. 132.



which have arisen both during the period of the Jesuit dominion and after the expulsion of the Fathers. But in any case no dispute has ever arisen concerning the fact that this land of the Jesuits was a self-governing State, whether it be known by any of the various names which have been applied to it—a republic, an empire, or a socialistic community pure and simple.

The mission country of the Jesuits was situated amid those delightful tracts of land where the modern Republics of Paraguay, Brazil, and Uruguay now meet. From north to south it lay, roughly, between the parallels of 25° and 30°, and thus it comprised a stretch of territory the open spaces of which may rightfully be called "the Garden of South America." We may now survey this spot in the height of its prosperity, beginning with some aspects of its thirty towns, which, of course, include some of the most salient features of all.

The Jesuits of Paraguay were nothing if not consistent, and their policy was eloquently shown in the construction of their towns. None of their converts, decreed the missionaries, should be permitted to outdo his, or her, neighbour in the matter of dress and outward appearance. The priests did their best to ensure equality and the absence of heartburning by a regulation that every Indian should be garbed exactly the same, both in material and cut, as were his brethren and sisters. This same theory was made to apply in the case of the dwelling-places of the Guaránis. It has been remarked that these resembled each other as closely as one drop of water resembles another. "The arrangement of these," says Alvear, who wrote from personal experience, "is so uniform that when you have seen one you may say that you have seen them all. Some tiny freak of architecture or some little touch of private adornment—that is the only difference that may be remarked. Essen-

tially they are all the same, and this has been brought to such a pitch that those who travel through them are apt to begin to wonder if they are not being accompanied by the same enchanted town, the eyes of a lynx being needed to tell the difference between the inhabitants and clothes of one of these places and those of another. The plan of them all is rectangular, the streets stretching from north to south and from east to west, and the Plaza, which is always roomy and level, in the middle. The church, college, and cemetery occupy that side of the Plaza that faces north."

This description affords, at all events, a rough and general outline of one of the Jesuit towns. It leaves, however, many details of interest to be filled in. The aspect of one of these places, it may be said, was extremely pleasant, the Jesuits, who understood these matters very thoroughly, having introduced orange-groves and other such growths with consummate skill among the buildings. The church would be a most solidly built edifice, containing three or five naves, as the case might be. Its interior, moreover, was richly decorated by the Indian craftsmen and workers in metal, and here, one imagines, some distinguishing originality must have occurred, although no doubt this was avoided as much as possible.

Attached to the college, which was usually a very large building, were the workshops and storehouses of the town, which were thus under the immediate eye of the Fathers. The buildings in which the Indians themselves were accommodated were very extensive but low-roofed structures, being some sixty yards in length and ten in breadth. The majority of the buildings were contrived of great blocks of the locally found *Tacurú* stone, which for the purpose of cutting possesses the very unusual advantage of being comparatively soft when first taken from the

earth, hardening little by little as it is exposed to the air. The magnificent woods of the neighbouring forests were frequently employed in addition, and the ubiquitous *adobe* was made to serve here and there. All the buildings were very solidly tiled.

So much for the general description of one of those Jesuit towns of which only the ruins now remain, all but swallowed up by the encroaching verdure of the forest. In their neighbourhood was nearly always a stone-lined spring, welling out into a pool planted about with palms, and thus presenting a most agreeable appearance. Near this would be the chapels of the "Stations of the Cross."

Finally, it must be said that many of these centres which were most exposed to the raids of the hostile Brazilian inhabitants of São Paulo were strongly fortified, being surrounded by a deep ditch and a solid wall of hardened mud.

Each of these towns was in charge of two Jesuits, not too large a number, it must be admitted, to have control of a town the population of which was probably about four thousand. These, however, were assisted by numerous Guaraní officials, and their management appears to have been conducted with exemplary smoothness.

Having now obtained a glimpse of the plan and aspects of a Jesuit mission town, it is time to consider some attributes that are at least as important—its inhabitants. Proceeding downwards along its hierarchy from the two Jesuit Fathers in charge—who were responsible only to a superior of their own order who travelled continually to and fro between the various towns—we arrive at the higher Guaraní officials. At the head of these was a *cacique*, who in a sense acted as Governor of the place, although his office was under the closest supervision of the two Jesuits in charge. There were also *corregidores*,

regidores, alcaldes, and many other officials, whose posts corresponded more or less with those held by Spaniards in the somewhat cumbrous municipal scheme that obtained in the peninsula.

In order that the position of these dusky dignitaries should be properly emphasized they were raised above the law which decreed perfect equality of dress for all, and on feast days their uniforms were wont to be sufficiently gorgeous to distinguish them from the rest.

The dress of the rank and file of the inhabitants was simple to a degree. The material employed for that of both men and women was white cotton. The men wore a species of shirt above short breeches, while the women were dressed in petticoats, above which was an armless chemise known as the *typoi*. The hair was plaited into one or two tails, and was generally adorned with a crimson flower. To such a degree had this doctrine of similarity of costume become implanted into the minds of the Indians that, after the expulsion of the Jesuits, those who succeeded the missionaries—and endeavoured in vain to carry on the work—were astonished at the tenacity with which they clung to it. Desirous of rooting out entirely the influence of the Jesuits, they assiduously pointed out to the Indians the advantages of individuality in dress. But it was a very long time before one of these could bring himself to distinguish his person from the rest by means of any of those added touches which are usually so eagerly sought after by the dusky races.

The supposition that Satan finds work for idle hands to do was acknowledged by the Jesuits with an enthusiasm on which was founded the principal tenets of their communities. In the mission towns any risk of this kind was quite infinitesimal! Indeed, one of the charges levelled by the opponents of the missionaries has been to the effect that they

harnessed the Guaranís from the age of five years upwards to an endless and grinding routine of toil. Indeed, in estimating the benefits derived by the company of the Jesuits from this fount of labour, a very gifted modern Argentine writer estimates the eighteenth-century Guaraní population of the Paraguayan missions at some 150,000, adding that, so healthy was the climate of their country that almost the entire force of this community was available, invalids being almost unknown. In this he unconsciously pays a notable tribute to the methods employed in the "Reductions"—by which name these mission towns were also known. For this remarkable lack of invalids may well be compatible with the circumstances attending ordinary hard work, but they suggest nothing of that grinding toil such as the *conquistadores* were only too frequently accustomed to inflict on the aborigines—labour involving broken health and premature death.

The admittedly healthy condition of the Jesuitical Guaranís is in itself sufficient to refute such a charge as this.

The various kinds of work carried on in the mission towns were of an amazingly comprehensive nature. Even their most hostile critics have never attempted to dispute the administrative abilities of the missionaries. These found a full opportunity in the fertile soil and varied products of the country. One of the first industries they took up was that of collecting the famous Paraguayan tea, the yerba maté, from the forests in which it grew. Undoubtedly this was one of the severest tasks which the Guaranís had to undertake, since the yerba-tree, the *Ilex Paraguayensis*, favours the denser forests that are the haunt of the jaguar, the venomous snake, and countless noxious insects. Moreover, as the yerba maté-trees in the neighbourhood of the settlements became used up, the journeys of the

Indians grew longer and more difficult, and the return marches, under the burden of the yerba loads, still more strenuous.

Another industry which rapidly attained to great importance was that of cattle-breeding. It is difficult to picture the Jesuit Fathers galloping with flying robes after the scampering herds of cattle, gathering them into *rodeos*, and "parting" them after the fashion of the gaucho—and this they undoubtedly did not do! At the same time, it is certain that they must have closely supervised their dusky herdsmen; for the numbers of their cattle rapidly increased to an extent which could only have been possible under an efficient, and comparatively scientific, management. This will be evident when it is explained that more than thirty thousand head of cattle grazed on one of their estates alone, and that at the time of the expulsion of the company, their pastures were found to contain nearly 800,000 cattle, nearly 100,000 horses and mules, and over 200,000 sheep and goats.

Beyond this there were the fields of cotton, maize, rice, sugar-cane, tobacco, and all those cereals which went to make up the store of the mission towns, as well as the spreading groves of orange-trees, and all the fruits of the sub-tropics and of Southern Europe which were cultivated with immense success in the rich red soil of Paraguay. It is a tribute to the energy of the Jesuits, moreover, that sufficient wheat was grown within the missions to render them self-supporting in this respect, when the small amount of wheat is taken into consideration that is at present produced within the Republic of Paraguay.

It was in these pastoral and agricultural pursuits that the main supply of Guaraní labour was employed. The Jesuits saw to it that the tasks of the Indians were made as attractive as possible.

Thus they would march to the fields singing chants and preceded by a small band of instruments, and they would return in the same impressive fashion when the labours of the day were done. In all such ways as this the work of the Indians was lightened, and undoubtedly the policy possessed its practical side in that far more satisfactory agricultural results were obtained from these contented people than would have been the case had they been dejected and apathetic.

The scope of the mission work, however, was by no means confined to the pastoral and agricultural pursuits. The community was entirely self-supporting, and it was thus necessary to quarry the stone of which the town buildings were constructed, to build the small vessels in which much of the produce was sent to be sold in the large cities lower down the river, and even to found the cannons and to produce the gunpowder which were necessary in order to defend the settlements from the slave-raiding attacks of those arch-enemies of the missions, the *Mamelucos*, who came out with fire and sword from the Brazilian town of São Paulo.

But, when the disposition and attainments of the original Guaraní tribe are taken into consideration, some of the most remarkable achievements of the missionaries were in connection with the finer arts and crafts rather than with the cruder labours of the main industries. It is true that at the head of each of these branches was a Jesuit who was a complete master of his particular art or craft. But this alone does not suffice to explain the astonishing progress made in these directions by a race that a generation or two before had represented one of the most primitive types of Indian in the world—naked savages without the faculty of hieroglyphics, unable to count beyond the few first numbers, ignorant of the very rudiments of music,

and lacking sufficient imagination to provide themselves even with a reasonable supply of that superstition which stands for the religion of the savage.

Yet it was from these very folk that were produced craftsmen of a really able type. It was they who, under the coaching of the missionaries, learned to become carpenters, to carve stone with professional cunning, and who became expert locksmiths, gunsmiths, and workers in metal. There were many weavers and printers, and among them were a certain number who had actually attained to the expert art of watchmaking. Among the most astonishing walks of life, however, to which the Guaraní was transported was that of painter—in the artistic sense of the vocation. Hand in hand with this art went that of music. Indeed, one of the proofs of how thoroughly these matters were undertaken lies in the fact of the bringing over from Europe, with a view to teaching the Guaranís music and singing, of Padre Juan Basco, who had previously been at the head of an archducal institution of music.

A school and a hospital were attached to each Reduction, and each of these, in addition, was provided with an asylum for the aged and infirm. Even here a certain amount of work was carried on, and the inmates of this institution were given such light tasks as they could perform.

These settlements of the Jesuits have frequently been said to constitute a state of pure socialism—or rather communism. But this is true only up to a certain point. A condition of equality existed among the Indians, and the total absence of money in any shape or form made it possible to render this equality more perfect than would have been possible in the outer world. But in the ideal communistic country no persons can exist who do not bow to the common law. Admitting such theories, it was the Jesuits

themselves who had no right in such settlements, for the laws which applied to the Indians did not—and in the nature of things never could—apply to them! The Jesuits, then, were actually officers of an autocracy which governed a people on communistic principles.

The constitution of the Jesuit missions demanded that all property—that is to say, all the harvests and the agricultural and pastoral products in general—should be divided into three parts. Special lands were set apart for each. The first of these was known as the *Tabambaé*. This was for the benefit of the general community, and in order to produce this all the Indians worked three days in the week. The rest of the time was devoted to the *Abambaé*, a portion reserved for the heads of families, and to the *Tupambaé*, which share was known as the property of God. The harvests were stored in the various public granaries, and dealt with according to the orders of the missionaries.

The economic success of these Paraguayan missions was undoubted. At the time of their dominion many unfounded rumours were spread concerning a vast amount of wealth that was supposed to be derived by these from local mines which, it is now clear enough, never had any existence. As a matter of fact, as regards mere wealth, any such procedure would have been unnecessary—or, at all events, superfluous—considering the enormous riches which the Jesuits held in their pastoral and agricultural possessions.

The day of the Jesuit Guaraní was mapped out for him with the same care with which a navigator might prick out his chart before starting on a voyage. Not only was every hour of his labours and restings worked out to the minute with meticulous care, but even the intervals of his recreation were planned with the same exactitude. The Guaraní was told

when and how to play just as he was told when and how to work. And this procedure, which could not have failed to be resented by more sophisticated folk, was undoubtedly the best adapted to awaken the irresponsible mind of the Guaraní, notorious as he was for his lack of the power of initiative.

Many of the feast days were kept in a truly gorgeous fashion in the Paraguayan mission towns. I have already described these fully elsewhere, and, in order that the less favourable side of the picture may be seen, I will quote a couple of paragraphs from Señor Lugones, whose masterly work cannot be said to err in leniency towards the Jesuits:—

“All was, of course, religious. The embroidered ornaments glittered in the sun; perfumed waters served in the ceremonies. There was a profusion of incense and of chiming bells; and, above all, there was that supreme bond between primitive gratitude and religion that occasioned these feasts. The feast day was the day of banqueting and of fine clothes. Entire families strutted with pride in the cloak and shoes of an acolyte. The people applauded with enthusiasm the performances of children who recited eulogies, or who danced, forming mystical ciphers with their figures to the beat of resounding orchestras. Bombs, rattles, trumpets, and hand-bells sent out their sonorous volume of sound to bring the fanfare to the point of delirium. Military spectacles aroused the fighting atavism in blood that was still wild; tilting at the ring, acting in Guaraní, clumsy comedies, entered into the programme, which was concluded by a banquet in the open air under the galleries which surrounded the plaza.

“The procession of Corpus was especially sumptuous. This procession would go winding about the plaza, halting at many places, where birds of the most brilliant colours fluttered in the midst of the arranged foliage, and where handsome fishes

floating in bowls served as an additional spectacle. As the acolytes passed along they strewed the ground with grains of roasted maize, contrived so as to imitate small white flowers, while the softness of the air, perfumed by the neighbouring orange-groves, set the seal of tender unction on the ceremony."

These are the words of a brilliant modern writer who holds, as do the majority of other contemporary South American authors, that the methods of the Jesuit proselytism comprised a mere appeal to the senses which had nothing in common with the true ethics of religion. That it was necessary to attract the Guaraní by an appeal of the kind is incontrovertible. No doubt, too, there was some slight foundation for the charges made against the members of the company in Paraguay to the effect that they made a practice of bribing the secular Governors of the province; that, when opposed, they made sufficiently bitter enemies; that there were times when the industrial importance of the community tended to swamp the spiritual side, and that, in fact, they preserved the Guaranís from the *conquistadores* merely in order that they might exploit the unfortunate natives for their own purposes.

Even if all these charges—the majority of which rest on very precarious foundations—were admitted, the practical results achieved by the Jesuit missions would have amply justified their existence. It has been brought against them that, while they charged the *conquistadores* with treating the Guaranís as beasts of burden, they themselves treated them as children, thus arrogating to themselves unending tutelary powers. I hold no brief for the Jesuits, but this accusation alone seems to hold their complete vindication. Under the merciless tyranny of the early Spanish system the melancholy natives died before their time in countless thousands. Under the benevolent despotism of the Jesuits they passed

through smiling lives to a satisfied old age. Is it necessary to say more?

There is no doubt that, from the industrial and political point of view of secular Paraguay, the presence of the Jesuits was anything but an unmitigated blessing. The Spanish colonist—who, in common with the majority of other folk of that period, was entirely devoid of sentiment so far as Indians were concerned—had in the first place to thank the interference of the missionaries for the loss of a considerable portion of his profitable field of free labour. But this was merely the foretaste of what was to come. When the vast Jesuit organization began to assume its definite shape, it became evident to the colonists that here was a force with which they could not hope to compete.

This development, of course, did not occur all at once. It was only at the beginning of the seventeenth century, when the mission settlements received the permission of the Spanish Government to trade in yerba maté outside the borders of their provinces, that the full significance of the industrial side of the great enterprise became apparent. In due course the commercial ramifications were extended, a perfectly amazing genius being displayed in this. After a time the river fleets of the Jesuits took to sailing down-stream deeply laden with yerba, hides, linseed, sugar-cane, wheat, tobacco, maize, and all the rest of the produce of the missions. These found a ready market in Buenos Aires, Santa Fé, Brazil, Chile, and even as far afield as Peru. After a time the officials of the missions opened stores, not only in Paraguay but in Buenos Aires as well, with the result that the supremacy of their products became even more marked than before, and that many of those very laymen who were most bitterly opposed to the presence of the missionaries went shamefacedly as purchasers into their stores.

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The fact that no body of laymen could be found with a sufficient power of organization to compete with the Jesuits did not, needless to say, add to the popularity of the latter. Nor did their prohibition of the employment of any other tongue but Guarani—though in itself a sufficiently sound precaution—fail to be hurtful to the Spanish pride. On their eastern frontier they had no reason to expect goodwill. On the contrary, it was from that quarter that threatened the deepest danger of all to the Jesuit establishments; for the hardy *Mamelucos* of São Paulo, having cleared all their own part of Brazil of the Guarani whom they had enslaved, had taken to slave-raiding farther afield, until they were brought face to face with the Jesuit settlements, and their labours were thus rudely interrupted.

Finding that the missionaries were determined to maintain their rights, the *Mamelucos* began a merciless series of onslaughts on the easternmost of the mission settlements, driving away into captivity many tens of thousands of the unfortunate converts. This condition of affairs continued until, having obtained special permission from the Court of Spain, the Jesuits armed and drilled their native followers. By this means a force was soon obtained which at first succeeded in resisting the attacks of the *Mamelucos*, and afterwards in inflicting upon them defeats serious enough to cause them to abandon their raids. The militia of the missions, it may be said, ultimately became something in the nature of a permanent force, and was lent on several occasions for service with the Spanish authorities.

There is no space here to enter into the various quarrels of the Jesuits with the lay and ecclesiastical bodies of their own country. The main features of these are closely bound up with the general history of Paraguay, and such disputes as that between the Company and Bishop Cardenas—which has been

admirably described by Mr. R. B. Cunninghame Graham in his "Vanished Arcadia"—must appear in their proper chronological order.

Indeed, it is the important influence which these settlements of the Jesuits have had upon the general history of Paraguay which alone justifies the length of this description of their communities. For without some idea of the ramifications of these truly amazing Reductions it is impossible to understand much of the history of Paraguay in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

The expulsion of the Jesuits from Paraguay occurred in 1768. The settlements in Paraguay were the last to be broken up. In the previous year the establishments in Corrientes, Córdoba, Santa Fé, and Montevideo had been closed and the officials of the Company deported. In Paraguay—where the Governor, Don Carlos Morphi, was held to be favourably disposed towards the Company—considerable opposition had been expected, and the Governor of Buenos Aires, Don Francisco de Paula Bucareli y Ursua, to whom the uncongenial task of the expulsion had been entrusted, was accompanied on his journey to the Reduction by a considerable military force.

Save for a few isolated and spasmodic bursts of resentment on the part of the Indians, the expulsion was effected almost without incident, the influence of the Jesuits, exerted in favour of peace, overcoming the indignation of the Guaranís—a resentment which, had it been allowed full play, would undoubtedly have set all those districts of South America into a blaze.

On the departure of the Jesuits the Spanish authorities strove to continue the work that the missionaries had carried on, and at the same time to destroy every trace of their influence and of their rule. It is almost needless to say that their attempts

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were a complete failure. Even with the best will in the world it was clearly impossible for men with no experience of Guaraní mission Indians and their ways to take up the task of generations of wise and skilled experts who had devoted the whole of their lives to the study.

The failure of this attempt of the Spanish colonial authorities became evident almost at once. In a few years political causes had all but depopulated the mission towns. In 1785 the total population of these had fallen to 70,000, and in 1797 the number had been reduced to just over 50,000 Guaranís. After this the end was rapid. The herds were carried off, the fields became overgrown, and in the end the tremendous vigour of the subtropical forests smothered even the buildings of the Jesuit towns themselves. As a result, very little more remains than a few ruins dotted here and there about the forests.

CHAPTER IX

THE LATER COLONIAL PERIOD

Manuel Frias becomes Governor of Paraguay—His domestic affairs lead to a dispute with Bishop Torres—Conflict between Church and State—The Peruvian authorities decide in favour of Frias—Death of the Governor on his way back to Paraguay—Luis de Céspedes Jéria contrives to obtain the post—Having been in league with the *Mamelucos*, he is imprisoned—Subsequent Governors—Gregorio de Hinestroza's conflict with Bishop Bernadino de Cardenas—Character of the Bishop—Mr. Cunninghame Graham's account of how he came into his bishopric—A dramatic priest—The latter's quarrel with the Jesuits—Some mutual expulsions—Diego Escobar de Osorio succeeds Hinestroza—Cardenas excommunicates the Jesuits—Death of Escobar de Osorio—Cardenas is appointed to the governorship—His measures against the Jesuits—Sebastian de León y Zárate is made Governor—Revolt and defeat of Cardenas—Further Governors—How Diego de los Reyes Balmaseda became Governor—The revolt of José de Antequera y Castro—Circumstances which led up to his execution—Motives of the rebellion—Scenes at the scaffold—Antequera's personality—Feuds in Asuncion—Bruno de Zavala restores order—Carlos Morphi—Events in South America which preceded the War of Liberation—Paraguay's answer to the message of Buenos Aires—Collision between the troops of the two States—Victory of the Paraguayans—Belgrano's propaganda—Stirred by this, Paraguay proclaims her independence—She begins her career as a sovereign State.

HAVING dealt with some of the more salient features of the Jesuit missions, it is necessary to resume the sketch of the general history of Paraguay, which was interrupted at the division of that province into two.

The first Governor of the northern of these two provinces—known then both by the name of Paraguay and Guairá—was Manuel Frias, who assumed charge of his post very nearly three years after the new

provinces had been created. According to many authorities, Manuel Frias gave promise of being a most able Governor; but the condition of his domestic affairs appears to have wrecked his chief opportunities of displaying statesmanship.

When he was appointed to the governorship of Paraguay, Frias had been separated from his wife for some ten years. This state of affairs was regarded with considerable disfavour by Tomás de Torres, then Bishop of Paraguay. In order that an end should be put to what he regarded as a public scandal, the Bishop determined that he himself would bring about a reconciliation between the Governor and his wife. Frias proved himself so obstinate in the matter that the Bishop was goaded to more and more strenuous efforts. In the end so enthusiastic did these become that the Bishop quarrelled violently with the Governor in his efforts to bring about peace between the latter and his wife!

Owing to this gratuitous interference in a domestic matter, all Asuncion found itself once again obliged to take sides with one party or the other in a bitter dispute between the authorities. As had already happened on several previous occasions in that town, the affair soon resolved itself into a conflict between Church and State. The great majority of the people, as a matter of fact, were in sympathy with the Governor. But Bishop Torres was an ardent fighter, and, having flung about decrees of excommunication as freely as raindrops fall in a tropical storm, he succeeded in drawing the serious attention of the high authorities in Peru to the case.

As a result of this Frias was summoned to Chuquisaca by the Royal Audience of Charcas. An order of the kind was not to be disregarded. Manuel Frias, leaving Diego de Rego y Mendoza in charge of Paraguay, set out for the west, and in the foot-

steps of his party there followed soon afterwards a petition in favour of the Governor, numerously signed by the inhabitants of Asuncion. Having heard all this weighty case, and doubtless wondering not a little at the private nature of the basis on which it rested, the Royal Audience gave its decision in favour of Frias. Whatever steps the Governor might have taken to mark his triumph in Asuncion were frustrated by his death at Salta on his return journey in 1627.

Once again the government of Paraguay was left in a state of suspense, which was somewhat violently interrupted by Luis de Céspedes Jéria. This adventurous person entered the country in 1628 by way of Brazil, and, although unsupported by any royal authority, managed to obtain control of the State. He is said to have been bribed by the *Mamelucos* of São Paulo, in whose country he had been before entering Paraguay, and it is certain enough that he was in league with these slave-raiders. As a result of this the incursions of the latter grew more and more serious, and it is said that at this period no fewer than sixty thousand unfortunate Guaraní Indians were captured by them in the eastern Jesuit settlements and were led away to be sold in the Brazilian slave markets.

It was not until 1631 that some beginnings of order were evolved out of the chaos into which Paraguay had fallen. In that year Céspedes was arrested and imprisoned, and in 1633 Martin de Ledesma Valderrama was made Governor by the royal authority. This latter, after having carried out some able colonizing work, was replaced in 1636 by Pedro Lugo de Navarra, who, having led a Guaraní army against the *Mamelucos*, abandoned them in the early stages of the battle, notwithstanding which the Indians succeeded in gaining an unexpected victory. It was largely owing to this

conduct that he was recalled to Spain, but failed to reach the peninsula, dying on the voyage.

In 1641 Gregorio de Hinestrosa took charge of the governorship. During his term of office occurred some of the most amazing episodes in the early history of Paraguay. It was his lot, indeed, to be one of the protagonists in a struggle between the sacred and the secular power, which varied in incident from the tragic to the sheerly ludicrous. Hinestrosa's great opponent was the Bishop Bernardino de Cardenas, one of the most extraordinary characters of his time, and the product of a period which encouraged adventurers among the ranks of the clergy as well as among those of the laymen. From his early days Cardenas had displayed great dramatic power, and he had succeeded in obtaining considerable influence among certain of the Indians of Peru, an influence which he occasionally appears to have turned to his own pecuniary advantage. Mr. Cunninghame Graham has an admirable account of the way in which he came into his bishopric:—

“Cardenas specially inculcated, in his memorial to the Council of the Indies, that it was not expedient to place the Indians under the regular clergy, a theory of which he himself was destined to become a great antagonist. Promotion, as we know, cometh neither from the east nor from the west; so it fell out that during his retreat, through the influence of his friend Don Juan de Solorzano, a celebrated lawyer, who had heard him preach when Governor of Guancavelico, he found himself named Bishop of Asuncion del Paraguay. This piece of luck opened the doors of his convent to him, and he repaired at once to Potosi to wait the arrival of the papal Bull authorizing him to take possession of his bishopric. There he appeared in the habit of his Order, a little wooden cross upon his breast, and a green hat upon his head, a costume which, if not quite fitting to

his new dignity, was at least suited to the Indian taste.

“ His biographer informs us that, without a word to any one, he began to preach and hear confessions. Being absolutely without resources, he was reduced to distribute indulgences and little objects of piety, and at the end of every sermon to send his green hat round the audience. His talent for preaching stood him in good stead, and after every sermon gifts were showered upon him, and a crowd accompanied him home.”

Arrived in Paraguay, the Bishop made the most of his intensely dramatic gifts, and even went in for a mild course of miracles admirably calculated to fill the minds of his more ingenuous parishioners with awe. It was not long before the Governor, Gregorio de Hinestrosa, found out how dangerous an antagonist a man such as this could be. Indeed, there could be no doubt that neither Asuncion, nor any other capital in the world, was large enough to hold at the same time the Bishop Bernadino de Cardenas and any secular Governor, whatever views the latter might hold. Notwithstanding the curious fact that on one occasion the pair simultaneously went down upon their knees to beg each other's pardon, the quarrels between the two mounted steadily in bitterness.

When he felt that his power had sufficiently increased, Cardenas added a new element of discord to the strife already existing by falling out with the Jesuits. From that moment he intrigued without cease with a view to the expelling of the Order, but, as it happened, the Governor being entirely opposed to him, he himself was expelled in 1644. But this was by no means the end of Bernadino de Cardenas.

In 1647 Gregorio Hinestrosa was replaced in his governorship by Diego Escobar de Osorio. Cardenas immediately seized the opportunity of returning to

Asuncion. Contriving to ingratiate himself with the new Governor, Cardenas launched a thunderbolt by excommunicating the whole Company of the Jesuits in Paraguay! It is said that, after this, Escobar de Osorio, realizing something of the hornet's nest that he had suffered to be introduced into Paraguay, was about to adopt strong measures against Cardenas. Just then, however, he died. So suddenly did his end come about that it has been strongly suspected that poison was employed to that end.

However this may have been, Cardenas himself was now appointed to the vacant governorship by popular vote. From this it will be seen how great a hold he had obtained over the public imagination. One of his first acts was to expel the Jesuits from their college in Asuncion, and to command them to evacuate all their mission settlements throughout Paraguay. On this the Jesuits appealed to the Royal Audience at Charcas, with the result that this Court decreed the restitution of the rights of the Jesuits and the dismissal of Cardenas from the governorship, which was confided to Sebastián de León y Zárate. Cardenas was in no mood to accept this decision passively. He revealed the desperate nature of the measures he was prepared to undertake by collecting an army in order to oppose de León when he arrived in Paraguay. A battle was fought on the outskirts of Asuncion, in which the followers of Cardenas—who had been so confident of victory that they bore into the battle ropes with which to bind the Guaranis of de León's army after they had been captured!—were totally defeated.

After this Cardenas disappears entirely from Paraguayan history. It is a marvellous tribute to his personality that, after many adventures and vicissitudes, he succeeded in getting himself made Bishop of Santa Cruz in 1665.

In 1650 Andrés de León Gabarito arrived in

Paraguay as interim Governor. He was also charged with a commission to inquire into the circumstances attending the repression of Cardenas' rebellion. Whether he had been too thorough in his punitive measures or not, it seems certain enough that the unfortunate Zárate had powerful enemies, for he spent twenty years in prison as an atonement for what may, or may not, have been faults.

A link with an important personage in the past history of Paraguay occurred in 1653, when Cristóbal de Garay y Saavedra, a grandson of that Juan de Garay who had founded Buenos Aires, was appointed Governor of the province. He appears to have been an able official; but little of serious importance seems to have occurred during his period of office, nor in that of his successor, Juan Antonio Blásquez.

The next Governor to be appointed to Paraguay was Alonso Sarmiento de Sotomayor y Figueroa. This official appears to have conducted himself bravely in stemming an Indian rebellion. He nevertheless suffered a term of two years' imprisonment before he was acquitted of charges brought against him in this respect. He subsequently obtained the post of *Corregidor* in Lipes, and it is recorded, much to his honour, that he died so poor that he did not leave enough money to bury him!

After this followed a succession of Governors, who were occupied chiefly in coping with the warlike tendencies of the fierce Guaycurús to the north, by far the most implacable tribesmen in the province, and in restraining the periodical aggressions of the *Mamelucos*, to say nothing of playing their share in the intrigues which were only too frequent in Asuncion itself.

The next period of interest began with the year 1717, when Antonio Victoria, who had been nominated as Governor of Paraguay, sold his office, with the consent of the Court of Spain, to Diego de los

Reyes Balmaseda, who had until then occupied the comparatively modest post of Alcalde of Asuncion. This sudden elevation to power appears to have turned the head of the former Alcalde. In the manner of upstarts he took to persecuting those who failed to admire his genius of administration. It must be admitted that all this is denied by Balmaseda's friends, who put the blame of all that occurred on his enemies. These latter assert that some of the members of the leading families of Asuncion were imprisoned and treated with considerable harshness. The inhabitants of Asuncion, from the days of the very first establishment of that capital, had never shown themselves inclined to submit to treatment of this kind, and very soon complaints from that town were ringing loudly in the ears of the high Peruvian officials. The Royal Audience in order to investigate the case sent to Asuncion José de Antequera y Castro. In due course the Royal Audience relieved Reyes Balmaseda from his post, to which succeeded their own judge-inquisitor, José de Antequera.

Concerning the period of confusion that followed there is an amount of conflicting testimony that is extraordinary even for the history of Paraguay. To this day diametrically conflicting accounts are published of the events which led up to the execution of Antequera. There are some who insist that Antequera was regularly appointed to his post by the Royal Audience, while others maintain that he merely seized a favourable opportunity to arrogate to himself the power. In any case it is certain that shortly after this occurred Baltasar García Ros, acting Governor of Buenos Aires, came up the river to Asuncion with orders from the Peruvian authorities either to replace Reyes Balmaseda in the governorship of Paraguay or to assume this post himself. The people of Asuncion, however, declared themselves in favour of Antequera, and García Ros was obliged

to return to Buenos Aires without having accomplished anything.

After this Asuncion found itself in a state of armed resistance to practically all the might of Spain in South America. Seeing that he was being opposed by the Jesuits, Antequera ordered their expulsion from Paraguay. It will already have been seen with what monotonous persistency decrees of expulsion, excommunication, and similar thunderings—occasionally quite innocuous—played their part in the Central State. As a matter of fact the Jesuits in the College of Asuncion were actually expelled for a time; but as these seem to have had little to do with the mission settlements the situation remained practically unaltered.

In the meantime Antequera was making a resolute stand against the edicts of the Royal Audience and against the troops which the central Government sent against him. The personality of Antequera naturally makes a strong appeal to the Paraguayan imagination. There was sufficient force in his rebellion to give it an almost national touch, and there are many who see in it some of the spiritual elements which characterized the Spanish-American War of Independence which broke out almost ninety years later.

If anything of this really entered into the motives of Antequera's rebellion, the undertaking was altogether too premature for any hope of success. The spectacle of early eighteenth-century Paraguay in arms against the world was a very gallant, but a very fleeting, one. Nevertheless various Imperial forces were defeated before the end came. Then the Viceroy of Peru rose up in ponderous wrath, and sent Bruno de Zavala at the head of an army of six thousand mission Indians to end the matter. There was no resisting a force such as this. Antequera fled first to Córdoba, and then to Charcas, where he was arrested. It is typical of the dilatory methods

of the Spanish contemporary justice that it was not until four years later that the order for his execution arrived from Spain.

Antequera was executed in Charcas in 1731, and on that occasion the uproar was considerable even in that town, one of the chief centres of the viceroyalty. On the fateful day the plaza—in the centre of which, as usual, the scaffold had been prepared—was filled with a hostile crowd. On the appearance of Antequera, in charge of his guards, the excitement of the throng reached a feverish pitch. In order to prevent a collision between the populace and the troops the Viceroy himself made his appearance in the square. But the time had passed for even his exalted personality to quell the tumult. A volley of stones sped at his mounted figure, and the crowd surged towards the scaffold to which Antequera had by that time been brought.

An attempt at rescue seemed imminent. There was no time for the executioner to perform his duty with the grim and deliberate ceremony proper to such an event. The Viceroy called to his guards to fire at Antequera, and as the reports of the cumbrous arquebuses died away Antequera fell, shot in four places. According to some accounts, two priests who accompanied him were wounded by the volley.

In this way fell Antequera, a man of striking personality, and undoubtedly a sufficiently gallant man. His figure is difficult to extricate from the confusion of events that enveloped it. The circumstances would seem to point to the fact that it was one of those historical cases in which every person concerned, being a little bit in the right, made certain that he was altogether justified, and completely ignored the fact that he and all the rest were a great deal in the wrong at the same time!

When the news of Antequera's execution reached the Paraguayans their rage knew no bounds. Rightly,

or wrongly, they vented this on the Jesuits, whose native troops had been so directly instrumental in the downfall of Antequera. Once again, it was the Fathers in the College of Asuncion who suffered chiefly from the vengeance which the people wreaked for the fate of one whom they considered a martyr.

Asuncion was once again in a state of complete anarchy. Apart from the bitterness which the followers of Antequera felt towards the Jesuits on account of the supposed wrongs they had suffered at the hands of the Company, they now cherished grievances against the regular supporters of the Spanish Empire, and a feud raged between these latter two parties, which from time to time broke out into open hostilities, in the course of which was killed Agustin de Ruiloba, who had been appointed to govern the disturbed province. All the world over it would be difficult to light upon a more peaceful and placid spot than the town of Asuncion and its neighbouring gentle slopes and valleys. Yet this pleasant red soil, with its smiling profusion of blossoms, palms, and verdure, would seem to have borne strangely restless men in those days—men who were always ready to flash out the sword in defence of their rights, whether real or imaginary, and of the strongly democratic principles which the buildings of Asuncion would seem to have nourished from their first foundation.

It was not until 1735, when Bruno de Zavala, now Governor of Buenos Aires, arrived in Paraguay by order of the Royal Audience, that an end was put to this state of affairs. Zavala, an aged but energetic official, first visited the Jesuit missions, and having obtained from these a powerful army of trained Guaraní soldiers, he marched on Asuncion for the second time. Having routed a force of rebels that attempted to oppose his progress, he entered the capital in 1735, and at length restored order. As

a result of this particular revolt, Asuncion found itself deprived of a much prized privilege—that of electing its own Governors.

After this ensued a considerable period of rest, so far as internal affairs were concerned, although two or three of the succeeding Governors found their energy sufficiently occupied, not only in subduing the bellicose tendencies of some of the northern warrior tribes, but also in supporting the cause of the domesticated Guaranís against the aggression of the Portuguese from the east. It may be remarked that in 1766 an Irishman, whose name is locally rendered as Carlos Morphi, was appointed as Governor of Paraguay. This official had been educated in Spain, where he had attained to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel. It was during his period of office that the Jesuits were expelled from Paraguay, and Morphi is alleged to have done his best to smooth matters for the Company, of whom he seems to have been a partisan. The governorship of Morphi—or Murphy—lasted until 1771, when he was recalled to Spain.

From this time until the end of the eighteenth century the chief events in Paraguay were connected with the settlement of the outlying provinces, which naturally became farther and farther afield from the centre as the tide of colonization spread outwards. The Guaycurús, however, and their neighbouring tribesmen still showed themselves hostile whenever the opportunity arose. Such attempts at colonization, moreover, as were undertaken in the Chaco were productive of a practically unbroken series of failures as a result, the Indians of this district remaining in as savage and as crude a condition as their forefathers had been when they set eyes on the first Spaniards who sailed up the Paraná and the Paraguayan rivers.

Having passed from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, it is necessary to take a hasty survey

of matters outside the frontiers of Paraguay in order to obtain a clear insight into the happenings within the inland State. Even before the close of the eighteenth century the desire for freedom from the yoke of Spain had been largely inculcated into South America. This had received an enormous impetus from the circumstances of the British Expedition to the River Plate, which occurred in 1806, and lasted until well into the following year.

It was clear to the Spanish colonials that the ultimate repulse of the invading forces was not in the least due to the might of Spain. This latter had been represented by the Viceroy Sobremonte, who fled precipitately on the advance of the British troops, and who thus served as an involuntary symbol of the weakness which had replaced the former power of the Spanish South American Government.

Very soon after this the efforts of Miranda, Bolívar, and those other South American patriots who were first in the field of the struggle for independence, had set the flames of battle alight in the southern continent. On the 25th of May, 1810, the Viceroy Cisneros was deposed in Buenos Aires, and his post was occupied by a *Junta*, or committee, of patriots. Very shortly after this, the new *Junta* of Buenos Aires sent word to Paraguay, of its institution, and invited the co-operation of the inland province. The Spanish Governor of the latter at the time was Don Bernardo de Velasco. On the receipt of the communication from the south he summoned a general meeting of the Paraguayan notabilities, and placed the case before them.

It was evident from the opinions expressed at this meeting that the full significance of the events in the outside world had not penetrated into Paraguay—for which situation the remote province had once again to thank the thousand miles that lay between its capital and the ocean. Imbued with a sense

of loyalty that was admirable enough in itself, the Paraguayans decided to support the cause of Spain, and in accordance with this resolution Bernardo de Velasco began to prepare the Paraguayan forces for the part they were to play in the struggle, placing the rivers and territories in the south of the country in a state of defence.

In the autumn of 1810 the republican authorities in the south sent up one of their most famous leaders, Manuel Belgrano, in order to treat with the Paraguayans, and, if they should remain firmly attached to the royalist cause, to exercise sufficient pressure to make them yield. Negotiations having failed, it became evident that a hostile collision was inevitable between the troops of Paraguay and Rio de la Plata. This came about at Paraguarí on the 19th of January, 1811. In the early hours of the morning of that day the Buenos Aires forces advanced on the Paraguayan position, and surprised it before the break of dawn. In the first confusion of the battle the cause of the Paraguayan arms appeared totally lost. Indeed, so convinced of this was the Governor, Bernardo de Velasco, that he made his way in haste from the field, stripping himself of his uniform as he went.

Thus the first news of the engagement that arrived at Asuncion announced a total defeat, with the result that the inhabitants of that town were filled with consternation. Later reports showed that the subsequent phases of the action had reversed the results of the first. The Paraguayan forces, true to their traditions, had proved themselves soldiers as sturdy as their opponents. Although their centre had been driven in, their wings had rallied, and after four hours or so of hard fighting, the patriot forces found themselves obliged to retire, leaving the field in possession of the Paraguayans.

Belgrano made his way with his diminished forces

to Tacuarí. Here a fresh battle was fought on the 9th of March, and, the patriot troops again suffering defeat, Belgrano had no choice but to remove the remnants of his army to the south and to abandon the enterprise. Before his departure, however, an armistice had been arranged, and of this the able Belgrano made the fullest use to further the propaganda of the patriot cause. Not only did he make use of all his persuasive power in his conversations with the Paraguayans, but he actually caused his policy to be proclaimed in the articles of the armistice. He arranged for it to be inserted here that "the object of his expedition had been to assist the natives of Paraguay in order that, supported by the forces of the *Junta*, they might recover their rights, and that they might appoint a deputy who should take part in the deliberations of the General Congress on the common policy to be adopted."

In another clause he proposed that there should be from that day "peace, union, entire confidence, and free and liberal commerce in all the products of the province [Paraguay] including that of tobacco, with the States of the Rio de la Plata, and particularly that of Buenos Aires."

The famous Argentine historian, General Bartolomé Mitre, has some interesting comments on this proposal. He observes: "This was putting the finger on the wound. Tobacco was the monopoly of the Government in Paraguay, and the planters might not export or sell their crops until the needs of the monopoly had been satisfied. Any one who infringed this regulation was punished as a smuggler. The factory established in Asuncion was accustomed to pay two pesos for each arroba of tobacco selected by it, which it sold again for nine pesos two reales. Moreover, it would buy, at the lowest prices those lots of tobacco which it had rejected in the first

instance—prices which the planter found himself under the necessity of accepting.”

Thus, in addition to a fresh political outlook, an entirely new commercial vista was opened up. This expedition of Belgrano's, as a matter of fact, was curiously paradoxical in its results. Although he had suffered a military repulse at the hands of the Paraguayans, the Argentine General had nevertheless largely attained the objects of his expedition. Indeed, so fruitful was the soil in which he had sown the seed, that on the 14th of May of the same year Paraguay formally proclaimed her independence!

The Spanish Governor, Bernardo de Velasco,¹ had to content himself with making a weak resistance. The Paraguayan parties, headed by Doctor Francia, Pedro Juan Caballero, Juan Valeriano Zeballos, Antonio Tomás Yegros, and Vicente Ignacio Iturbe, swept all before them. A fruitless attempt at a counter-revolution resulted merely in the imprisonment of the Spanish ringleaders and in the strengthening of the Paraguayan nationalist party.

Thus we have now arrived at the period of Paraguay's independence, which was officially proclaimed on the 12th of October, 1811, when she entered upon her career as a sovereign State.

¹ The list of Spanish Governors during the colonial period of Paraguay will be found in the Appendix.

CHAPTER X

THE DICTATOR FRANCIA

Confusion attending the formation of the new States—Some types of legislators—Paraguay's first dictator—Character of José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia—Circumstances of his youth—His success as a lawyer—He takes part in the government of independent Paraguay—Work of the *Junta*—Robertson on Francia—The latter's dealings with the Paraguayan Congress—Various types of national representatives—Costumes—Uniforms of the Alcaldes—Quaint processions—Ceremonies of the Indian officials—Francia is elected First Consul—The basis of Francia's character—An anecdote concerning this—How Francia caused an enemy to receive fair play—His measures as First Consul—Condition of Paraguay—Despotism and tranquillity—Francia's first appointment as Dictator—His services to agriculture and public order—He is elected Dictator for life—How he asserted his authority—His dealings with the Church—Destruction of the ecclesiastical power—The Dictator remedies the ravages of the locusts—Circumstances which led up to a conspiracy against Francia—Its repression by means of execution and torture—The Reign of Terror—Imprisonment of the old Spaniards—The "Supremo" brings about the isolation of Paraguay—Intercourse with foreigners prohibited—Fate of a Frenchman—Francia rebuffs the neighbouring States—The French naturalist Bonpland—His kidnapping at the hands of Francia—The death of Francia.

ONE of the most remarkable circumstances in the War of Liberation in Spanish America was the tendency of that genuine and honourable love of independence which had given birth to the struggle to resolve itself into a state of tyranny when the objects of the war itself had been achieved. One of the chief reasons of this was undoubtedly the backward intellectual state of the South American masses—a condition of affairs which had been artificially kept in being by the policy of the Spaniards,

who, dreading the results of intellectual progress on the part of its colonists, had used every endeavour to obstruct any attempts in this direction.

Thus many of the new States, when the time came for them to govern themselves, found themselves in possession of an intellectual nucleus of humanity that, however brilliant may have been the members of its group, was small—altogether out of proportion to the masses of the general populace. Sometimes, in the course of the inevitable confusion which occurred in the formation of one of these new States, the intellectual group would be swept aside, and some rough-and-ready legislator would snatch the reins of government in a heavy hand, and would drive the young country on the curb, plying the whip unsparingly at the faintest sign of a restlessness that was inevitable in the circumstances. No young State had a more drastic experience of these autocratic measures than Paraguay. In her case the cause was not the seizure of power by crude hands. On the contrary, the intellectual ability of her first Dictator was undoubted; but, since he had chosen an autocratic path, his tyranny was none the less thorough for that.

The name of José Gaspar Rodríguez de Francia is one of the most notable in the annals of Paraguay, as, indeed, it may well be, considering that it was this very extraordinary and fateful personality that was alone responsible for the launching of the young State upon a career unique in the history of the South American Republic. It was undoubtedly sheer force of character which dispersed Francia's colleagues, and drove its possessor to what was virtually the throne of Paraguay almost before the echoes of the last decree of the Spanish Government had died away.

Doctor Francia was no longer a young man when the Spanish rule came to an end in Paraguay. He is said to have been born in the year 1757, and

would therefore have been in his fifty-fifth year when the time came for the Paraguayans to take their own government in hand. The details of his early career are somewhat vague—a circumstance which is not extraordinary when it is considered that in the colonial days of his youth there was no reason to suppose that any particular importance would attach to Francia's personality. In the period of his dictatorship, moreover, Francia was not inclined to be communicative concerning his private affairs, and there were none who dared risk his displeasure by plying him with questions which the dreaded *Supremo* might deem impertinent.

It is generally said that Francia was originally intended for the Church, and that he studied for a considerable time at the University of Córdoba, after which he gave up the career of the Church for that of the law, which he eventually practised with no little success. Even in those days there was a spice of romance in the lean, dark, and rather sinister figure of the man who was beginning to be notable for his justice and integrity, and at the same time for his haughty aloofness and for the austerity of his life.

Francia's qualities had not remained unrecognized during the last period of the colonial era, and he had received more than one Government appointment before the wounded Spanish imperial eagle winged its way from South America. He himself had taken a prominent part in the events which led up to the independence of his country, and, this achieved, he was among those chosen to control the destinies of the new State.

The first two representatives of this Government were chosen on the 15th of May, 1811. They consisted of Dr. Francia and Don Juan Valeriano Zeballos. Two months later was inaugurated the first of the sessions of the Paraguayan Congress. The members of this elected a *Junta*, or govern-

ing body, composed of four officials. The president of these was Don Fulgencio Yegros, and the others were Francia, Dr. Francisco Javier Bogarín, and Fernando de la Mora. One of the first decrees of this body prohibited the holding of any public office by a Spaniard. After this they opened up negotiations with the State of Buenos Aires, and, although no amalgamation of the new countries ensued, a *modus vivendi* was arrived at.

The existence of this *Junta* was not destined to run smoothly—there were very few objects or institutions in Spanish America which were destined to enjoy a smooth course just then! No doubt Francia's master mind was already fixed on its goal. He resigned from the *Junta* on the 1st of August, only two and a half months after the formation of that body. The pretext that he employed for his retirement was the spirit of military autocracy into which he alleged that the *Junta* was in danger of falling.

Having regard to Francia's career, it is probable that the dread of autocracy alone obsessed him when the power was in danger of falling into any other hands but his own. Francia, therefore, despite his resignation, did not remain idle, and he was soon back in the *Junta*, enjoying increased influence. This policy was continued by Francia until, on the 12th of October, he and Yegros were nominated as joint Consuls of Paraguay.

For a sketch of the career of the future Dictator at this period I will quote at length from Mr. J. P. Robertson, who was personally acquainted with him. In fairness to Francia, however, it must be said that Robertson's opinion of one of the most remarkable men that South America ever produced did not err on the side of leniency. But Robertson shall speak for himself:—

“Having now evidently determined to get rid of all competitors for power, and the epoch approach-

ing for the decision of the questions which the Buenos Aires' envoy was to open, Francia made all affected haste to call a Congress of Deputies, which, from the different sections of Paraguay, should assemble within three months at Assumption.

"In the meantime arrives Mr. Herrera, the Buenos Ayres Ambassador. He is lodged in the old custom-house, at once under the surveillance and stewardship of the collector of customs. He remains a week there, dining by himself, before he has an interview with a single member of the Government; suspicion and vigilance attend his every step; he hears vague rumours of danger to his person, and sees indubitable indications of the folly of hoping for any alliance with a country over which, even now, Francia exercised so potent a sway. . . .

"The time intermediate between the issuing of the writs for election of the deputies to Congress, and of their meeting in the capital, Francia successfully employed in encouraging and increasing the enmity of his countrymen to Buenos Ayres. He gained over to his interest the officers in command of the troops, and made himself personally and familiarly acquainted with the humblest deputy that came into town. The wily doctor flattered the vanity and stimulated the cupidity of them all. The Indian alcalde, the small farmer, the cattle-grazier, the petty shopkeeper, the more wealthy merchant, and the substantial hacendado all became his prey. By large and undefined promises of protection and encouragement to the order of men to which they respectively belonged, by one delay after another, never appearing to originate with Francia, he fostered the ambition of aspirants to power, and protracted the meeting of Congress for two months beyond the appointed time. All this took place after each deputy had arrived in Assumption. Francia had thus an opportunity, not only of increasing adherents, fortifying converts,

and deciding waverers, but of entailing upon the impoverished deputies such inconvenience and expense as needed scarcely the aid of the Consul's suggestions to determine them to come to a final settlement of all their business on the first day of the meeting of the Congress.

"Such a motley group of national representatives was never, perhaps, before assembled to deliberate, or rather to decide without deliberation, on the fate of a nation.

"Here was a 'tápe' Indian alcalde, with an antiquated three-cornered cocked hat, and an old red or brown wig that had been worn under the said hat from its earliest days. The latter, too, was rather brown, but so well adorned with ribands, red, blue, yellow, pink, that not much of the real colour was discernible. Black velvet breeches, open at the knees, with silver buttons in long and close array, and a finely embroidered pair of drawers hanging out under them, like the ruffles of a gentleman's shirt from under his coat-sleeves, were supported by a red sash tied round the waist. To correspond with this the alcalde had garters of the same hue tied in visible display round discoloured silk stockings, and large silver shoe-buckles completed this part of his attire.

"His horse was caparisoned in a fashion no less unique. The ribands upon his tail, mane, ears, and pendent from the peaks of an antiquated Court saddle, covered with what had once been red or blue velvet, streamed in variegated luxuriance from each and every point.

"Mounted upon a charger thus adorned and trained to dance, the Indian alcalde, with a brass, and sometimes gold-headed, cane, emblematic of his civic authority, would ever and anon set forth to parade the streets, pending the obstacles and delay which preceded the actual meeting of the Congress.

His horse, attended by two pages, one on either side of the now mounted deputy, and both as much in want of the mere decencies of dress as their master abounded in the superfluity of it, began a little preliminary dance; while the musicians, no better arrayed than the pages, essayed to play the overture of a tune to which the procession was to move on. The alcalde's friends and dependents kept assembling on horseback during this overture; and with such remnants of Court finery as they could borrow from the priest, or gather from the *débris* of their chief's decorations—an odd bit of riband, parts of the alcalde's Sunday suit, a red handkerchief bought expressly for the occasion, a small hat, and a poncho—did a follower of the first rank fall into the procession. The gradations of importance of those who followed him were easily to be inferred by persons skilled in Indian costume, from the gradual diminution as you descended the scale of rank of some courtly badge or ornamental device.

“Thus escorted, the deputy moved on, till he came in front of the Government House, where Caraf Francia was. Increasing there the rigidity of his upright posture on horseback, with his eyes immovably fixed on his horse's ears, he gave the Caraf a horse-dance, a calabash tune, and finally made his reverential act of obeisance. All this he performed on horseback, and then took his departure in the same dancing, though slow and measured, solemnity of state in which he had arrived in front of the Consul's window. Processions of this kind, some of a better but none of a less grotesque class, as you advanced from the Indian deputy to the more considerable landholder, crowded the streets during the time that elapsed between the assembling of the deputies and the actual meeting of the Congress.

“It may be conceived with what anxious desire this meeting was expected by the members elect,

all more or less encumbered with attendants, away from their families, and short of money, house room, and provisions. When at last the day of meeting was by Francia permitted to arrive, that which every one had anticipated took place. In a few hours after Congress met the day's deliberations were closed by a rejection of all proposals for an amicable intercourse with Buenos Ayres. Then one of Francia's colleagues in the Government, Cavallero, was dismissed, and Francia was elected First Consul, with Yegros (a mere cipher) as second, for one year. This was in 1814; and the burlesque of national representation being performed, the Buenos Ayres deputy left Assumption in fear and trembling the next day, the congregational body dissolved itself, and curates, country gentlemen, yerba collectors, wood-cutters, Indian alcaldes, shopkeepers, lawyers, traders, all joyfully resigned their legislative functions. Every man arose, and, saddling his beast, took his way to his respective home.

“From this moment Francia became *de facto* the absolute and undisputed despot. Yet did he not institute his system of terror all at once. It was by gradual process and slow degrees that his heart got chilled, and that his measures, first characterized by callousness, became at length stained with blood.

“The following anecdotes will tend to show what was the *basis* of Francia's character; and subsequent records will elucidate how easily stern integrity may turn to sullen despotism, inflexible determination be warped to unrelenting barbarity.

“It has been already observed that Francia's reputation, as a lawyer, was not only unsullied by venality, but conspicuous for rectitude.

“He had a friend in Assumption of the name of Domingo Rodriguez. This man had cast a covetous eye upon a Naboth's vineyard, and this Naboth, of whom Francia was the open enemy, was called

Estanislao Machain. Never doubting that the young doctor, like other lawyers, would undertake his unrighteous cause, Rodriguez opened up to him his case, and requested, with a handsome retainer, his advocacy of it. Francia saw at once that his friend's pretensions were founded in fraud and injustice ; and he not only refused to act as his counsel, but plainly told him that much as he hated his antagonist Machain, yet if he (Rodriguez) persisted in his iniquitous suit that antagonist should have his (Francia's) most zealous support. But covetousness, as Ahab's story shows us, is not so easily driven from its pretensions ; and in spite of Francia's warning, Rodriguez persisted. As he was a potent man, in point of fortune, all was going against Machain and his devoted vineyard.

“ At this stage of the question Francia wrapped himself up one night in his cloak and walked to the house of his inveterate enemy, Machain. The slave who opened the door, knowing that his master and the doctor, like the houses of Montagu and Capulet, were smoke in each other's eyes, refused the lawyer admittance, and ran to inform his master of the strange and unexpected visit. Machain, no less struck by the circumstance than his slave, for some time hesitated, but at length determined to admit Francia. In walked the silent doctor to Machain's chamber. All the papers connected with the law plea—voluminous enough, I have been assured—were outspread upon the defendant's escritoire.

“ ‘ Machain,’ said the lawyer, addressing him, ‘ you know I am your enemy. But I know that my friend Rodriguez meditates, and will certainly, unless I interfere, carry against you an act of gross and lawless aggression ; I have come to offer my services in your defence.’

“ The astonished Machain could scarcely credit

his senses, but poured forth the ebullition of his gratitude in terms of thankful acquiescence. . . .

“Alas ! that an action so magnanimous in itself should be blighted by the record which historical truth exacts—that no sooner had Francia vindicated the law and justice of his enemy’s case than old antipathy revived ; and one of the many victims, at a subsequent period, of the Dictator’s displeasure was the very Machain whom he had so nobly served. . . .

“No sooner, by the tumultuous and unanimous voice of Congress, was Francia seated in the First Consul’s chair than his air gradually gathered more of austerity, his measures were more divested of conciliation, his address became more abrupt, his tone more imperative ; and it was evident to me, as well as to many others, that he was already beginning to lift the mask which he had too long reluctantly allowed to cover his ambitious projects and designs. One ominous feature of despotism began to display itself in Paraguay : every man feared to open his lips to another on politics. Among the first of Francia’s legislative enactments was one of singular degradation to the old Spaniards.”

I have quoted Robertson at the foregoing considerable length because the interest of this matter of his seems to me to be twofold. In the first place it throws an eloquent light on the life and customs of a place and period which are among the most interesting that the entire history of South America has to show. Secondly, there is nothing inappropriate in devoting all this space to Francia ; for, when once he had secured his dictatorship, Francia was Paraguay, and Paraguay was Francia.

The results of this extraordinary man’s iron rule were by no means all disadvantageous to the country. While anarchy reigned in the neighbouring States a perfect tranquillity obtained in Paraguay, where, after

a time, the title by which Francia chose to be known, "El Supremo," was scarcely breathed above a whisper by the awestruck populace. Whatever may be thought of the methods by which they were obtained, the advantages which the State derived from such benefits are not to be denied.

Francia, moreover, incarnate despot though he was, was an upright despot with a strict code of morality and honour of his own. Thus, when on the 3rd of October, 1814, he was named Dictator for the period of five years, an annual remuneration of nine thousand pesos was attached to the office. Francia, considering that the resources of the country did not warrant an expenditure such as this, refused to accept more than a third of the sum, an act of self-abnegation which was quite consistent with his character.

Having once obtained the power of Dictator, Francia soon gave proof that he intended to be no mere figurehead. In a very short time he had made an efficient force of the new Paraguayan Army. With these troops he saw to it that the frontiers were properly guarded, and by this means the incursions from Corrientes in the south of marauding bands of irregulars were soon put a stop to. According to his own lights, he encouraged agriculture and mining, adding duties and applying export restrictions where he thought fit.

It became evident to the easy-going Paraguayans that here, at all events, was a ruler who knew his own mind, and whose powerful personality was sufficient to assure them that he would permit no civil conflict so long as he remained head of the State. As for the Dictator, he contented himself with feeling the pulse of the populace until he became assured that the last doubt as to their sentiments had vanished. Then, on the 30th of May, 1816, when he had been in office for little more than eighteen

months, he convened the Congress again, and gathered in its members from the countryside to Asuncion. All fell out in accordance with his plans. Receiving with enthusiasm the idea which Francia had been careful to disseminate, the Congress unanimously elected him to the post of Dictator for life.

After this the gathering dispersed, and its members went back to their homes, having endowed Francia with an authority so limitless as to be comparable only to that of a Nero or an African chief of a bygone generation. Francia, in fact, had been invited to be a despot, and when he accepted the invitation he accepted it in the full and thoroughgoing fashion that was to be expected from a person of his temperament.

It very soon became clear throughout the length and breadth of the land that it was intended to brook not even a shadow of authority other than that of Francia. At the time of his accession to the perpetual dictatorship the only institution which could possibly rival the influence of his own person was the Church. Francia very soon put an end to all chance of such danger in that direction. First of all he shorn it of all the ceremonial which went so far towards impressing the populace. Then he took possession of the clerical wealth for the State, declared any marriage illegal for which his permission had not been obtained beforehand, and, in short, caused the few priests whom he suffered to remain in Paraguay to become his passive creatures, and thus became as much the governing power of the Church as he was of the State.

Few rulers all the world over have shown themselves possessed of more power of initiative than Francia. In 1819 occurred a serious visitation of locusts, which destroyed the crops. The only person who remained undismayed in the face of the

threatened famine was Francia. Calling together the agriculturists, he commanded them without the slightest delay to resow their devastated lands with crops similar to those that had been destroyed. The landowners received the order with astonishment and doubt; but when Francia spoke, to hear was to obey. The seeds were sown, the harvests sprang up afresh, and the threatened catastrophe was averted. It is actually said that it was owing to this piece of legislation that the discovery was made for the first time that the soil and climate of Paraguay were capable of producing more than one crop in the course of the year.

In 1820 the Uruguayan chief Artigas—who had played somewhat the same part in the Banda Oriental that Francia had in Paraguay—sought refuge in the inland State, and was hospitably received by Francia. Ramirez, Artigas' successor in Uruguay, having tried in vain to cultivate Francia's friendship, joined the ranks of his enemies. As a result of this a plot was hatched to invade Paraguay from the south. This was discovered by Francia, and he immediately adopted measures calculated through sheer terror to banish the idea of any future attempt of the kind from the minds of the Paraguayans. A period of torture and execution followed. Francia's old colleague, Fulgencio Yegros, was one of the first to be executed, and on nine consecutive days the Dictator executed each day eight of the leading conspirators—or, at all events, persons who were accused of being the leading conspirators.

This was the beginning of the actual reign of terror, and the dread of Francia's name now grew more intense almost with every day that passed. The executions did not end with the first seventy-two victims, and under the continual tortures accusations, whether true or false, were launched in all directions. The Dictator's hatred of the old Spaniards, more-

over, now spurred him to acts of increased oppression. On the 9th of June, 1821, he flung no fewer than three hundred of these into prison, and only released those who survived after an eighteen months' confinement on the payment of a collective fine of 150,000 pesos.

It is impossible to say to what extent the embittering of Francia's policy was due to this conspiracy. In any case, from this time onwards his policy became still more definite. His keenest desire was that Paraguay should become self-supporting and independent of all other nations. To this end he gradually did away with all trading and intercourse between the inland State and its neighbours. The law which set the seal on the isolation of Paraguay was the one which not only forbade the entrance of any foreigner into that country, but prevented the departure of any foreigner who happened to be domiciled in Paraguay at the time. Among the latter was an unfortunate Frenchman of the name of Escoffier, who twice endeavoured to evade this law by attempting to escape by way of the Chaco, the non-success of the second venture costing him his life.

To do him justice, Francia was perfectly consistent in the manner in which he carried out this policy of isolation. If he would not allow his subjects to trade outside his frontiers, neither did he allow himself to hold any communication with the heads of other States or their envoys. In 1824 Argentina sent to him an Ambassador whom he flatly refused to receive. The following year Bolivar himself contrived to get a letter sent across the Chaco to Asuncion, proposing to Francia that Paraguay should emerge from its retirement to take its rightful place among the other States. Francia, with an Arcadian simplicity, replied that Paraguay was perfectly satisfied with its lot, and saw no reason to change it,

As a matter of fact, Paraguay—and in all these matters Paraguay meant Francia—had probably greater political reason to remain on good terms with the royal and united State of Brazil than with any other of its neighbours; for Brazil was powerful, and the length of frontier between the two countries was formidable. But when in 1824 the Brazilian Government sent a Consul to Asuncion, Francia refused to have anything to do with that official, until the Brazilians had made good their aggressions in territories and cattle. As a result of this the Consul returned to Brazil to set in motion some fruitless negotiations.

Three years before this Francia had given proofs of the lengths to which he was prepared to carry the policy inspired by a somewhat morbid dread of interference from the outer world. The famous French botanist Aimé Bonpland had taken up his abode on Argentine territory on the bank of the Alto Paraná River, having thus Paraguayan territory facing him on the opposite shore of the stream. In this haunt of exuberant Nature his enthusiasm found full vent, and, among other things, he set himself to make experiments in the propagation of yerba maté. This soon came to the ears of Francia, and the latter's dread lest an undue rivalry should be set up to an industry that he regarded as purely Paraguayan led him to commit an act that showed his contempt for anybody and anything without the borders of his own State.

On the 3rd of December, 1821, a party of four hundred Paraguayan soldiers crossed the Alto Paraná suddenly and swiftly in canoes. Falling upon the unfortunate Bonpland's establishment, they bore him a prisoner back to their own country. There the kidnapped naturalist had to remain for ten years, notwithstanding the European and South American protests with which Paraguay became flooded.

Francia completely ignored these, and it must be admitted that Bonpland himself soon became so enamoured with the floral wealth of his new quarters that he lost all desire to return to Europe, and, indeed, when his liberation was actually effected, he seems to have greeted his change of scene with some regret. But it was certainly from no considerations of this kind that Francia had kidnapped the distinguished French scientist !

Beyond such salient episodes as these it may be said that very little occurred during Francia's dictatorship upon which any historian can lay his hand as being of any special interest beyond the rest. With his abandonment of foreign relations he avoided all foreign complications ; for he had made Paraguay strong enough to discourage all attempt at aggression from outside. Indeed, until 1840 it may be said that Francia ruled—by no means unwisely, after his own lights—and the people obeyed, as people naturally would when they knew that the penalty of disobedience was death. And if all this ceased in 1840, it was for the sole reason that in that year the unutterably dreaded *Supremo* died, at the advanced age of seventy-four.

CHAPTER XI

CARLOS ANTONIO LOPEZ AND FRANCISCO SOLANO LOPEZ

Condition of affairs at the death of Francia—The establishment of a provisional Government—After various experiments Consuls are appointed—The rise of Carlos Antonio Lopez—Liberal measures adopted—Carlos Antonio Lopez becomes Constitutional President of Paraguay—Rosas closes the river against Paraguayan commerce—Carlos Antonio Lopez forms an alliance with Brazil—Desultory warfare with Argentina—Further international complications—Intervention of England and France—Action of the allied fleets—On the death of Rosas Paraguay resumes her intercourse with the outer world—Arrival of foreign Ministers—Treaties—Increasing power of Carlos Antonio Lopez—Prosperity of the State—Death of Carlos Antonio Lopez—He is succeeded by his son Francisco Solano Lopez—Youth and temperament of the latter—Madame Eloisa Lynch—An unofficial Queen—Francisco Solano's attainments—He proves himself a second Francia—Autocracy under a modern cloak—Bizarre methods—His ambition—A description by Sir Richard Burton—George Masterman on the dictator—A fateful personality—Contemporary population and power of Paraguay.

FRANCIA'S lengthy autocracy had had its inevitable effect. So long had the power of initiative and command been his alone that his death left the State, not only without a leader but without any political programme or definite national ideals. Had a man of the deceased Dictator's temperament been at hand, he could have stridden without the faintest opposition to Francia's vacant throne. Indeed, his seizing of the reins of power would undoubtedly have been welcomed with a sigh of relief by the Paraguayans as the simplest solution of the legislative difficulties which now faced them.

But no such man came forward. If he existed,

it was in too humble a capacity to enable him to take advantage of the situation. The Paraguayans found themselves obliged to have recourse to a form of government which in reality represented something of a compromise. A *Junta* was hurriedly formed, and by the instrumentality of this was established a provisional Government, consisting of the alcalde of Asuncion and of the four military commandants of that city.

The provisional nature of the Government will be sufficiently evident from its elements. The men to whom the direction of Paraguay was confided were those officials who had been trained to yield implicit and unquestioning obedience to Francia. As might have been expected, they displayed not only a want of genius but a lack of initiative which soon roused an active sense of discontent among the people. This discontent was responsible for a rapidly mounting political confusion and strife of a kind to which Paraguay had long been a stranger. Officials such as senators and deputies, the very existence of whose offices had been overlooked for many years, came into being once again.

Various experiments resulted, in the beginning of 1841, in the nomination of a Commandant-General, Don Mariano Roque Alonso, who was to take temporary charge of the State and who was to be assisted by a secretary, Don Carlos Antonio Lopez. This form of government had scarcely been in existence for a month when the titles of its officials were changed, and their order of rank was reversed. Consuls were now again the order of the day. Carlos Antonio Lopez was named First Consul and Mariano Roque Alonso was made Second Consul.

These officials showed a liberal spirit. They introduced many progressive measures, opened up political and commercial relations with the Argentine Province of Corrientes, and released from gaol most

of those victims of Francia's tyranny who had not already been freed by the *Junta*.

In 1844 occurred another change in the form of government. Carlos Antonio Lopez then became constitutional President of Paraguay.¹ The beginning of his term of office was complicated by disputes with the Argentine province of Corrientes—disputes that did not prove themselves the easier to settle owing to the firm conviction on the part of the River Plate authorities that Paraguay should in the natural order of affairs form an integral portion of the Argentine Confederation.

Rosas, the most despotic ruler that the southern State had ever known, was now at the head of affairs in Argentina, and when this Dictator, in the arbitrary fashion that distinguished so many of his acts, closed the river against Paraguayan commerce it was clear that the strain of the situation had arrived at breaking-point. It was one thing for Francia to forbid the entrance of foreigners into his State, but it was quite another affair for Rosas to place a barrier across the river at a point below the Paraguayan frontier, and thus to isolate the inland Republic again, whether she would or no.

Carlos Antonio Lopez had no intention of submitting to any procedure of this sort. He made his peace with the province of Corrientes, and, entirely reversing the theories of Francia, he formed an alliance with Brazil. Then, in December 1845, he declared war on the Argentine Confederation. After some inconclusive fighting, however, hostilities were suspended. The United States endeavoured to mediate, but their intervention failed, and a desultory species of warfare broke out again between Paraguay and Argentina, while relations soon became strained between the former State and the Empire of Brazil. Disputed territory in this case was the cause of a

¹ See Appendix.



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situation which perilously approached open warfare ; but energetic action by the Paraguayans resulted in the cessation of what they considered a policy of territorial aggrandizement on the part of the Imperial Government.

All this time, owing to the hostility of the Argentine Dictator Rosas, access to and from the Atlantic along the great river had been closed to Paraguay. England and France, appealed to by Brazil, had come to the aid of Paraguay and of the province of Corrientes, which was suffering the same isolation as Paraguay. The combined British and French fleets had invested Buenos Aires, and a squadron of war steamers, escorting a number of heavily laden merchantmen, had succeeded, after some heavy engagements, in forcing their way up the stream. The vessels, however, did not get beyond Corrientes, and this province absorbed practically all the merchandise carried by the fleet. Owing to this, Paraguay was left in much the same situation as before. Further assistance, moreover, was not forthcoming from Europe ; for it was soon discovered that, from the practical point of view, the very closest blockade could make no difference to the town of Buenos Aires with the vast pastoral and agricultural wealth of the interior at its back. In 1848 Great Britain withdrew from the blockade, and in 1849 France followed her example.

At the beginning of 1852 Rosas was deposed, and with his flight to England disappeared the antagonism that had barred the lower reaches of the great river to the Paraguayans. Carlos Antonio Lopez now signified his intention of resuming the intercourse with the outer world, or, rather, of initiating this ; for it is a remarkable fact that now for the first time since Paraguay had been an independent State was any general intercourse with other nations undertaken.

On the 22nd of December, 1852, the British war-steamer *Locust* arrived at Asuncion, having on board Sir C. Hotham, the British Minister—and, incidentally, the first European official of the kind who had ever set foot in Paraguay—and the United States Minister. A few days later the French Minister arrived, and this latter was followed by the representative of a Power of considerably less importance, Sardinia.

Treaties were drawn up between Paraguay and the various countries whose ministers now represented them in Asuncion, and by this act Paraguay at length asserted her intention of occupying her proper place in the world. The first definite commercial relations had been established just before the diplomatic steps had been taken; for on November the 23rd had arrived the first British trading steamer.

The influx of all these foreigners—whether of an official or commercial standing—was naturally an event of the first importance so far as Paraguay was concerned. The visit of the ministers of the foreign Powers, moreover, was equivalent to an official recognition on the part of Europe and the United States of the independence of the State of Paraguay. The official and social world of Asuncion was lit up by a blaze of festivities, and the following year (1853) Don Francisco Solano Lopez proceeded to Europe as special Envoy to visit various of its Courts.

In the course of time the power of Don Carlos Antonio Lopez increased. For Paraguay of that period he had proved himself a sufficiently liberal legislator; yet a certain atmosphere of autocracy seemed inseparable from the State in the mid-nineteenth century. Thus in 1857 he was named chief of the State for a period of no less than ten years; he was given authority to nominate his successor—which, of course, had the practical effect of making

his office hereditary—and the number of national deputies was reduced to one hundred, the power of this remnant being diminished to vanishing point.

Nevertheless, although the might of the President had now increased to within measurable distance of that formerly wielded by the Dictator Francia, Lopez showed himself averse to employ it in the manner of the deceased *Supremo*. His personality was regarded with considerable awe by his Paraguayan entourage ; but this was on account rather of the powers with which he was vested than because of any deeds of "frightfulness." Carlos Antonio Lopez, moreover, showed himself well disposed towards foreigners, although he proved himself not entirely devoid of his predecessor's arbitrary theories when it came to a point of international dispute. This brought him more than once into diplomatic conflict with the United States, and on one occasion an actual collision occurred between the U.S. war steamer *Waterwitch* and a Paraguayan battery.

Paraguay, as a matter of fact, had to accustom itself little by little to a free and liberal intercourse with the outer world, and at this period numerous international incidents took place in connection with the grievances suffered not only by subjects of European States, but by the South Americans of the neighbouring countries. In each instance, however, the matter was settled without the outbreak of war. Thus the population and strength of Paraguay grew rapidly, until, from one of the most negligible of republics, she had advanced in military power to the position of one of the strongest.

The commerce of the country, moreover, had grown from practically nothing into a source of considerable national wealth. This altered condition of affairs was, of course, due almost entirely to the efforts of Carlos Antonio Lopez. His death, in 1862,

put an end to a period of government which had lasted eighteen years, and which, as has been said, was tending more and more to become of the absolute order.

Carlos Antonio Lopez had named as his successor his eldest son, Francisco Solano Lopez, and the affairs of the nation duly passed into this latter's control. The future of Paraguay now appeared promising in the extreme. Francisco Solano Lopez had had the advantages of a liberal education and of the invaluable experience with which his travels in Europe had provided him. He had won golden opinions in London and Paris, and it was confidently hoped that to his father's prudent methods of legislation he would add the enterprise and progressive spirit which were to be expected from a man of his attainments. To what extent Francisco Solano Lopez justified these hopes will shortly be seen.

It is certain that from the very beginning of his rule Francisco Solano Lopez was eaten up by that most mischievous form of ambition that haunts the love of power. In this he was undoubtedly encouraged by the woman who had elected to share his life. This handsome and remarkable person was Madame Eloïsa Lynch, an Irish - Parisian whom Francisco Solano had met in the French capital, and whom he had apparently found small difficulty in persuading to join him in Paraguay.

The ceremony of marriage was never undergone by the pair. But Eloïsa Lynch seems to have been accepted as more or less a member of the family by the relatives of Francisco Solano, and when the latter became absolute King of Paraguay in all but name, Eloïsa Lynch reigned by his side as his queen, and, moreover, succeeded in retaining his affection to the last.

Francisco Solano Lopez was thirty-six years of age when he became "*Jeje Supremo y General de*

los Ejercitos de la Republica del Paraguay." As has been said, so far as his education was concerned, he was admirably equipped for his post. In addition to his own national tongues of Spanish and Guaraní, he spoke fluent French, and was thus in a position to converse without the cumbersome aid of an interpreter with any distinguished travellers who might enter his country. He had, moreover, drunk at the generous fountain of Paris, one of the mainsprings of the Latin race, to which his own nation in part belonged, and, for the rest, was attached.

The uses to which Francisco Solano Lopez put his talents constitute one of the greatest tragedies of South America. At the same time, responsible though he was for so many outrages and for so deep a sea of blood, it cannot be said that he was averse to progress of the purely material order. He was one of the first in South America to start railway enterprise ; he introduced some Parisian notions of architecture into the Asuncion streets and plazas, and was responsible for a considerable amount of alteration in the local manners and costume. His chief attention, however, was directed towards the Army, and the pains he took to make this already efficient service still more formidable was sufficiently ominous in itself.

Once firmly established in the Dictator's seat, Francisco Solano Lopez wasted no time in asserting his power. So far as autocracy was concerned it very soon became evident to the Paraguayans that here was a second Francia, prepared to go all the lengths—and even farther—of the harsh measures inaugurated by the original *Supremo*. It was not long before his adherents found themselves inculcated with a dread such as those of Francia had known only too well. This condition of affairs, nevertheless, was veiled under a modern cloak, for there were now foreigners—and among them a number of

English—in Paraguay, whose influence had already become notable up to a certain point.

Lopez followed the example of Francia in refusing to tolerate any authority whatever save his own throughout the length and breadth of Paraguay. Considering the Church as by far the most formidable of any potential rivals, he made a tool of the Bishop, Palacio, who soon undertook the offices of a personal attendant. Mr. Thompson, one of the Englishmen who was residing in Paraguay at this period, remarks of him that: "The Bishop used to go and wait in Lopez' corridor with his hat in his hand. When Lopez came out, the Bishop shuffled up towards him with a deprecating look, and made a deep bow, to which Lopez would return a nod, without touching his cap."

As time went on Lopez' methods tended to grow more bizarre. He designed magnificent uniforms for himself, taking care at the same time that his suite should be provided with garments of the most sober tints. At meals, his wines and dishes were distinct even from those of his own family and immediate entourage. Lopez, in fact, was determined to neglect no means which could emphasize the fact that Paraguay's Dictator stood quite alone on the pedestal of his own making.

Unfortunately for himself, for his country, and for the southern half of South America in general, Francisco Solano Lopez was imbued with the idea that he possessed many of the qualities of the great Napoleon. Obsessed by this theory, he endeavoured to have as much as possible in common with the great European *conquistador*. This is incidentally referred to in a description of him by Sir Richard Burton: "His appearance is not unfavourable, though of late he has become very corpulent, after having been a slim and active youth. He is about five feet seven inches in height, of bilious, nervous temperament,

and darker than Spaniards. . . . His hands and feet are small, and his legs bandy with early riding. His features are somewhat Indian, his hair is thick, and his beard, worn in the form which was once called 'Newgate frill,' is by no means so full and thick as his portraits show. . . . He still affects the white charger and the Napoleonic grenadier boots and spurs, the rest of his toilet being a kepi, a frock-coat, and a scarlet poncho with gold fringe and collar ; in fact, he has a passion for finery. Dignified in manner, he has a penetrating, impressive look, which shows the overwhelming pride and self-confidence that form the peculiar features of his personality."

The impression made by Lopez on George Masterman, an apothecary attached to the Paraguayan forces during the great war, was less favourable, as was, perhaps, only to be expected, seeing that Masterman had suffered severely at the hands of the autocrat. He thus describes this remarkable man :—

" Personally he is not a man of very commanding stature, being but five foot four in height, and extremely stout—latterly most unwieldily so. His face is very flat, with but little nobility of feature, head rather good, but narrow in front and greatly developed posteriorly. There is a very ominous breadth and solidity in the lower part of his face, a peculiarity derived from his Guaycurú ancestry, and which gives the index to his character—a cruel, sensual face, which the eyes, placed rather too close together, do not improve. His manners, when he was pleased, were remarkably gracious, but when enraged—and I have twice seen him so—his expression was perfectly ferocious."

I have devoted this considerable space to the personality of Francisco Solano Lopez for the reason that this extraordinary man was at this period more closely connected than any other with the destinies of three republics and one empire. Under his rule

the military force of Paraguay attained to its zenith. At that time the population of the country was far greater in proportion to that of the neighbouring States than it has ever been since. It is, indeed, somewhat difficult to realize now that at so recent a date as the middle of the nineteenth century the inhabitants of Paraguay outnumbered those of each of the other River Plate republics. Yet so it was, and Brazil and Argentina, knowing something of the temperament of Francisco Solano Lopez, watched with no little anxiety the further rapid increases in the strength of the already formidable Paraguayan Army.

Less than two years after the advent to power of Francisco Solano Lopez the Army of the inland State had attained to a strength of no less than eighty thousand men. These, moreover, had been trained to a point of efficiency which rendered the force without rival in the continent as a striking power. Such an instrument in the hands of a man of such passions as consumed Lopez was akin to a powder-magazine in the too close neighbourhood of a lighted match. In due course the explosion occurred.

CHAPTER XII

THE PARAGUAYAN WAR

Origin of the struggle—Brazil and the States of the Rio de la Plata—The intervention of Francisco Solano Lopez—Outbreak of the war—Seizure of the Brazilian steamer *Marquez de Olinda*—Paraguay invades the province of Matto Grosso—Curious analogy between the Paraguayan War and the present European struggle—Lopez as the prey of a wild ambition—His Heaven-sent triumphs—A parallel to the Belgian invasion—The capture of Corrientes—The five campaigns of the Paraguayan War—Chief events of the struggle—Bravery of the Paraguayan troops—The river battles—Improvised war-steamers—Some gallant actions—The motto of the Paraguayans—Francisco Solano Lopez as Generalissimo—How his men were squandered—Defeat as a crime—Its penalties—The toll of human life—Disappearance of the flower of Paraguay's manhood—Final stages of the struggle—Fairness in terrorism—The fate of the women workers—The death of Francisco Solano Lopez and the conclusion of the war—Condition of Paraguay—Recovery of the Republic.

THE actual origin of the struggle which is generally known in South America as the Paraguayan War still remains food for considerable controversy. Those Paraguayans who associate the interests of Francisco Solano Lopez with those of the nation at large are given to assert that the Dictator took up his post at a critical moment, when the treaties of peace with Brazil and Argentina were about to expire, and when the various frontier questions had become too vexed and too urgent to be settled by any other means than a recourse to arms.

It is true that the political situation was by no means without its difficulties. It would seem certain enough, nevertheless, that, had not Francisco Solano Lopez found himself at the head of so fine an Army,

this call to arms would never have sounded. It is certainly not to be conceded that Brazil, the first of the neighbouring States to be concerned in the matter, was entirely without blame. Neither as a colony, a kingdom, or an empire had Brazil been able entirely to withstand the temptations of territorial aggrandizement offered by the chaotic political condition which characterized the early days of the youthful republics of Spanish extraction.

In this matter Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay all nursed grievances of their own. Struggles—the majority of which were more or less local—had occurred from time to time, and at others mutual concessions had tided over the threat of hostilities. On the whole, however, it was not to be denied that the advantage in territory rested with Brazil.

There was thus sufficient motive for war, for the Dictator of a State possessed of the finest Army in South America. As is so frequently the case in such matters, the actual outbreak of hostilities was based on no such direct question. The germs of the struggle had their being in Uruguay, where revolution prevailed, and where Brazilian intrigues were undoubtedly at work to benefit one of the Uruguayan parties at the expense of the other.

It is probable that when Francisco Solano Lopez intervened in the matter he was by no means without justification. It very soon became evident, however, that this intervention of his was being carried out in a manner which could only end in war. The outbreak of this was not long delayed. On the 10th of November, 1864, the Brazilian steamer *Marquez de Olinda* arrived at Asuncion on her way from Rio de Janeiro to the upper reaches of the Paraguay River, where she would again find herself alongside Brazilian soil.

This particular voyage of the *Marquez de Olinda* happened to be somewhat unusually notable, for she

had on board the new Governor of the province of Matto Grosso, who was travelling up-stream to take up his post. The *Marquez de Olinda* had actually left Asuncion, and was proceeding on her northern way, when the Paraguayan war steamer *Tacuari*, smoke pouring from her funnel, appeared in chase. The Brazilian vessel was overhauled, captured, and brought back to Asuncion, where she was detained, and her passengers and crew made prisoners.

This, of course, was equivalent to a declaration of war, and Brazil prepared itself for a collision. Lopez allowed the Empire little time for this. Less than three weeks after the seizure of the *Marquez de Olinda* he sent his brother-in-law, Colonel Barrios, in command of a flotilla, conveying troops in order to attack the Brazilian possessions to the north.

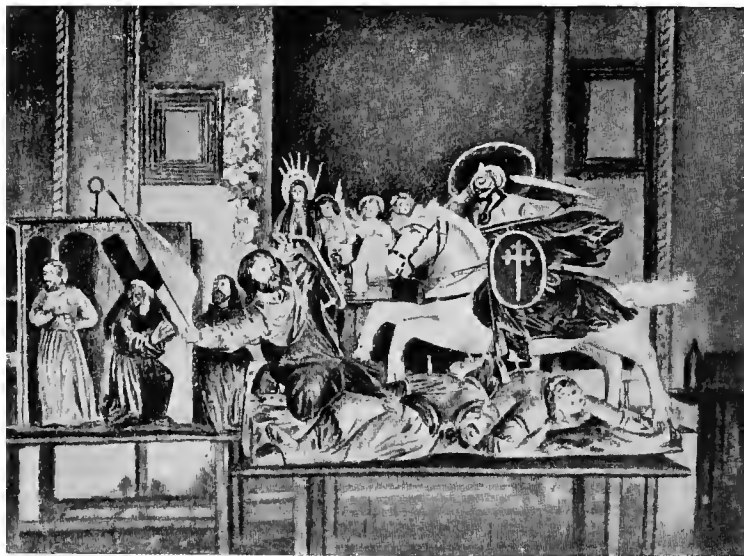
The first point assailed was the Brazilian fort situated on the river bank at Coimbra. Menaced by three thousand fine Paraguayan troops, the Brazilian garrison escaped by river to the north, leaving behind it a considerable store of munitions of war. Proceeding farther up-stream, the Paraguayan force then captured Albuquerque and Corumbá, the Brazilians retreating before them as they went, and very soon an important stretch of Brazilian territory had been occupied by the invading army.

Viewed in the light of contemporary events, there is a curious wealth of analogy between the events of the Paraguayan War and of the great European struggle of to-day. Francisco Solano Lopez stood very much in the same relation to his people as does William of Prussia to-day. At the head of a powerful and well-trained army which the nation had been taught to revere as a superhuman force, Lopez found himself the prey of a wild ambition, to which

he sacrificed conscience, humanity, and the lives of countless thousands of people. Thanks to their complete preparedness, his armies swept outwards on all sides, driving back the enemy before them, until the growing numbers and stiffening resistance of the opposing forces caused the tide to halt, and then to turn.

But all was victory with Lopez. His proclamations made it so, and to question one of the autocrat's Heaven-sent triumphs was to earn the wages of sudden death. A mere reference to the numbers of the Paraguayan losses sufficed to cause the execution of a soldier. There was even a parallel to the tragedy of Belgium in the South America of half a century ago. Desirous of attacking Brazil in the south as well as in the north, Lopez sent to the Argentine Government a high-handed demand for the passage of his troops across the Argentine province of Corrientes. When the inevitable refusal was returned, the autocrat of Paraguay fell upon the province, and succeeded in capturing for a time the important port of Corrientes. Thus, in a sense, the province of Corrientes may stand for Belgium. There is, however, one immeasurably wide difference between the two invasions. To the honour of the Paraguayans be it said that they left the soil of Corrientes free from those atrocities by means of which the Prussians so deeply stained the Belgian earth and their own name.

This invasion of Corrientes naturally brought about war with the Argentine Republic, which country, owing to this threat from without, found its provinces consolidating themselves into a compact set of national units. But this was not the end of the complications which the irresponsible rashness of Lopez had brought upon himself. Seeing that the party hostile to him was now in power in Uruguay, he found himself at war with that little State,



JESUIT DECORATION : SAN IGNACIO.



RUINS OF HUMAITÁ CHURCH : FRONT VIEW.

as well as with the powerful Empire of Brazil and the great Republic of Argentina.

It is, of course, impossible in the space available here to go fully into the details of what was in some respects one of the most remarkable wars that the world has ever witnessed. A Paraguayan authority has divided the struggle into five campaigns—those of Matto Grosso, Uruguay, Humaitá, Pikycry, and las Cordilleras. By a brief separate reference to each of these we may obtain a rough insight into the general course of the war.

The first of these campaigns comprised the invasion of the Brazilian province of Matto Grosso, to which reference has already been made.

The second campaign was that of Uruguay. This was also fought on foreign soil, and was the blow delivered to the south which corresponded with the northern stroke which had Matto Grosso for its aim.

The third campaign was that of Humaitá. Here for the first time the Paraguayans found themselves on the defensive, the object of the allies being to dislodge them from the strong post of Humaitá, which commanded the reaches of the great river in the neighbourhood of the southern Paraguayan frontier.

The fourth campaign, that of Pikycry, represented the second stage of the Paraguayan defensive operations, when the tide had already definitely turned against the arms of the inland State.

The fifth, and last, of the campaigns, was that of the Cordilleras. This was fought out in the north of the Republic, and in the course of this occurred some of the most desperate fighting of all, the remnants of the heroic Paraguayan army fighting battle after battle to prevent themselves being hemmed in by their continually advancing foes. With the collapse of the last worn and attenuated

companies and the death of Francisco Solano Lopez the war ended.

This will suffice to give a rough idea of the main events of this remarkable campaign. A full and detailed description of this is still lacking in the English language, and the sooner this omission is rectified the better it will be for those students interested in this particular phase of South American history, for the warlike feats and political circumstances of this period are unusually notable, and deserve a wider acquaintance outside South America than they have so far obtained.

One of the most remarkable features of the war was the intense bravery which the Paraguayan troops showed in the face of greatly superior forces. This was demonstrated, not only on land but on the river, where some of the most important combats took place. On the water, as a matter of fact, the preparations had not been nearly so complete as those on shore. It is probable that Lopez had not fully foreseen the vital part which the great inland waterway was to play in the grim struggle; for, while his army was provided with the most up-to-date warlike contrivances, his arsenals and munition factories being provided with British supervisors, his fresh-water fleet was of an improvised order.

The vessels composing this were, indeed, small passenger or cargo steamers, ranging in size from some six hundred tons downwards, which had been armed with converted field-guns, or even with field-guns that still retained their wheeled carriages. A number of these vessels were commanded by Englishmen; but, whether in charge of these or of Paraguayan officers, the gallantry displayed was identical, and these frail craft would go charging down the stream to encounter the heavily armed and armoured Brazilian warships and monitors. A more unequal combat can scarcely be imagined, but on



RUINS OF HUMAITÁ CHURCH : BACK VIEW.

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more occasions than one the desperate Paraguayans drove the enemy from their decks down into the protected bowels of their vessels, and caused the opposing flotilla to retreat.

Notwithstanding this, it was, of course, a matter of impossibility for the unarmoured sides of the Paraguayan vessels to withstand for long the rain of shot poured into them from the enemy vessels, and their number gradually diminished as, one by one, they sank. To this day the iron remnants of some of these may be seen, and on the banks of the Tributary Yhagüy there still rest the ruins of a burned Paraguayan flotilla, vegetation sprouting from the forsaken decks and stranded boilers.

This river fighting was equalled in fury by the battles on land. When the Paraguayan forces had spent their strength in the attack it was only after the most desperate resistance that they yielded ground before the masses of the allies. The motto of the Paraguayans was *Vencer o Morir* — "Conquest or Death." These words were inscribed even on the drums of the army, and they seem to have found an echo in the heart of almost every soldier of the inland State; for the losses they sustained, and in the face of which they continued to fight, were phenomenal.

It was Francisco Solano Lopez, of course, who assumed supreme command of the Paraguayan army, and who relied with confidence upon his strategy to obtain the victory over the allied leaders, Marshal Caxias, of Brazil, and General Bartolomé Mitre, who commanded the Argentine troops. Francisco Solano Lopez' methods, as a matter of fact, were sufficiently crude. One of his chief military axioms seem to have been that his men should never retire under any circumstances, and in order to enforce this he would frequently place companies of men just to the rear of the fighting line, who had orders to shoot down

any soldier who demonstrated the slightest inclination to yield his place.

It is not surprising in these circumstances that the slaughter of the Paraguayan troops should have been terrible. The mere dash, moreover, of the Paraguayans was in itself frequently fatal. On more than one occasion a too headlong pursuit of a shattered wing of the hostile forces brought them under a crushing fire from the main army that changed victory into defeat. Lopez' generalship, however, was of the kind which troubled itself very little about the losses suffered by his rank and file. As long as he could obtain the vicarious glory of some brilliant but unprofitable feat achieved by his troops, he cared little how many thousands of men fell in the operation.

It was this enormous wastage of life, of course, which contributed so largely to the final defeat of Lopez. When his affairs became desperate, moreover, he assumed an attitude of mind which more than fitted the wildest situation. Defeat at the hands even of a completely overwhelming force of the enemy became a crime which had to be expiated by torture or death, frequently by both. A system of espionage was established which added a new source of dread to the sufferings of the soldiers, and as the war drew towards its end the conditions under which the Paraguayans fought became more and more terrible.¹

As a matter of fact, the losses in human life sustained by the Paraguayan nation in the course of this war were altogether phenomenal when the total contemporary population of the Republic is taken into consideration. Paraguayan authority has estimated the population of the State at the beginning of the war at some 900,000 souls. This same authority has calculated that at the conclusion of the

¹ See Appendix.

war no less than 450,000 persons had died. 35,000 soldiers had fallen on the field of battle, and 115,000 had perished from disease and hunger. Owing to these latter causes, moreover, more than 300,000 old folk, women, and children had lost their lives.

Owing to the condition of want and privation which obtained at the end of the struggle the mischief did not end here, and thus in the course of five years the unfortunate Republic had lost two-thirds of the number of its entire population. As a matter of fact, this loss was far greater in reality than is expressed by these mere figures. For the flower of the Paraguayan manhood had completely disappeared, to say nothing of those boys who in tens of thousands had filled the places of the grown men who had fallen in the struggle. Thus Paraguay found itself populated by old men and women, and by children of both sexes, the handful of surviving adult males being so meagre as to be quite negligible in quantity.

But the contemplation of this tragic spectacle has led us onwards too rapidly, since we have not yet referred to the manner in which the war was concluded. As has already been said, the final stages were marked by a steadily mounting series of tragedies. As the defeats grew more numerous, so did the number of executions ordered by Lopez. Not only did the officers themselves, whose gallantry had been unable to prevail against superior numbers, suffer in this respect. The vengeance of the *Supremo* was frequently visited on their wives and womenfolk, who paid the penalty of torture and death for supposed faults which were not only not their own, but which in reality had no existence at all. It may, however, be put to the credit of Lopez' sense of fairness in terrorism that he spared his own family in this respect no more than the rest!

It was only natural that after a year or two of this

grim struggle, the battle-ridden soil of Paraguay should have failed to yield its crops, and that the spectre of starvation should have loomed large over the land. Even then the State was not at an end of its resources. Companies of women were sent out to till and sow fresh fields. It was frequently necessary for them to march for several weeks on end before the chosen spot was reached, and in the course of these terrible journeys many hundreds of delicately nurtured ladies expired from want of nourishment and from sheer exhaustion.

This state of affairs continued even after the allied armies, advancing from the south, had taken possession of Asuncion, the capital. For some time the Argentine and Brazilian authorities had caused to be officially proclaimed that which was the mere plain truth—that they were not at war with the Paraguayan nation, but with Francisco Solano Lopez, whom they held to be as much the enemy of Paraguay as of their own States. Nevertheless Lopez, followed now by the scanty band that alone survived from his once numerous army, contrived to keep up the struggle among the northern woodlands, and, continually harassed, made a desperate running fight of it from point to point.

It was in the midst of the forest on the bank of the River Aquidaban that the end came. By that time the ragged remnant of the autocrat's troops were almost naked and on the verge of starvation. The Brazilian pursuit had continually grown closer. On the 1st of March, 1870, occurred the surprise that shattered the final stand, and that cost Francisco Solano Lopez his life. As the autocrat fell, transfixed by a Brazilian lance, the war ended, and the arms of both Paraguayans and allies were simultaneously lowered.

The condition in which Paraguay was left at the conclusion of the great war almost beggars de-

scription. Nothing beyond the wreck of a once powerful State remained to its diminished inhabitants. It was left almost entirely to the old people, the women, and the children to make good those material benefits which had been lost by the death of the nation's manhood. How this was achieved undoubtedly stands for one of the chief glories of the history of Paraguay.

The conclusion of the war, moreover, left the inland State in possession of a genuinely constitutional Government. Although this has since only too frequently been the cause of civil strife, the ideals of a liberal and democratic Government have never been abandoned from that time.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME SALIENT FEATURES OF THE REPUBLIC

Strategical situation of the Republic—Paraguay as a natural centre of inland communications and commerce—Asuncion as the mart of the interior—Future of the capital—Area of the Republic—Frontier complications—The Pilcomayo as a boundary river—Difficulties offered by the exploration of this stream—Its international importance—The Paraguay-Bolivia frontier—Bolivian claims—Constitution of the Paraguayan Republic—Legislative bodies—Scantiness of the members—Method in which elections are conducted—The Ministry—Population of the Republic—Difficulties in the way of a census—Some estimates of the inhabitants—The dwellers in Paraguay proper and in the Chaco—Results of the Paraguayan War—Recent political events—Disastrous effect on the population—Paraguay a bilingual State—The Spanish and Guaraní tongues—Government of the Chaco—Departments of Paraguay proper—A comparison between Asuncion and Montevideo—Paraguayan cities—Distribution of the population—The Army—Uniform and training—Prussian officers in Paraguay—The River Navy of the Republic—Past and present strength of the Paraguayan flotilla.

PARAGUAY may be said to represent the heart of South America. If the metaphor be continued and the continent be compared to the anatomy of a man, it might even be said that the lowly position in latitude of Paraguay would cause it to stand for the stomach rather than the heart of South America. This, again, is appropriate enough, for one of Paraguay's chief occupations is in supplying foodstuffs to itself and to its neighbours !

In any case from a strategical point of view the geographical situation of Paraguay is not a little remarkable. Bisected, roughly, by Capricorn, the inland Republic stands at the gate of the tropics.

To the north and east lie the forests of Brazil; to the west stretches the Chaco of Bolivia and Argentina, while to the south extend the great pastures and agricultural lands of Argentina.

Aided by the waters of those magnificent rivers that wash her territories, the Paraguay and the Alto Paraná, Paraguay represents one of the great natural centres of the inland communications and commerce of South America. Indeed, were a junction possible between the head waters of the Paraguay and those of the southern tributaries of the Amazon, separated as these are by such a comparatively insignificant extent of territory, Asuncion might well rank as the most important future mart of the interior, where the tropical products of the north might be exchanged for the meat and corn of the south, and where the minerals of Bolivia and Peru might be bartered against the sugar and coffee of Brazil.

It is possible that at some rather dim and distant date science may bring about some such consummation as this. But, even without anticipating any such grandiose development, the situation which Paraguay must occupy when the industries of the interior of the continent begin to assume their proper dimensions cannot well fail to be favourable to a point which must largely compensate for such disadvantages as arise from that country's remoteness from the ocean.

From the point of view of area Paraguay is among the smallest of the South American Republics, Uruguay and Ecuador alone out of the ten occupying less area. Even so, the exact size of Paraguay is not known, although it is estimated roughly at one hundred thousand square miles. The reason for this uncertainty is that in some districts the frontiers of Paraguay pass through unexplored country, while in others the exact position of this frontier has still to be established.

Probably some of the most curious circumstances which ever complicated the negotiations concerning a frontier line occurred in connection with the River Pilcomayo, which forms the boundary between Argentina and Paraguay to the west of the Paraguay River. In the ordinary course of events no boundary could be more definite than a river. But this was not so in the case of the Pilcomayo. Certain stretches of this had long defied the efforts of all who endeavoured to explore them. Thus when, in recent years, an expedition under Messrs. Olaf Storm and F. Freund were occupied in following the course of the river from west to east, the party was brought to a halt by the waters of a great swamp in which the river lost itself, the shallowness of the lake forbidding further navigation.

I have referred in a previous book to a later expedition which eventually was the cause of the modifying of the Argentine Paraguayan frontier ; but the matter demands inclusion again here.

This later expedition made the important discovery that a previously little known river, that was given the name of the Confuso, branched off from the Pilcomayo in the neighbourhood of longitude 60°, and, running north of the other stream, was navigable at intervals to the point where it joined the Paraguay at Villa Hayes, midway between Asuncion and Concepcion.

This new river was held, in fact, to be the true Pilcomayo, and its discovery gave rise to a certain amount of political confusion that went to justify its name. Indeed, the bringing to light of the swampy Confuso raked up an important historical question. At the conclusion of the Paraguayan War the United States, accepting the office of arbitrator, had awarded to Argentina the whole of the Chaco as far north as the Pilcomayo River. On the discovery, therefore, of the actual course of the stream which

until then had been known as the Confuso, Argentina, alleging that river to be the Pilcomayo, laid claim to the strip of territory between the two rivers. As, however, the United States award had decreed the Argentine-Paraguayan frontier to lie along the Pilcomayo *that gave into the Paraguay opposite Asuncion*, the joint committee of the two republics appointed to deal with the matter agreed that the southern branch of the river must continue to divide the two countries. Thus another of those numerous but inevitable international questions was settled in that essentially reasonable fashion which has now become characteristic of the Latin continent.

Many difficulties in connection with the north-western frontier which divides Paraguay from Bolivia have still to be overcome. So far the numerous negotiations which have taken place on the subject have been comparatively barren of result. The position, roughly, would seem to be that Bolivia—although that country admits that by the Guijarro-Decoud treaty of 1879 it resigned the Chaco Boreal to Paraguay in return for the latter's renunciation of claims north of the latitude of the Apa—claims that the arrangement fell through. Bolivia asserts, moreover, that the later draft agreements of 1887, 1894, and 1907 were never ratified, and, in short, that a situation which the general public for many years has taken for granted never actually had any existence in fact! Whatever its rights and wrongs may be, no doubt the question will be settled with that same temperate wisdom which characterized the arrangement of the similar question in the south.

The Constitution of the Republic of Paraguay is quite one of the latest evolved in South America, having been drawn up in 1870, when the fall of the younger Lopez freed the country from an autocratic dominion. As in the great majority of republics, the chief Paraguayan legislative bodies are divided

into two houses, a chamber of senators and a chamber of deputies. It cannot be said that these offices are too numerously filled, as the senators are no more than thirteen in number and the deputies are limited to twenty. This somewhat scanty provision of legislators is explained by the fact that the numbers were originally arranged in order to represent a total population of some 300,000—which, in 1870, is said to have been all that the Paraguayan War had left of the heroic inhabitants of the inland State. Since that time, of course, the population of the Republic has steadily increased, but the number of senators and deputies has remained unaltered.

The elections in Paraguay are conducted on a model which is popular in South America, and which has this in its favour, that the dislocation of the political machinery is less acute than in the case of general elections carried on in the British fashion. An election is held every two years. But this election concerns the seats of only one-half of the deputies and one-third of the senators, the remainder retaining their seats until their turn arrives to contest them.

The President is elected for a term of four years, and the Vice-President holds office for the same period. The ministers of state are limited to five, their portfolios being those of the Interior, Agriculture, Justice, Instruction, and Army and Navy. It will be evident from this that the Ministry is fully as compact in its way as are the chambers of the senators and deputies.

An estimate of the population of most of the South American republics is apt to present a certain amount of difficulty, more especially when, as in the case of Paraguay, the native population is large. In the Paraguayan Chaco, for instance, where many of the tribes are still in a condition of savagery, it is clear that in a census of their numbers guesswork must play a very large part. Even in many parts of civi-

lized Paraguay, to the east of the great river, it is practically impossible to take count of the Guaranís in the remoter forest country. Hence the astonishing differences in the figures given by the various authorities.

The larger estimates of these are rendered by the Paraguayans themselves, in which predilection they only conform to a popular weakness throughout the continent—where land is still sufficiently abundant for the various States to watch with pride the increasing number of inhabitants! Some of these estimates undoubtedly overshoot the mark, and need not be taken quite seriously here. Of the reasonable figures put forward Don Arsenio Lopez Decoud suggests a population of 1,000,000, which may be accepted as moderately accurate, although the numbers given by the more cautious fall rather below this.

Of this total 950,000 are held to reside in Paraguay proper, and the remaining 50,000 in the Chaco, these latter, of course, comprising the various tribes of Indians, the great majority of which still remain uncivilized. If the accuracy of this estimate be granted—although it must be said that the census of 1909 was responsible for a total of no more than 633,000—the population of Paraguay approaches that of Uruguay, notwithstanding the fact that the latter Republic possesses a town of the really imposing size of Montevideo. It must be remembered, though, that Paraguay was originally one of the countries in South America most thickly populated with Indians, and that in 1865, just before the Paraguayan War, the population had already attained to nearly a million. But for this desperate campaign, which left alive no more than a third of the Paraguayans, there is no doubt but that the numbers of the inhabitants of the harried State would have amounted to a really important figure.

In considering this matter, moreover, it is impos-

sible to leave out of the question the more recent political events. Even in the twentieth century civil strife has claimed an astonishing number of victims, the most disastrous years in this respect having been 1904, 1908, 1909, 1910, 1911, and 1912. Indeed, Don Arsenio Lopez Decoud states that it is probable that the revolutions have cost the Republic 30 per cent. of its population in the period alone between the years 1904 and 1912. These figures are sufficiently startling ! However, there can be no question here of deaths alone ; for the loss to the State, calculated in this way, must include those who have emigrated from the land for political reasons. In any case no argument beyond such figures as these is needed as an incentive to the Paraguayans to conclude their internal differences as rapidly as possible !

Of these inhabitants of Paraguay the whites and a considerable number of the Indians employ the Spanish language. The Guaraní tongue is nevertheless the popular speech of the masses, and the educated classes are wont to employ it as a subsidiary language to Castilian, Paraguay being thus a bilingual State.

Among its other innumerable uses the all-important Paraguay River serves as a boundary between the two political sections of the State. The western section is that of the Chaco, the level Indian country with its one centre of commercial importance, Villa Hayes, on the bank of the great river. This great district is parcelled out into military commands, although the influence of these does not yet penetrate into the interior, which is still largely unknown.

The eastern section constitutes Paraguay proper, and is made up of twelve departments, each containing a certain number of districts. As the list of these departments and districts makes somewhat lengthy reading I will refer the reader to the Appendix for their perusal.

Unlike that of a number of other South American republics, the population of Paraguay has not tended to cluster together in any particularly large centres. In this respect it is instructive to compare its capital with the Uruguayan metropolis. Whereas Montevideo possesses more than a third of a million inhabitants, it is probable that the population of Asuncion does not exceed 80,000. The sole remaining Paraguayan towns, moreover, which run into five figures are those of Villa Rica and Concepción, the populations of which are respectively estimated at 30,000 and 16,000.

A country such as Paraguay, however, is by no means necessarily the worse off for the lack of any notably swollen urban centres. Indeed, there is little doubt but that many of the other republics would find their economic conditions not a little improved by a dispersal over the land of a certain number of the superfluous inhabitants who have flocked together to some of the great cities. So far as Paraguay is concerned, being so far little interested in manufactures on a large scale, the present distribution of the population would seem to be the most favourable for her staple industries.

To conclude the first general survey at the more salient features of Paraguay, we may take a glimpse at the army and navy of the Republic. It will have been seen from the foregoing historical pages that the traditions of the Paraguayan army have continued high throughout its history. Never did they stand higher than in the great Paraguayan War which ended in the death of the younger Lopez. Very long, however, before that struggle was brought to a conclusion the Paraguayan regular army had ceased to be, and its ranks had been filled up by the ordinary inhabitants of the country, who continued to step into the rapid breaches until scarcely

any others but old men and young boys were left in the ranks.

At the present time the standing army of Paraguay is not numerous, comprising as it does some two thousand men of all arms. Owing to the nature of the occupations of a large portion of the Paraguayan populace, however, it would be easy to add rapidly to this number in time of war. In recent years Paraguay has followed the example of various other South American republics in choosing Germany as the model upon which to build up her army. As a result of this the uniform of the Paraguayan troops is to all intents and purposes German, and the instruction and organization of the men carried on according to the precepts of Potsdam. In order to attend to the organization of this a number of Prussian officers have been at work in Asuncion, while at the same time Paraguayan officers have been attached to the German Army in Europe. A regular military college, moreover, was founded in Asuncion in 1905.

The question of the future status of these numerous Prussian military officials in South America after the European War is a sufficiently interesting one, though it is, at the time of writing, too early to venture even a supposition on this subject. It is certain that the unpopularity of Germany at the present time throughout the continent is very marked. What effect this will eventually exert upon the South American armies trained on the German model remains to be seen. In the meantime it must be said that, in the eyes of those not trained to admire it, the aspect of the leather helmet and the Prussian frock-coat is completely out of place in the sunny latitudes of the Southern continent.

Considering that Paraguay possesses no ocean coastline, an imposing Paraguayan navy is not to be looked for. It may even be a matter of some

surprise to a good many people to hear that Paraguay possesses a navy at all! It must be remembered, however, that the waters of the great River Paraguay constitute an international highway, and that from the port of Asuncion the frontiers of Bolivia, Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay may be reached without penetrating as far as the ocean. Indeed, the importance of a river navy, was fully demonstrated in the Paraguayan War, when a regular campaign was fought on the waters of the Paraguay, and when more than one pitched battle occurred between the Paraguayan war vessels and those of the Brazilians and the Argentines. But all this has been fully told in a previous chapter.

At the present time the maritime power of Paraguay is insignificant compared even with the river fleet she possessed at the period of the great war. She possesses, indeed, one or two gunboats, which are in reality little more than converted tugs, and, although these would doubtless put up a gallant enough fight, they could not, in the nature of things, offer any effective resistance to the modern armed vessels with which some of the other republics patrol the great rivers. Fortunately, there would seem very little chance at the present day of any collision of the kind occurring. It must be said, however, that the career of these small vessels has by no means been uneventful, as they have played a leading part in several of the revolutions, and on more than one occasion have been instrumental in turning the scale of power.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PARAGUAYAN OF TO-DAY

Respective proportions of the upper and lower classes of the Republic—Some conservative indications—Taste in tea—The triumph of yerba maté—The Paraguayan lady—Matters concerning ease and comfort in costume—Mr. C. B. Mansfield on Paraguay of the mid-nineteenth century—Patriarchal simplicity of the contemporary society—Asuncion market as it used to be—A picturesque spectacle—Visiting—Dress of the ladies—Hospitality of the inhabitants of Asuncion—Some compliments in Guaraní—A comparison between the Paraguayan and the Argentine gaucho—Influence of the Jesuits on the general population—The Paraguayan as an agriculturist—His occasional exuberance—Labour conditions of the Republic—Introduction of the strike—Educational problems—Proportion of illiterates to the population—Difficulties in the rural districts—Asuncion as the centre of journalism—Work of the South American Missionary Society in the Chaco—The feat of Mr. W. Barbroke Grubb—Success of the enterprise—The currency of Paraguay—Gold and paper dollars—Fluctuations of the paper dollar—The effect of insignificant values upon the cleanliness of the paper.

IT would, of course, be unreasonable to expect that the inhabitants of a land that, apart from all other circumstances, has suffered from such long periods of political isolation in the past, and the remoteness of whose geographical situation is only now in the act of being overcome, should resemble in the matter of social ethics the dwellers in the neighbouring republics who have now for generations enjoyed the closest contact with the other civilized centres of the world. This naturally does not apply to the topmost layers of society, which in Paraguay, as elsewhere throughout the globe, conform to the

standards and conventions of London, Paris, New York, and Buenos Aires.

But—again in Paraguay as elsewhere—the actual bulk of this particular stratum is sufficiently slender, and from the point of view of mere numbers it is quite insignificant compared with the mass of the general population. In any case, sandwiched in between the rapidly increasing evidences of the progressive spirit is much that is old-fashioned—and that does not necessarily lose in the least from that condition. This is to be judged from matters which may appear—and generally are—quite unimportant in themselves. The teas, for instance, of India, Ceylon, and China have not yet succeeded in making any appreciable headway against the popular yerba maté—and it would be strange had they done so, considering that the chief source of Paraguayan tea is, after all, Paraguay, which must be expected to support its home industries. Paraguayan ladies of the twentieth century will not disdain to be photographed in an attitude which depicts them as leaning on so out of date an instrument as a harp! This attitude, as a matter of fact, suits many of the handsome Paraguayan ladies most admirably, and, as I do not think that many of them actually take the trouble to play these harps, it does not follow that they are in reality so Early Victorian as the romantic photographers would have them appear!

Perhaps I can put such matters as these in a nutshell by explaining that the average Paraguayan lady has not yet consented to affect the tailor-made fashions. In this she is in all probability wise, since the flowing garments that she prefers are undoubtedly better adapted, not only to her own particular type of beauty but to the climate. There is no doubt, indeed, that the suspicion of the lotus which enters into the Paraguayan atmosphere permits

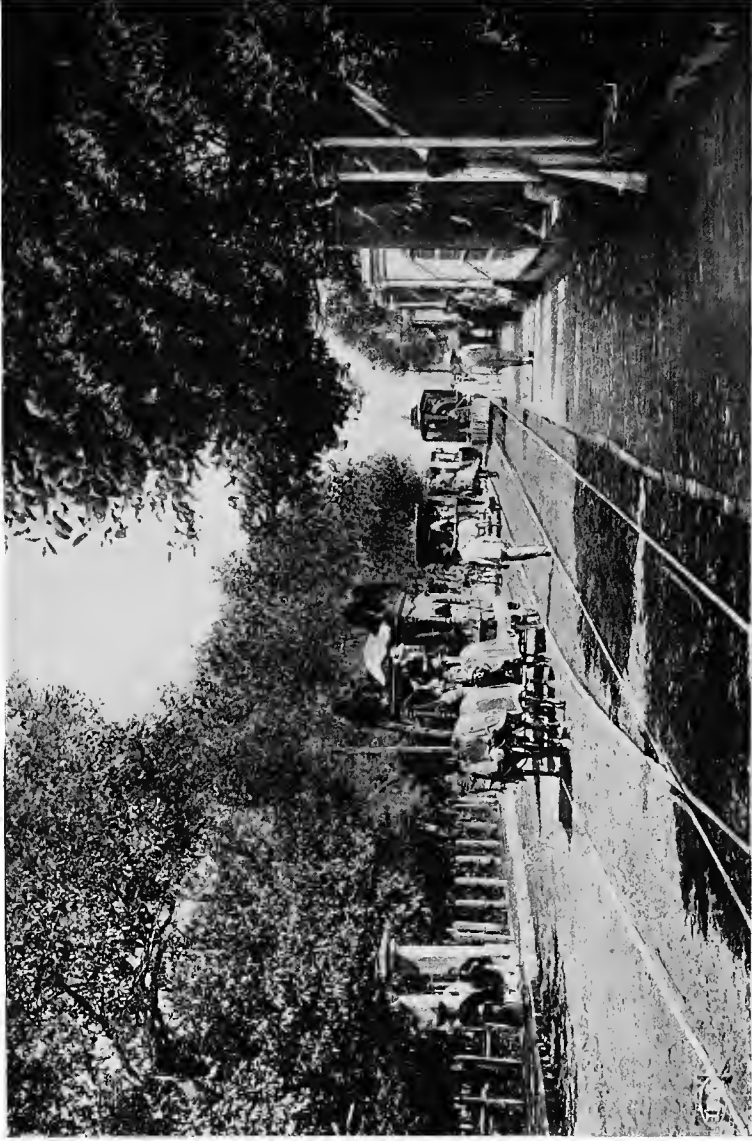
a certain unconventionality of costume that is by no means without its advantages.

This, as a matter of fact, is particularly evident among the poorer classes, and even among some of the less flourishing of the bourgeoisie. These, having more regard for matters of ease and comfort than for the straiter-laced ethics of costume, do not disdain to walk the warm earth on their bare feet, while their women will contentedly puff smoke from at least as many cigars during the day as the men.

Even in the days when Paraguay languished under the heel of her dictators, the Paraguayans would seem to have made the most of their free-and-easy lives. No one has borne more striking testimony to this than Mr. C. B. Mansfield, who visited the country in the early 1850's, when its inhabitants had by the decrees of their tyrants been so long shut off from the outer world that their society had attained to a state of patriarchal simplicity. Surely no modern Paraguayan need think the worse of his ancestors for the intellectual ignorance which was thus strangely forced upon them for those generations. Similar results must have occurred in whatever corner of the world such measures might have been applied.

These remarks of Mansfield's concerning the general social atmosphere of Asuncion in the middle of the nineteenth century are undoubtedly invaluable, and I will quote from them at some length.

"It is curious," he says, "to see some of the countrymen of the better sort coming into town on horseback, with no shoes or stockings, the long fringe of their calzoncillos dangling about their bare legs, and their toes stuck in massive silver stirrups, silver also decorating their bridles and headstalls with a considerable weight of metal. But the market itself, as I said, is a very pretty sight, being crowded all the week round, Sundays included, with women



AN ASUNCION TRAMWAY FUNERAL.

in white (as snow) cotton dresses, their petticoats flounced with lace, coarse or fine according to the wearer, about a foot deep, and above the flounce a broad band of embroidery in black wool like that of the chemise, not to speak of the scarlet girdle ; with here and there a man, equally in white, but with a scarlet or blue poncho slung over one shoulder."

Asuncion market, with its crowding buyers and sellers, its fruits, cakes, sweetmeats, live animals, and all other merchandise, is still a sufficiently picturesque spot ; but it can no longer, alas ! present as glowing a picture as this.

Mansfield was on friendly terms with many Paraguayans of the higher orders of that period, and his description of the state of society just then is more or less what would be expected from its long period of artificial isolation. Mansfield says :—

"The more I see of these simple people the more I like them : there are three or four families whom, though I have only known them a month, I should be sorry to see for the last time, if I were going away to-morrow. The artlessness of the young ladies is particularly pleasing ; of course, they are utterly devoid of education, beyond reading and writing. An elderly lady of one of the best families asked me confidentially the other day whether people went by land or by sea from Buenos Aires to the United States, displaying an amount of ignorance of the state of the country in their own vicinity which perhaps you will not at once appreciate. The ladies are always visible from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m., except between twelve and three ; in the morning one commonly has to wait a little while till they are dressed ; in the evening they generally sit in state to receive visitors in the *patios* of their houses, or on the causeway in the street, under the corridor :

their morning dress is about the style of an English housemaid on a workday, and that for the evening like ditto on Sunday ; their ball and holiday costumes about the same as that of an English lady of the sensible sort. One or two families, who are a little ahead of their neighbours in following the *estilo de abajo* (the 'style of below'—down the river, which includes Buenos Aires and all the rest of the world), I suspect have even introduced stays.

"A great deal of my time is consumed in visiting. The oftener you come to see any family the better they are pleased, and no length of time is too long for one to stay. . . . The Guaraní forms a never-failing source of talk and fun ; for I make them tell me words, and when they have repeated them a sufficient number of times for me to be satisfied of the phonetics I write them down. . . ."

Mansfield was justly proud of the knowledge of the Guaraní tongue which he picked up in this fashion, and of his power of rendering his thanks in such Guaraní compliments as, "Nde pügweüghpe capüpecha, ndepópe rosapotricha"—"I am under your feet like the grass, and in your hand like a rose." No doubt so distinguished a scholar as Mansfield took care that this rendering of Guaraní should be accurate. There cannot fail to exist a certain number of Englishmen whose opinion on this point must be invaluable—but the author cannot claim to be one of these !

Dealing with the populace of the country *en masse*—a somewhat perilous procedure—it may be said that the Paraguayan *chacrero* is a milder and more peaceable man than was the Argentine gaucho: it is necessary to use the past tense in referring to the latter, for the simple reason that the genuine wild son of the southern *Campo* is now to all intents and purposes extinct.

The Paraguayan *paisano*, on the other hand,

remains much what he has been since the time when the country became definitely settled. A circumstance which perhaps influenced the general population of Paraguay, more than any other was the dispersal of the Jesuit establishments that have already been referred to, and the distribution throughout the province of all those Guaraní agriculturists who had until then been retained in their communities apart from the main populace.

Thus the difference between the Paraguayan *paisano* and the Argentine gaucho is largely owing to the fact that the Indian strain of the former springs from a much more peaceable ancestry than such native blood as the true gaucho possessed. The temperament of the Paraguayan is rather that of an agriculturist, while the gaucho has never deigned to fill any, less adventurous rôle than that of a stockrider.

It must not be imagined from this, however, that the character of the Paraguayan populace is necessarily lamblike. Generally speaking, the Paraguayan of the masses is amiable and easy-going; but there is a wild strain in him that is apt to reveal itself with some exuberance at times. On such occasions he is rather apt to be handy with firearms, not necessarily from malicious motives, or even with the settled intention of damaging any one, but rather from a surfeit of animal spirits and *caña*, the native rum. In these days, however, when it is the fashion for almost every *peon* to carry a revolver, there are doubtless many employers of labour who sigh for the comparatively good old days of the less comprehensive knife!

Of late years the Paraguayan has made strenuous endeavours to bring his labour conditions up to the level of those of the neighbouring republics. To this end the strike has been introduced—a weapon of labour which the old-timer would find it extremely

difficult to associate with the atmosphere of the inland State. Nevertheless, the strike has arrived—a more significant sign of the times even than the recently constructed houses of modern architecture in Asuncion.

Notable progress has been made in the educational problems of the Republic. The simplest forms of education are apt to present some difficulties in a country whose population is as sparse and scattered as that of Paraguay. In 1908 it was estimated that the number of the inhabitants of Paraguay over the age of six years was 411,131, out of which total 254,171 were illiterate. In Asuncion itself is a university, as well as a number of secondary schools. It is in the remoter rural districts that the most difficult educational problems present themselves; but in the natural course of events these must automatically disappear when the districts in question are more fully opened up.

That which applies to education in Paraguay holds good in the case of journalism. In common with every other Latin-American centre, Asuncion is generously supplied with newspapers and periodicals, and the journalist here enjoys the high standing that is the right of his profession. The journalistic enterprise, however, is almost entirely confined to the capital.¹

The religion of the country is, of course, Roman Catholic; but all creeds are tolerated in accordance with the liberality of the age. In connection with this, mention may be made of the Anglican mission establishments in the Chaco. This movement was begun in 1889, when the Church of England South American Missionary Society sent a pioneer, Mr. W. Barbrooke Grubb, into the then completely unknown wilds of that part of the Chaco inhabited by the Lengua Indians.

¹ See Appendix.

Barbrooke Grubb's feats among the Indians are now becoming familiar to many whose interests are not directly connected with South America. At the same time, the fame of this "Livingstone of South America" is not yet as widespread as it deserves to be. The story of his first entry into the Chaco, of his self-introduction to the savage and menacing natives, and of his almost miraculous escapes from death at their hands, is to be excelled in none of the missionary annals throughout the world. Its results are plain to see—to all those who care to take the trouble to enter the Chaco!—in the church, schools, and in the centre of intellectual and industrial progress that now flourishes as a bright spot in the midst of the strange Chaco country.

In order to end this chapter on a less exalted note, we may turn to a topic which has so far possessed very little interest in the Chaco, the currency of Paraguay. The dollar here is arranged, as in Argentina, on a double basis. The gold dollar is the equivalent of the gold dollar throughout South America and of that of the United States. But the paper dollar—the national dollar of the Republic—fluctuates with the vicissitudes of the State. Of late years it must be admitted that the tendency of this paper money has been to deteriorate. Thus in 1910 the average rate of exchange was just under 70 dollars to the pound sterling. In 1912 the average was nearly 76 dollars; in 1913 it was just below 77, and during 1914 the rate of exchange shot up to 100 dollars to the pound!

The effect of this is evident in small matters as well as in large. As nickel coins appear to be no longer in circulation, the wear and tear to which the paper money is now subjected will be evident when it is explained that, at this last rate, a dollar note is worth a fraction more than twopence, and

a fifty-centavos note stands as the equivalent of a shade more than a penny! Representing such insignificant values, they pass from hand to hand as freely as do copper coins in England, and the lamentable result, so far as the surface and cleanliness of the note is concerned, can easily be imagined!

CHAPTER XV

PHYSICAL FEATURES

Paraguayan mountains and forests—Rivers—Situation of the Iguazú Falls
Principal natural characteristics—The Paraguay River—Its source—
The Lake of Xarayes—Quality of imagination as displayed in the
ancient maps—The imagined and the real importance of this sheet of
water—Some features of the Paraguay River—Navigable limit of the
stream—Circumstances which favour shipping—Differences between
the Paraguay and the Paraná—Tributaries—Similar purposes served
by the Apa and the Pilcomayo—Importance of some of the affluents—
The Tebicuary—Characteristics of the western tributaries—The
Pilcomayo River—An ill-defined stream—A curious phenomenon—
The Alto Paraná River—The Guayra Falls—Tributaries of the Alto
Paraná—Paraguayan mountains—Isolated hills in the Chaco—The
chains of Amambay and Mbaracayú—Characteristics of the hill
country—Paraguayan lakes—The Chaco inundations—Lakes Ypoa
and Camba—Lake Ipacarái—A beauty spot of Paraguay—The
Estero Ñeembucu—Climate of the Republic—A Paraguayan claim
—Temperatures—The annual monthly rainfall—Favourable distribu-
tion of rain for agriculture—Minerals.

SPEAKING generally, it may be said that the physical aspects of Paraguay are of an agreeable, rather than of a grand, nature. The inland State, for instance, lacks any mountains comparable with those of Brazil to the east, or with those of Bolivia to the west, very few Paraguayan ranges—even on the eastern frontier, where they are boldest—exceeding fifteen hundred feet in height.

Paraguay, moreover, possesses nothing gigantic in the way of deserts, lakes, or plains, though it is true that the wealth of forest which covers the rolling country is sufficiently notable. In rivers alone can the Republic pride itself on possessing something

phenomenal, although even here it has, strictly speaking, been deprived of one of the most notable features in the world ; for the famous Falls of Iguazú, which occur where the three States of Paraguay, Argentina, and Brazil meet, are actually, bounded on the one side by Argentina and on the other by Brazil, the Paraguayan shore being just beyond the reach of the troubled waters.

The principal natural characteristics of Paraguay, then, are lightly rolling, forest-covered hills and valleys, two magnificent rivers fed by innumerable streams, the curious plains of the Chaco, and a few definite mountain ranges of quite inconsiderable height.

Since in many respects its rivers constitute Paraguay's most important natural features, we may deal with these first. The more important of the two main streams which water the Paraguayan soil is, naturally, the Paraguay River. The source of this stream is well to the north of the frontier of the inland Republic. It rises, in fact, in the Matto Grosso plateau, within a metaphorical stone's-throw of the headwaters of some of the southern streams of the Amazon system. Its actual source is a Brazilian district known as *Las Siete Lagunas*, or "The Seven Lakes," in latitude $14^{\circ} 35'$ south.

The Paraguay River begins by running due south, coursing with considerable velocity as far as latitude 16° south. After this its slackening speed is marked by a series of strongly defined curves, which continue until the swampy Lake of Xarayes is reached. This Lake of Xarayes, it should be said, has played a much greater part in ancient records than was its right. Up to a certain point it has a good deal in common with Raleigh's mythical lake on the banks of which stood the golden city of Manoa. It is true that, although this latter lake has now been completely wiped off the earth by



STEAM TRAMWAY : ASUNCION.

the modern map-makers, the waters of Xarayes still make their appearance in the atlases of to-day. But the process of shrinking which they have undergone is of a sensational order!

In the ancient maps—when the quality of imagination was of a more practical value than it is to-day—the Lake of Xarayes appears as a vast sheet of water in the centre of the continent. In the eyes of the seventeenth and early eighteenth century geographer this amazing expanse of water dwarfed Titicaca—just as, incidentally, the stream of the Paraguay River was made to appear considerably broader than that of the Amazon. There it lay—*peu connu*, as a less sanguine Frenchman admitted in a legend beneath its name—with its arms stretching out towards some imaginary mountains, a thing that could not fail to catch the eye at once, being one of the most salient objects of the map.

To-day he who is unfamiliar with the situation of Lake Xarayes will have some difficulty in tracing its modest outline. In any case it is through these shallow waters of reduced fame that the Paraguay River makes its way, and, after having received a number of tributaries on its left bank, flows into the Paraguayan Republic a little to the south of latitude 22°.

Before referring to the numerous tributaries which enter the Paraguay River during its passage through the inland Republic, it would be as well to observe some of the features of the main stream. Although to the north of Asuncion it is customary to employ vessels of less draught than those which ply between the Paraguayan capital and the Atlantic, nevertheless the stream is navigable for moderate-sized steam vessels for considerable stretches beyond the northern frontier. Indeed, it is claimed that the river is navigable to a point as far to the north as latitude 16° south. In any case the species of craft which can

ascend so far as this comprises nothing beyond steam launches.

So far as the Paraguayan shore is concerned, however, the stream that washes the entire length of this territory, is navigable by important vessels. The river, moreover, is entirely unbroken by rapids, and the current is inclined to be less at the mercy of shifting sandbanks than that of the lower reaches constituting the Paraná. One of the circumstances, indeed, which chiefly strike the traveller, ascending the river system, is the absence in the Paraguay of those innumerable lowly islands—many of which come into being and die away, in the course of a few decades—that dot the waters of the Paraná. Seeing, moreover, that the current is moderate, the Paraguayan is fortunate in having an almost ideal river to navigate.

The majority of the tributaries of the Paraguay River flow in from the east by way of its left bank. From north to south, the first of these is the Apa. This stream, though diametrically opposed in its direction, serves an almost exactly similar purpose in the north to that which the Pilcomayo does in the south. The Pilcomayo comes across from the west to cut off Argentina, which has encroached for some hundreds of miles on the western bank of the river, facing Paraguayan soil on the east. The Apa runs from the east to cut off Brazil, which has encroached for some hundreds of miles on the eastern bank of the river, facing Paraguayan soil in the west.

Leaving the subject of these two curiously consistent rivers, we arrive at the River Aquidabán, and, farther to the south again, the Ipané. Some idea of the importance of the Paraguay even in these upper stretches may be gathered from the fact that both these tributaries are of a length approaching two hundred miles.

In commercial importance, however, these two

streams are outdone by the next tributary to the south, the Jejui, which is an important navigable river. But it is the last tributary on this bank to be noted which is the most important of all. This is the Tebicuary, which joins the main river to the south of Asuncion, between the ports of Villa Franca and Villa del Pilar. The Tebicuary, which possesses a number of tributaries of its own, rises in the Sierra de Caápucú. Its dimensions will be evident when it is explained that it enters the main stream by two mouths, the breadth of the first of these being over half a mile, and that of the second exceeding a third of a mile.

These constitute practically all the tributaries of the great river that are Paraguayan on both banks. Nothing of the kind is received from the opposite bank of the main river, where the dead level of the Chaco with its loose soil tends to encourage such streams as exist to overflow their low shores, and to transform all the neighbouring country into a vast lake. The effect of the countless trunks of palm-trees as they emerge in their groves from the waters is most curious.

This is the case, too, even in parts of the important Pilcomayo River which divides Paraguay from Argentina. The source of the Pilcomayo is in Bolivia, in the neighbourhood of that of the Rio Grande, and, considering its great length, the stream is most curiously ill-defined in many of the districts through which it passes. Even in those parts where the depth is sufficient for small steamers the abundance of snags which infest the current frequently make navigation difficult in the extreme.

Needless to say, the cause of all this waterlogged timber is the loose alluvial soil, which, when eaten into by the waters, crumbles into the stream, bearing with it the trees that had been rooted in it. The author has himself seen the effect of a storm

which raised considerable waves on one of these streams. As the waves beat upon the low shore one great length of the bank fell in after another, and the effect of the lines of tropical trees toppling forward into the water was not a little extraordinary.

A very different state of affairs is to be met with in the Alto Paraná, the second of Paraguay's main streams. The Alto Paraná, which rises in the State of Goyaz in Brazil, is essentially a rocky stream, although here and there it swells out into large lake-like expanses, one of the chief of which, extending itself just above the Guayra Falls, is five miles or so in width. These Guayra Falls occur at the point where the Paraná River begins to wash Paraguayan territory. They are said to be two hundred feet or so short of the height of the Iguazú Falls; but the volume of water projected by the Guayra Falls is considerably greater. The first passage of the Alto Paraná along the Paraguayan shore is extremely rapid, and the current, which has carved a deep bed for itself, is much disturbed by rocks and broken waters.

It is true that as the river approaches its junction with the Paraguay it becomes navigable for light draught stern-wheel steamers. Nevertheless the stream may be said to be remarkable for its grand and picturesque scenery rather than for any particular navigable qualities, considering the size of the river. As may be supposed, the Alto Paraná possesses no tributaries which may be compared with the principal affluents of the Paraguay. The chief of those which traverse Paraguayan soil are the Acaray, the Tacuarí, and the Monday, the last stream being rather more than a hundred miles in length.

It has already been remarked in this chapter that Paraguay possesses no mountains of the kind which would be considered of the slightest importance in Bolivia or Brazil. The plains of the Chaco region are,



GUAYRÁ FALLS.

of course, broken by no elevation worthy of anything approaching the name of mountain, although one or two isolated elevations are to be met with here and there, and although on the Bolivian border to the north the well-defined range of the Cordilleras de Chochis springs up. But these mountains occur in a district where the features of the Chaco proper do not obtain.

Two of the principal mountain chains to the east of the Paraguay River are those of Amambay and Mbaracayú, both of which are prolongations of that very extensive Brazilian range which runs parallel with the coast. It is unnecessary to enter here into the ramifications of these hills, or even into a disquisition concerning the various names by which their subdivisions are known, for the nomenclature here is apt to be a little confusing.

It may be taken that these elevations lack that significance which appertains to so many of the South American chains. In themselves they constitute no barrier to the opening up of the country. As a rule they are easy to traverse, the gradient of the slopes being in most parts moderately gentle. That which is apt to form an obstacle to the traveller is the thick vegetation which in many districts covers these somewhat lowly mountains from their summits to the banks of the little stream which so frequently goes plashing along the valley. The timber of these forests is dealt with elsewhere.

Paraguay is sparsely provided with lakes. There are times when a new-comer to the Chaco, seeing himself surrounded by enormous stretches of inland water, must receive with incredulity the information that the Chaco does not contain a single lake. Yet this is true enough, and the great sheets of water which abound there at different periods are merely the result of inundations, and must not be regarded as permanent.

This, of course, is not the case in Paraguay proper, where exist several lakes of comparatively modest dimensions. One of the most curious of these is Lake Ypoa in the neighbourhood of the Paraguay River, a little to the north of the River Tebicuary. This sheet of water is situated in an unusually flat region, and is somewhat difficult to be adapted to practical purposes, being surrounded by swamps which are frequently so extensive as to make the true shores of the lake difficult of approach. A smaller lake, Camba, to the south of Ypoa, is situated in similar country; but the swamps here are by no means so extensive.

A far more beautiful sheet of water is Lake Iparacaf, situated to the east of Asuncion. The shores of this, as a matter of fact, constitute one of the popular beauty spots of Paragúay, and are dotted with pleasure resorts such as San Bernardino.

Beyond this there is a vast extent of swampy water in the south-western corner of the Republic, the Estero Ñeembucu, which is sometimes known by courtesy as a lake, and a few true lakes in the centre of the country such as those of Aguaracaty, Mandivú, and Ypita..

As regards the climate of Paraguay, an enthusiastic Paraguayan makes the following claim: "Let us begin with a categorical statement, dictated by almost six lustra of meticulous observation, and by an ample comparison with all the climates of the earth: *Within the limits of practical possibilities the climate of Paraguay realizes the conditions of an ideal climate.*"

This is a bold claim, but it is justified to a far greater degree than is usually the case with such assertions. In the first place, it may be said that, considering its situation, the summer heat of Paraguay is by no means excessive. In the neighbourhood of Asuncion, at all events, it is rare even in

December, January, and February for the thermometer to register over 100° Fahrenheit. In winter the record will occasionally fall nearly as low as 40° Fahrenheit, but in the daytime it is nothing unusual for the reading to exceed 80° even in July or August.

The rainy season, moreover, occurs in the summer, a circumstance that, from the visitor's point of view—since Paraguay is a winter rather than a summer resort—is much to be commended.

The figures below give the average monthly rainfall throughout the year, as calculated by a Paraguayan authority. The quantities are worked out in millimetres:—

	mm.		mm.
January	196	July	98
February	151	August	63
March	137	September	125
April	181	October	196
May	142	November	163
June	106	December	160

It will be seen from this that, if the distribution of the rainfall be convenient for the tourist, it is also favourable for an infinitely more important object, the agricultural growths of the country. For it is a matter of the utmost interest to these industries that the seasons should not be divided into alternate periods of drought and downpour as is the case in so many tropical countries. In Paraguay a certain amount of moisture is always at hand from one year's end to another, to compensate for the desiccating effects of the brilliant sunshine. It is largely owing to this, of course, that such an unusual luxuriance is evident in the vegetation of the Republic.

Very few of the more precious minerals, it may be said, are met with in Paraguay. Iron abounds in many parts, but has not yet been subjected to any industrial tests of importance. Much copper is said

to exist in Encarnación and Caápuquí. Manganese, too, is said to be abundant in various parts, more especially in the Cordillerita, and marble is also found. In 1779 important deposits of mercury were supposed to have been discovered in some district or other situated at a distance of 150 miles from Asunción. The record of the exact locality, however, would seem to have been lost. It is, indeed, probable enough that, since no measures were suggested from Spain—to which country samples of the mineral were sent in 1779—much was lacking in either the quality or the quantity of the supposed deposit.

CHAPTER XVI

TRAFFIC AND DEVELOPMENT

The establishment of the steam ferry across the Alto Paraná—A momentous link—The shadow of contemporary events—Results of the Great War—Economic situation—A postponement of benefits—Country traversed by the line—The garden of South America—The journey by rail from Buenos Aires to Asuncion—The ferry from Zárate to Ibicuy—From the Paraná to the Uruguay—Ramifications of the system—An enchanting landscape—Peculiarities of the Misiones earth—The passage of the Alto Paraná—Paraguay—Sub-tropical exuberance of the landscape—Effects of the international crisis on the time-table—Influence of the railway—Political considerations—Industrial impetus—Forthcoming railroad connection with Brazil—Extensive international ramifications—A new southern line—Paraguay's future as a tourist resort—The attractions of Asuncion and San Bernardino—Other points of interest—Some waterfalls and ruins—Local travelling—Difficulties of the by-ways—Bullock carts—Inconveniences of the soil—Chaco inundations.

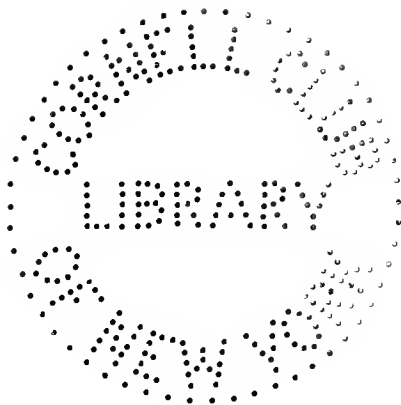
IT was in 1913 that occurred one of the most important events in the history of Paraguay. It is true that this was in no way connected with politics, presidents, or constitutions. All that actually occurred, in fact, was the establishment of the steam ferry across the Alto Paraná River, by means of which communication was opened up between the Paraguay Central Railway and the Argentine North Eastern Railway. But the link was actually of the most momentous order; for it was the last in the lengthy chain by which the inland State of Paraguay for the first time in its history was given a direct road to the sea independent of the watery highway offered by its great river.

By means of this steam ferry, which bodily transports the trains between Posadas on the Argentine shore and Encarnación on the opposite Paraguayan bank, Asuncion is now in direct railway communication not only with Buenos Aires, but with the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo in addition. The true importance of this achievement has been considerably obscured by the shadow of contemporary events. From the point of worldwide acknowledgment it was certainly unfortunate that the fruit of all the years of work and preparation should have come to maturity just at a period when the countries of the Rio de la Plata—suffering from the European complications hatched in the Balkans—were undergoing a financial crisis. This in itself was sufficient to depress the spirits of the most resolute shareholders; but when in the following year the great European War broke out, scarcely a ray of light seemed to be left on the horizon.

It was inevitable, of course, that this gigantic catastrophe should lead to an unprecedented situation in Paraguay. Thus, instead of the "bumper" freights and financial profit which in ordinary circumstances could scarcely have failed to attend the enterprise, a far less satisfactory situation had to be faced. This has been admirably explained in the Paraguay Central Railway's report for the year ending on the 30th of June, 1915:—

"The situation of Paraguay has been entirely abnormal: the economic life of the country passed through a period of rapid changes. Much of the business effected during the past year has been incidental to this abnormal condition; that is to say, is perhaps due less to a healthy increase in the output of produce, where increase has occurred, than to efforts to adjust changing values to the new conditions.

"For example, produce has in some cases been





SCENE ON THE LINE TO PARAGUAY.

exported in satisfaction of debts abroad, whereas in normal times money payments would have been made. In some cases the depreciation of the currency enabled exporters to purchase native products at unusually favourable prices, but the rise in freights, etc., and the congestion of ocean traffic soon tended to make these profits illusory. The depreciation of the currency, enabled the timber companies to save on wages and to sell in Argentina, where a stock of Paraguayan timber has accumulated. On the other hand, the same cause affected the internal cattle trade adversely, and the depreciation of the paper money has, perhaps more than anything else, contributed to the impoverishment of the people."

It is clear enough that a situation such as this could not fail to result in a fall in traffic receipts. But, although the vastly increased commerce that had been anticipated with so much reason has not yet materialized, there is no question whatever but that its advent is merely postponed, and that when once the normal situation has been re-established in South America and throughout the world, the benefits of this most important railway communication must be experienced to the full. In the meantime some of the results of the traffic workings of recent years will be found in the Appendix.

It has practically become an axiom now among the railway experts of South America that a railway line makes its own traffic. This has proved the case even where the lines have been flung out into a desert and unpopulated country. As it happens, the region through which this new line passes, both to the north and south of the Alto Paraná River, is neither desert nor unpopulated. It is, in fact, that very garden of South America in which the Jesuits of old raised their varied and very abundant crops. All that has been required to invest these districts with their former smiling fertility has been the touch

of a railway line, and a few whiffs of smoke from an engine ! But for this matter-of-fact magic the neighbourhood has cried out in vain until now—and even now, as has been explained, the magic touch cannot become operative until the return of normal conditions.

The journey by rail from the Atlantic coast to Asuncion is a sufficiently remarkable one, and affords a notable instance of the triumph of the engineer over natural obstacles. Should the traveller start from Buenos Aires he will soon discover that, in the ramifications of the railway route, the stream of the Alto Paraná is not the only one which separates him from Asuncion. Less than three hours' run, as a matter of fact, brings him to the bank of the mighty main river itself, the Paraná proper. Here, at the port of Zárate waits the giant steam ferry-boat that receives the long train in three divisions on its deck, and that sets out on her voyage along the waters of the river. To those who choose to remain within the railway carriages the sensations of this completely noiseless progress, void, moreover, of any vibration, is sufficiently strange.

A far more interesting plan, however, is to alight from the railway carriage and to mount to the spacious upper deck, whence the ramifications of the various channels of the river can be observed. After four hours or so of this passage of the still waters, the square bow of the ferry fits itself into the groove prepared for it at Ibicuy on the Entre-Rios shore. After this the train rumbles off on to the land lines, forms itself again into a single row of carriages, and makes its way to the north through the Argentine province of Entre-Rios.

At the important railway centre of Concordia the waters of another great South American river, the Uruguay, come in sight. At this point, by ferrying across the stream—but on this occasion independently

of the railway carriages—and entering the train at the Uruguayan city of Salto on the opposite bank, direct communication is available with Montevideo, the Uruguayan capital that reposes on the northern bank of the great estuary, just where the Atlantic Ocean ends and the river begins.

From this point onwards the interest of the journey waxes with an almost bewildering rapidity. By the time that the junction of Monte Caseros has been reached, the wealth of verdure and blossom that comes pressing forward to the line at intervals has notably increased. Here and there is caught a glimpse of the upper waters of the Uruguay River—clear and sparkling reaches, these, that differ completely from the broad yellow flood nearer the mouth.

As the train enters the northernmost Argentine province of Misiones—the northernmost, that is to say, so far as these eastern territories are concerned—the enchanting slopes, valleys, and patches of woodland make it perfectly clear that the garden of South America chosen of old by the Jesuits has been entered. The soil has become a rich red—a tint that in its way suggests the Devon earth. This ruddy shade is characteristic of these regions that still largely await development, of the coffee lands of Brazil, and of a great part of Paraguay itself.

It is undoubtedly fertile to a degree, this warm, bright earth of these favoured neighbourhoods. It possesses, moreover, various peculiarities of its own. In periods of drought its dust clouds are formidable, and in times of heavy rain the mud into which it resolves itself is not only unusually deep, but at the same time most extraordinarily tenacious. He who takes an involuntary roll in the mud of Paraguay and of these neighbouring districts must make up his mind to bear the ruddy stains on his clothes for a very long time to come; for it is no more to be

banished by a casual application of the ordinary brush than is a host of swamp mosquitoes to be discouraged by such inefficient opponents as a pair of human hands. But, so far as the Paraguayan soil is concerned, it is easy to put up with such minor inconveniences in view of its most generous services as a producing agent.

Advancing steadily northwards over the new line, once again the waters of a great stream come in sight. Embowered in a more luxuriant screen of verdure than those other waters to the south, the beautiful Alto Paraná River endeavours to bar with its stream the way into Paraguay. It now entirely lacks that success it enjoyed in the past. The railway companies have seen to that, and the steam ferry which awaits the train lies against the bank in massive proof of their triumph.

The great vessel which takes the train upon its deck at this port of Posadas is modelled on exactly the same lines as the one which plied between the southern ports of Zárate and Ibicuy, and sets out upon the waters with a similar conviction of tremendous power, which, for some reason or other, seems far more apparent here than it does in the ordinary steam vessel. In one respect, however, this second passage is more momentous than was the first. It is an international one, and its conclusion lands the traveller in the Paraguayan port of Villa Encarnación.

From this point ten hours or so of railway travel take the passenger to the end of his journey. But there will be much to see before he arrives at the town of Asuncion. It is true that, on the whole, the landscape closely resembles the smiling country of Misiones ; but with every northward mile the sub-tropical exuberance becomes more manifest. The lapacho-trees grow taller, and the spreading clusters of their pink blossom still more abundant. The

forest patches that alternate with the rolling open country become denser, while the clearings in the woodland are more closely populated with a dancing flight of gorgeous butterflies, and carpeted with an added profusion of brilliant flowers.

The speech of the populace is now Guaraní—a proof that we have really and truly left the cosmopolitan ethics of the south far behind. We are, in fact, among the landscape, people, and fruits of Paraguay. Since these are described in other places, we may leave them for the present, and turn to some of the practical considerations of the railway.

The disadvantageous circumstances which prevailed when the junction with the Argentine railways was effected have already been referred to. These have naturally affected the time-tables of the international trains. In the first place it had been intended to run three international trains each way in the week; but the present crisis has caused the number of these to be reduced to one each week.

As I have already endeavoured to point out, it would be absurd to estimate the prospects of the railway from this. The mere possibility of reaching Asuncion in fifty hours from Buenos Aires must in normal times offer an outlook sufficiently tempting to be resisted by very few who have the means to afford the trip, whether they be commercial folk or tourists. But before dealing with these latter the larger political and industrial situation, as influenced by the railway, must be considered.

The tendency of lines such as this to reduce disturbed populations to a condition of ordered and occupied tranquillity has already been referred to. That this influence will be exerted in Paraguay before long is, humanly speaking, as inevitable as that the country through which the line passes must receive an industrial impetus such as it has never before

experienced. As it is, both the cattle and the orange traffic from Paraguay are showing signs of considerable development. But the future of the railway is bound up with the future of the Republic—it is a platitude, this—and no rapid progress can be looked for until a normal situation has come about again in the world.

The next important feature of the railway development in Paraguay will be the connection by rail of the inland Republic with Brazil: this line will run from Asuncion to the east, tending very slightly to the north. The railway will enter Brazil in the close neighbourhood of the famous Falls of Iguazú, where it will be linked up with the Brazilian systems connecting with Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Santos, and all the principal ports and cities of the centre and south. By this means, indeed, an alternate railway connection with the Uruguayan capital of Montevideo will be offered.

The first sections of the line, starting from Asuncion, have already been completed. The topographical difficulties of the further sections, where the line enters the mountainous country, are naturally very much greater than those of the first, and the progress here cannot be expected to proceed with the same rapidity. When this work, however, has been completed the strategical situation of the inland Republic, instead of being disadvantageous, will have much to commend it. Asuncion, in fact, will form one point of a great railroad triangle, the other two points being respectively Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro. This will mark the completion of the main railway ramifications of the international system of Argentina, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Brazil.

Another railroad which in course of time must prove of great interest has been begun, running southward from Paraguari station on the Central Paraguay

railway. It is possible that this may be eventually carried to the south as far as the Paraná River.

It is difficult to see, when political circumstances have once permanently adjusted themselves in Paraguay, what conditions can arise to interfere with the prosperity of the country. Speaking from the industrial point of view, the great variety of the Paraguayan products in itself constitutes a safeguard against a comprehensive financial depression. Moreover, the rôles which Paraguay is destined to play in the future must necessarily increase as the true importance of the neighbouring countries begins to assert itself.

Thus, apart from all question of pastoral and agricultural products, there is no doubt that Paraguay has a considerable future before it as a pleasure resort. Twenty years ago a prediction such as this would have been received with complete incredulity ; but things move quickly in the south-east of the continent. The ease with which, in normal times, riches are accumulated in Argentina has already produced a very well-defined demand for pleasure resorts in the convenient neighbourhood of that great Republic.

In response to this have sprung into being such bathing-places as Mar del Plata in Argentina itself, Poçitos in the neighbourhood of the Uruguayan capital, and half a dozen similar pleasure towns where the salt breezes of the Atlantic tend to counteract the summer heat of the interior. All such resorts, however, are designed for the warm months only, and there are many who are by no means loath to slip away during a few weeks of the short, but fairly sharp, mid-Argentine winter.

The new Brazilian resort of Guarujá, in the neighbourhood of Santos, has begun to cater for a demand such as this. But it must be admitted that, although the relations between the Argentines and

the Brazilians are now most satisfactory, the Argentine as a general rule prefers to take his pleasure in a spot where his own speech prevails. That Paraguay is admirably adapted for this purpose has already been proved by the increasing numbers of Argentines who have taken to visiting its balmy lands in the winter.

Up to the present the two chief resorts of this kind have been Asuncion and San Bernardino, a very pleasant spot on a picturesque lake to the east of Asuncion, situated at two or three hours' journey from the capital. But in that future which the march of the great southern continent should—with a very moderate degree of optimism—be expected to bring about, these two pleasant spots could only rank as the headquarters of a wide field of places of notable interest. The magnificent Falls of the Iguazú are in themselves sufficient to draw all the way from Europe and North America visitors who would see a cascade of water the volume of which is exceeded by no other, and the natural beauties of which are probably unique in the world.

It requires very little imagination, moreover, to picture the power of attraction which the Jesuit ruins must exercise when once their situation becomes generally known. In actual size they are, of course, small affairs when compared with the gigantic piles of Inca remains that obtain in Peru and Bolivia. But their intrinsic interest is at least as great, and the haunting charm of their situation is of a kind which it would be difficult to match elsewhere. Perhaps it is part of the tragedy of their existence that such objects as these should constitute an asset of these modern days when regarded from the point of view of tourist traffic!

It must be admitted that, once away from the track of the railway or the main water highways, the travelling facilities in Paraguay are of a primi-



A MILD CHACO FLOODING.

To face P. 241.

tive order. The ubiquitous horse is, of course, always at the disposal of the wayfarer ; but this necessitates travelling "light," and where much baggage is concerned the complications of the way, are not to be under-estimated in many districts.

The homely bullock-cart, as a matter of fact, is the chief stand-by of the heavily laden traveller in the rural districts, and on journeys of any length he must accommodate the pace of his horse to that of the slow and ponderous oxen. These carts are provided with extraordinarily high wheels, which prove an efficient preventative against the disaster of being bogged, although, even with this precaution, such a fate as this is by no means unknown.

As may be imagined, the country roads in Paraguay leave not a little to be desired in the way of surface. Although the soil in many districts is far more favourable for the purposes of road-making than that of the southern alluvial provinces of Argentina, the depth of mud which is apt to be churned up in the rainy seasons and the volume of the dust-clouds which the wheels call into being during the dry periods are on a sufficiently wholesale scale to astonish the new-comer to the land.

In the Chaco, moreover, such drawbacks as these are accentuated by the very peculiar nature of the lower strata of the earth. The top soil here consents to drink in the periodical inundations ; but when this has once been thoroughly permeated, the waters find themselves barred from a further descent by a curiously hard substratum. This is one of the principal reasons why for long periods great stretches of country resemble a vast but extraordinarily shallow lake, being entirely covered with water to the depth, perhaps, of two or three feet. It is necessary for the traveller to make his way through this, just as though he were proceeding along a dry road, and, in consequence, horses and oxen

have to splash their way across an apparently interminable stretch of water. Something of this sort is to be met with in two or three regions of Paraguay proper ; but the conditions are much more those of true marsh land than those which prevail in the Chaco.

CHAPTER XVII

BY RIVER TO PARAGUAY

Up-stream journeys of a former age—The river schooners—Some records of the mid-nineteenth century—A description by Mansfield—Intricate navigation—Traffic of the present day—Señor Nicolás Mihanovich—The Argentine Navigation Company—Charm of the journey from Buenos Aires to Asuncion—The passage from the industrial to the picturesque—Aspects of the landscape—Influence of the sub-tropics—The vegetation of the banks—The Chaco shore—Insect pests—Superabundance of mosquitoes and *bichos*—Winged life of the river reaches—The parting of the river ways—The Paraguay stream—Some questions of fluvial nomenclature—Beauties of the Paraguay River—Characteristics of the Bermejo—Alligators—The first Paraguayan port—Some features of Humaitá—The ruined church—Temperament of the Paraguayan—Recuperative force of the nation—Evidence of Chaco industry—Quebracho logs—How the timber is floated down the river—The mouth of the Pilcomayo—Asuncion—Nationalities concerned in the river traffic—Steamship companies—Foreign warships—Motor craft—*Chatas* and “dug-outs.”

THE most leisurely, and in some respects the most picturesque, method of reaching Paraguay is by way of the great river system. This, moreover, is the time-honoured way, although in the age of sailing-vessels the journey was wont to occupy almost as many months as the modern steamer employs days.

Indeed, the accounts of many of these up-stream journeys—dating backwards from the mid-nineteenth century—in small river schooners afford fascinating reading to all who are interested in this species of travel. In those days the vessels did not plough their way up the waters with the comparative regularity of the twentieth-century steamer, that only runs foul of a sandbank on rare occasions in the

seasons of low water, and that, when completely held up in this fashion, is wont to back and to charge her way across the obstacle much in the way that a horse takes a stiff fence.

The topsail river schooners made a more varied trip of it than this. In their day the Robertsons, Hinchliffe, Mansfield, and a dozen others have left some interesting records of this. Having already introduced horse metaphor into these aquatic matters, it may be said that when the coveys of small craft went sailing up to Paraguay their course resembled that of a steeplechase! Certainly the accidents of the way—mostly connected with “bumping the mud”—were sufficiently numerous to render precarious the situation of every boat in the flotilla.

Here are some paragraphs from Mansfield, written after nearly a month on board, when the vessel on which he was a passenger was approaching Corrientes :—

“This whole voyage has been a race between us and the *Neptuno* (she is close to us now) and several others—a regatta of a thousand miles! The *Adelaide* was left behind at Paraná, distanced; she lost the best south gale by some passengers having gone ashore for whom she had to wait; of the other vessels we have left behind all but one, which has regularly sailed away from us to-day. No doubt we shall leave the *Neptuno* behind to-night, if the wind keep up, as our captain is much the most plucky. . . . The channel we were now sailing up is a fine wide reach, apparently, one would suppose, the main trunk of the river; the reason that we did not take it this morning was that there is very rarely water enough over the bank at its mouth, at the place where the other small channel forks from it, to allow any vessel to pass; while ordinarily all the ships pass up the little narrow channel in which we had stuck. By accident, however, the usual

channel had got silted up shallow, and stopped us, so that instead of being ahead of all the others we were now last ; but by accident the other channel was opener than usual, and we found it out, though not till after the other ships had gone by us up the small channel ; so we alone got the benefit of the discovery. The consequence of this is, that if this breeze continues we shall make a good run of eight or nine leagues before we come to another turn in the river, through which it will not carry us, while the rest of the squadron (except two little vessels who preceded us this way in the morning) will have been obliged to anchor again a mile or two above, where they gave us the go-by, on account of the turning of the channel slightly towards the wind in one place. Such is river navigation in sailing-boats : running aground is a great bore, but it must be remembered that in all our voyage we have only been really stuck three times."

This will give some idea of the intricacies with which the sailing-vessels of those days had to contend. As a matter of fact, their course is no less complicated at the present time ; but, as they are now wont to be innocent of passengers, these troubles of the trips very rarely meet the public eye.

The steamers which ply to-day between Paraguay and the mouth of the Rio de la Plata belong to a company which is now in the third stage of its development. Originally a British company, it was taken over by Señor Nicolás Mihanovich, who became famous as a king of the navigation of the great river system. Within recent years, however, the enterprise has again become British, and is now known as the Argentine Navigation Company.

He who can afford time for an up-river journey from Buenos Aires to Asuncion will find the experience as instructive as anything else of the kind throughout South America. It is true that the flat

pastures which go to make up the earlier stretches of the landscape lack a good deal from the picturesque point of view. But it is this very distribution of the scenery which adds to the charm of the trip, for, as the sub-tropical regions begin to exert their influence, and as the banks approach each other more nearly, the charm of the surroundings increases steadily.

After a certain point has been reached there are very few hours or dozens of miles which are not productive of some new feature or other to captivate the eye of the traveller. But not until that famous wheat centre, the Argentine town of Rosario, has been reached does this phase of the journey begin. There for the first time the flat, reed-covered banks of the river fall away, to give place to definite *barrancas*, or cliffs, that boldly mark the edge of the great stream. When the grain-shoots and line of moored steamers that mark this thriving town have been passed, the sandstone cliff continues at intervals on alternate banks; the vivid scarlet of the ceibo-tree becomes more frequent, and the clumps of camelota, the floating water hyacinth, tend to increase in size. The districts, moreover, are obeying one of the primal laws of the world in that, as the blossoms, birds, and butterflies increase in brilliancy, so does the human complexion tend to grow duskier. But here this applies only to the humbler people on the banks and to the fisherfolk and watermen who sit in their crude dugout canoes. The more important persons continue white-skinned, the sole distinction between them and their brethren of the lower reaches of the river being that they now begin to form the aristocracy of the land instead of standing as the mere representatives of the wealthier classes.

When the roofs and parks and gardens of Paraná have been passed and the buildings of Colastiné,

the river port of Santa Fé, have been left behind, the warmer airs already give a foretaste of what is to come farther to the north. All this time the vegetation has been increasing on the banks. The wide stretches of open, treeless pastures have long ago fallen away. The country where the cattle graze is now pleasantly interspersed with clumps of indigenous trees, and the line of the banks is obscured in parts by dense clusters of verdure, in which the palms begin to occupy a more and more important space.

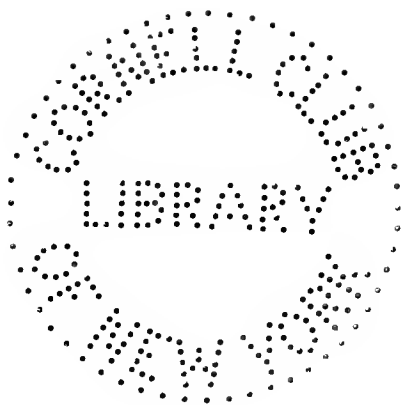
Presently, on the right bank of the river, and thus to the left of the steamer's bow, appears that curious low-lying country of the Chaco, the alternate forests, swamps, and pastures that extend from here northwards through the entire length of Paraguay and well into Bolivia on the other side. There are orchids hanging up aloft among the foliage now, and doubtless a monkey or two among the denser clumps of woodland. But these pioneer creatures of the tropics to the north are rare enough here, and in any case are invisible. Their presence thus is generally unsuspected by the new-comer, which is not the case with the mosquitoes and those clouds of other *bichos*, whose numbers increase in the most amazing fashion with almost every hour that goes by.

Indeed, did one judge of the winged pests of these neighbourhoods by the myriads which abound above the fervid waters, the outlook would be sufficiently unpromising even to the most mosquito-hardened of men. The song of this plague is continuous of an evening now, and when the daylight has vanished in the abrupt fashion in which it is wont to fade away in these latitudes, the electric globes of the steamer are all but obscured by the insects that dance about them so thickly as to resemble dense clouds of smoke that roll in confused masses about a half-seen flame! Fortunately, these river

reaches—most beloved of all the haunts of the winged creatures—do not afford a fair and moderate sample of the insect life of these latitudes, quite considerable enough though the usual run of this is wont to be.

Arrived at the Argentine town of Corrientes, one of the most important strategic spots in the whole river system has been reached. To one bound upstream this is the parting of the river ways. A few miles to the north of the town the choice is open to the traveller whether he will turn to the right and ascend the waters of the Alto Paraná, with Argentina on his right hand and Paraguay on his left, or whether he will keep straight on to the north and reverse this territorial situation, having Argentina on his left and Paraguay on his right.

The main line of the waters, with Asuncion as its object, lies straight to the north, and almost immediately after leaving Corrientes the steamer has entered the Paraguay River. It is at this point that the somewhat curious nomenclature of the various streams becomes most evident. It is the remarkable fate of the Paraguayan when bound from his home to the Atlantic Ocean to have to descend three different rivers, or, if you prefer it, various stretches of the same river known by three different names. From the point of view of fluvial equity, there is no doubt that considerable wrong has been done to the River Paraguay in the way of nomenclature. Why this splendid navigable stream, at its junction with the cascade-broken and far shorter Alto Paraná, should yield its name to that of the lesser current, and should continue to flow southwards as the Paraná, is a sufficiently incomprehensible matter to most geographers. And then, when it has all but run its course, the river performs a second wedding, with the Uruguay this time, and again changes its name. But on this occasion neither





A TRIBUTARY STREAM.



RIVER TRANSPORT.

stream obtains the advantage over the other, for both roll their few remaining miles to the sea under the entirely fresh name of La Plata. Nevertheless, there does not seem to be a doubt that, from the point of view of importance, the name of the great stream which rises to the north of the inland Republic should be the Paraguay for its entire course as far as the ocean.

This digression, however, has led us away from the up-stream journey to Asuncion. Once in the Paraguay River, the beauties of the scene would seem to have become more marked. The banks have drawn sufficiently near to each other for their increasing charms to become plain. No longer does the steamer steer a tortuous course through a maze of low and reedy islands that never permit the stranger to be certain whether he is gazing on the mainland or whether further channels at the back lie between him and the actual shore.

Now the banks of the stream, with their flower-starred vegetation, are plainly defined. Once to the north of the mouth of the Bermejo tributary, moreover, which pours its amazingly red and muddy waters into the main stream, the river has become comparatively limpid. Alligators had already made their appearance in the Paraná; but such banks of sand and mud as emerge here and there from the waters of the Paraguay are far more thickly covered with the sluggish bodies of the small saurians, that in these latitudes seldom exceed six or seven feet.

Presently, as the steamer drops her anchor before a port to her right, there is a significant touch of colour about the small official boat which puts out to her from the shore. Hitherto the light blue and white of Argentina has flown at the stern of these craft. But from this one for the first time floats the red, white, and blue of Paraguay. The steamer

has arrived at Humaitá, the first port of the inland Republic.

This alone would suffice to render the port a sufficiently significant spot. But Humaitá has more to show than this. On the bank are the massive ruins of a church pricking up gauntly against the deep-blue sky. The battle record of Humaitá has been told in a previous chapter ; but here is a visible reminder of that extraordinarily fierce war, when Paraguay took the field against the combined forces of Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay. Ruined though it is, the great dull-red structure, battered and holed, is very much the largest in the place—a fitting monument for so great a tragedy, as was the Paraguayan War.

But if the ruined church of Humaitá affords a somewhat grim welcome to Paraguay, the matter is more than atoned for by the tranquil beauty of the surroundings and by the placid and smiling air of the Paraguayans themselves. They, at all events, are not in the least obsessed by the past shadow of that great war which wrecked the lives of so many thousands of their parents and grandparents. The pessimist might argue, of course, that the number of internal struggles which have occurred in the interval between 1870 and the present day have been sufficient to drive the memories of a dozen great wars from the minds of people possessed of even the most brooding temperament !

The average Paraguayan is certainly of no brooding temperament, as the sight of their tranquil faces will assure the new-comer. If he has escaped the obsession of the great war, it is certainly not on account of the later troubles which have visited his country ; for these he would seem to have taken as lightly as he did the first. The atmosphere of Paraguay may not be of the kind which stimulates a remarkable degree of energy ; on the other hand,

it is clear that it contains no element of depression. The recuperative force of the Paraguayan is sufficiently eloquent on this head. The manner in which the country recovered from the blows from without which all but annihilated its inhabitants was the amazement of all who witnessed it. People such as this may be trusted to throw off as rapidly the aftermath of their internal political troubles when the time comes for these to be regarded definitely as fragments of history left well behind.

With such comforting reflections we may continue to make our way up-stream towards Asuncion. On the right hand the plantations grow more varied as the fields of tobacco, sugar-cane, and banana-trees come to take their place among the maize and the other growths that from time to time have adorned the banks from the start of the voyage. Here the reed huts grow more frequent, and the groups of swarthy labourers—or loungers—become more numerous.

On the Chaco shore the scene remains much the same throughout. The casual traveller would find it difficult to hazard a guess as to what was going on behind the dense fringe of vegetation that covers the low and mysterious shore. Here and there, however, a spacious clearing, and the sight of a small engine that goes puffing along its light rails, effectually prove that there are already important tracts of the Chaco which are no longer given over to the savage Indian, the tapir, and the innumerable other beasts, birds, and insects of that strange region.

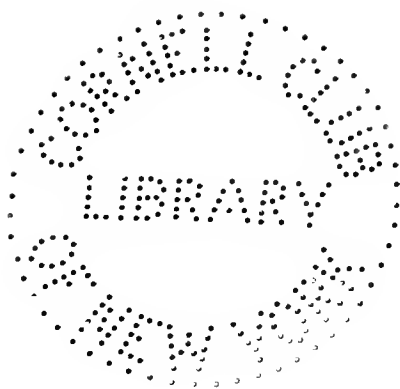
It is possible that you may even see a raft putting out from this shore, a double-decked arrangement with light timbers beneath and the valuable quebracho logs on top. So weighty are these latter that, unaided, they absolutely refuse to float in water. In order that they may make their river journey, therefore, it is essential to support them on a substructure

of timber of lighter gravity, and, thus carried, they float down to the factories that are waiting to extract the much-prized tannin which they contain.

In this particular region, although its attributes remain much the same throughout, the Chaco happens to be Argentine territory. Not until the mouth of the Pilcomayo River appears on the port bow of the steamer is the point reached at which the northernmost stretch of Argentina falls away, and Paraguayan territory extends on either hand. This important spot, as a matter of fact, is by no means easy to distinguish from the rest, for the main river is broad here, and the banks of the Pilcomayo are so low as to render its mouth difficult to make out.

To one who is familiar with maps of the country a much clearer indication of the geography of the place is afforded by the roofs and spires of Asuncion pricking upwards from the imposing mass of buildings that spreads itself widely over the rolling ground in the midst of the pleasant verdure that abounds at the spot.

To turn to the commercial aspects of the stream, river traffic on the Paraguay, it may be said, is carried on almost entirely by Paraguayan, Argentine, Brazilian, and Uruguayan vessels, some variety being occasionally afforded by a few small Bolivian and Italian ships. For a considerable number of years there is no record, I believe, of vessels of any other nationality having penetrated as far as Asuncion, the navigable limit for ocean-going vessels being Colastiné, on the Paraná, the port of the Argentine city of Santa Fé. The two chief shipping companies connected with the Paraguay River are the Mihanovich Steamship Company, now known as the Argentine Navigation Company, and the Lloyd Brasileiro. The latter company runs its steamers direct as far as Corumbá, in the Brazilian province



ASUNCION



CUSTOM HOUSE : ASUNCION.

of Matto Grosso, and the Argentine Navigation Company now follows suit, performing two direct journeys each month from Buenos Aires to Corumbá.

Towards the middle of the nineteenth century, when small paddle-steamers were in vogue as gunboats, several warships of British, French, and United States nationality steamed up-stream to visit Asuncion, one of these cruises—that of the U.S. war steamer *Waterwitch*—being especially notable on account of the valuable description of the country given by the American Lieutenant Thomas Page. The practice on the part of foreign Governments of proceeding so far up-stream as Asuncion has been abandoned from sheer necessity, no vessels of sufficiently light draught being available among the modern vessels of the kind. The visits of Argentine and Brazilian gunboats, however, are frequent enough, and it is no uncommon sight to see these craft, specially adapted for the river, anchored off Asuncion.

This latter port, by the way, is most liberally provided with motor-launches, and this type of vessel is now tending to grow common throughout the entire length of the river. There is no doubt that in course of time these great streams must provide one of the chief markets in the world for this type of craft, many of the ordinary boats used for carrying fruit, firewood, and other such goods to market being already provided with an auxiliary motor-engine. The humbler craft which ply the waters of the Paraguay, dodging in and out of the large and small tributaries, are the rafts, or *chatas*, laden with cargoes of all kinds, and the dugout canoes, these latter used principally by the Indians.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE CHIEF CITIES OF THE REPUBLIC

Asuncion—Some attributes of the capital—Its atmosphere—First impressions—Aspects of the town—Principal buildings—Changing aspects of the Asuncion streets—The architecture of to-day—The inhabitants of the capital—Amenities of the spot—The “Belvedere”—Scenes in the garden—Tastes of the better-class inhabitants—Influence of the modern spirit—Regattas and sports—The progress of football—San Bernardino—Paraguay’s principal pleasure resort—Attractions of the spot—Villa Rica—The second city of the Republic—Benefits accorded by the new line—Villa Rica as the centre of an agricultural district—Origin of the majority of its inhabitants—Encarnación—An important spot on the railway—History of the development brought about by the railway—The Paraguayan situation compared with the Argentine—Reasons for the absence of a “boom” in the former country—Influence of the internal political situation and the abnormal condition of Europe—Villa Concepción—The navigable limit of the Paraguay River—An important northern centre—Some characteristics of the lesser cities.

PARAGUAY possesses few towns which can lay claim to much importance in the way of population. It is probable, indeed, that there are only seven in the Republic—Asuncion, Villa Rica, Concepción, Carapegua, Villa del Pilar, Paraguarí, and San Pedro—the number of whose inhabitants run well into five figures. The first of the three is infinitely the most important. Asuncion, in fact, which holds a population of some eighty thousand, is the only city in Paraguay which can be called large from the modern South American point of view.

The next town in point of size is Villa Rica, to the south-east of the capital, on the Central Paraguay

Railway, which probably numbers thirty thousand inhabitants or so. The Port of Concepción, away to the north on the Paraguay River, contains little more than half this population, and the remaining towns fall below this again in point of numbers. It will be evident from these figures that the urban population of the inland Republic is by no means overwhelming, a circumstance which is not necessarily in the least detrimental to the interests of the country.

Asuncion, the capital of the Republic, would be a notable spot in a far more populous country than Paraguay. Apart from its industrial and commercial significance, it is an unusually pleasant town situated among charming surroundings. Those who expect to find in the capital of Paraguay the bustle and animation that characterizes such cities as Buenos Aires, Montevideo, and Rosario will very soon find themselves mistaken.

Notwithstanding the fact that it is now provided with an electric service of tramways, and that the traveller may now enter his compartment at the railway station and remain undisturbed until he alights in Buenos Aires, the atmosphere of Asuncion is still deliberate and mildly antagonistic to anything in the nature of real hurry.

As is the case with the majority of ports, the entrance to Asuncion is effected in a more imposing fashion by water than by land. The Customs House, alongside which the steamer draws up, is a stately enough edifice, and the broad stone stairway which leads upwards to the arched entrance produces a curiously classical effect, notwithstanding the modern architecture of the building.

The houses of Asuncion rise with the bold upward sweep of the shore. They are dominated in the foreground by the great edifice, constructed by the dictator Francisco Solano Lopez for his palace, which

now contains the various ministerial and public offices of the State. Other buildings of note are the House of Congress, the Cathedral, the Oratory, and the extensive lowly building which in colonial days was the residence of the Spanish Governors. The Museum of Fine Arts, founded by a distinguished Paraguayan, Don Juan Silvano Godoi, is of more modest dimensions, but among its treasures is a genuine Murillo—a Virgin and Child. The National Library, too, can boast a large collection of priceless historical documents. The theatre is a lowly and somewhat unimpressive building, recalling the days when the architectural efforts of the South Americans ran to length and breadth rather than height.

Notwithstanding the existence of such old-fashioned buildings as these, there is no doubt that the aspects of the Asuncion streets have begun to undergo a revolution which can only end in the complete metamorphosis of the city—for the atmosphere of both the Americas would seem loath to tolerate half-measures between the ruins of a completely past age and the very latest inventions of the most modern town-planner! In the Asuncion streets have already sprung up many of those rather florid erections with which the inhabitants of Buenos Aires and Montevideo have by this time become familiar.

It is true that these houses of the new Asuncion have not yet attained to anything approaching the height of those of the southern capitals. Nevertheless, down to their stone and stucco ornaments, they are in all other respects practically identical. It is these erections that are sounding the doom of the lowly and simple buildings, of the *patios* with their cool shade and flowering shrubs, and perhaps eventually of the evening love-songs and even of the guitar itself!

But, although things are apt to move quickly in the South America of to-day, it is difficult to conceive



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any such poetical catastrophe as occurring to the inhabitants of Asuncion who have sprung from the old stock. Indeed, nothing short of an overwhelming influx of foreigners is likely to achieve such an end ; but, since such incursions have taken place elsewhere, there is no reason why something of the kind should not occur sooner or later in Asuncion.

In the meantime—at all events during those periods when the city is free from political convulsion—the rank and file of the inhabitants of Asuncion stroll about in supreme content. Bare-footed men chat at the street corners ; bare-footed women go by, by no means lacking in loquacity, and many with baskets poised upon their heads. Here and there you may see sellers of the Ñanduti, that famous Paraguayan lace of a texture so elaborate and filmy as to require an infinite patience in its making. Many of these honest and happy-go-lucky folk are to be met with in the public gardens such as the Plaza Constitución and the Plaza Independencia. Spots such as these are easily made beautiful in a climate such as that of Paraguay, and the effects of the wealth of blossoms and flowering shrubs may be imagined.

Some time ago—whether the situation remains the same since those tremendous events which have happened outside Paraguay I cannot say—one of the chief meeting-places for the Asuncion society was the “Belvedere,” an open-air café on the outskirts of the capital, which was reached by means of the tramcar that went rumbling along the tree-shaded street. In the pleasant garden of the “Belvedere” Paraguayan ladies, ministers, officers, and civilians in general would gather in the cool of the late afternoon to sip their refreshment, and to chat concerning the events of the day. In its own way it was a sufficiently notable spot, and there is, after all, no reason to suppose that the recent catastrophes

have altered the circumstances of the "Belvedere" to any appreciable extent.

The tastes of the better-class inhabitants of Asuncion have remained simple enough up to the present time. Perhaps some of the most salient evidence of the new spirit with which the country has become imbued is that afforded by the attention which is now paid to sports and games. At the present moment this is chiefly devoted to regattas on the magnificent stretches of river available, and to football of the Association variety, various clubs being in existence in Asuncion. This game, as a matter of fact, has made astonishing progress, considering that the first club to be formed in the country was only founded some sixteen years ago. Now there exist two football leagues in Asuncion which are said to comprise twenty clubs, with a total membership of almost a thousand. There is a certain amount of horseracing; but this, as might be expected, is run in a very modest fashion compared with the manner in which the sport is conducted in the great centres in the south of the continent. When the inhabitant of Asuncion desires a change of scene he takes the train to Patiño, which he reaches in a little over an hour. From this point launches bear him across the charming waters of Lake Ipacará to San Bernardino, the chief pleasure resort in Paraguay.

San Bernardino, as a matter of fact, is no parvenu in the way of pleasure resorts. It has enjoyed its own quiet and modest fame for many decades now, and there were many Paraguayans who, even before that, proved themselves by no means insensible to its beauties. But the future of San Bernardino cannot well fail to eclipse its past. It is now provided with a large hotel built in the modern style, and it is probable enough that, when the conditions of the world have returned to something approaching a

normal state, this hotel will not be long without rivals of its own kind.

San Bernardino, of course, has to thank the linking up of the Paraguayan and Argentine railways for the opportunity of exchanging its local repute for a cosmopolitan fame. Until the mutual extension was effected the only route by which the foreigner could attain to San Bernardino was that involving the up-river trip to Asuncion, whence the excursion could be made. Now, San Bernardino lies on the main railway route from either Buenos Aires or Montevideo to Asuncion, and it is needless to dilate here upon the difference which this must make as regards its popularity before long.

That which applies to the pleasure resort of San Bernardino holds good in a wider sense all along the new line. The industrial and commercial advantages which this new means of communication must bring to the districts through which it passes are sufficiently obvious. One of the Paraguayan centres which bids fair to reap its full share of the benefits of this is Villa Rica, the second city of the Republic. Before the completion of the line the best part of a week might have been allowed for the journey from Buenos Aires to Villa Rica. Now, barely forty hours separate the two towns !

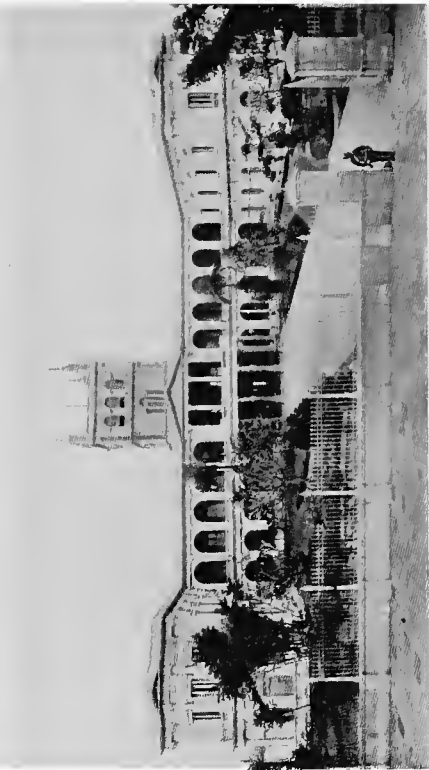
No town is more worthy of these advantages than Villa Rica. The centre of one of the most fertile agricultural districts in South America, the stimulus to the surrounding industries which has now come into being will very soon react on the town itself : it needs no special inspiration to prophesy that much. A rapid increase of population here may be anticipated with some certainty. Its inhabitants, it may be said, are supposed to consist very largely of the descendants of the Guaranís of the Jesuit mission settlements ; and this is probable enough, as Villa Rica came within the boundaries of the Jesuit rule.

Another town that must benefit from this new order of affairs is Encarnación, on the northern bank of the Alto Paraná River. It is true that Encarnación has always been a port ; but, so far as river traffic was concerned, it was unlikely ever to have attained to any position of special importance, seeing that the Alto Paraná can only take rank as a second-rate river from the point of view of navigation. Now that it represents the junction between the steam-ferry and the land lines, it has become a spot of no little present significance, which gives out great promise for the future.

The history of this railway development, as a matter of fact, presents one of the most extraordinary features out of even that collection of unusual events that goes to make up the chequered history of Paraguay. The opening up of railway lines in the neighbouring countries, more especially in Argentina, met with an almost instantaneous response. Not only did the industries concerned give an immediate promise of a prosperity on a scale which had been unimagined until them ; but, as a natural consequence, the values of the lands affected began to rise by leaps and bounds. Indeed, the pace of this advance produced the effect of staggering many of the old stagers, who found it difficult to believe that a legitimate and inevitable advance to the higher values of the new era was not largely the result of a temporary "boom," which would one day shatter the hopes and finances of those who had confided in it.

It is not too much to say that in the south-east of Paraguay every attribute is at hand which contributed to the former immense rise in land values to the south. If nothing approaching this has occurred to the north of the Alto Paraná, the fault does not lie with the Paraguayan soil, crops, or cattle. As has been pointed out elsewhere, the reason for such





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comparative stagnation as has followed the railway extension is purely artificial. Every industrial consideration has been governed by the internal political situation of the Republic, and by the abnormal condition of Europe. But if the full progressive force of this railway has been so far curbed, it can be permanently restrained no more than could the Guayra Falls be dammed! But this is a fact with which the majority of financiers are already familiar enough.

Villa Concepción, the third city of Paraguay, occupies an important strategic position on the banks of the great river, seeing that it is situated at the point which marks the end of the navigation by steamers proper. Putting aside launches and such minor craft, therefore, it may be said that Concepción is the navigable limit of the River Paraguay. The spot is served both by the steamers of the Argentine Navigation Company and those of the Lloyd Brasileiro.

The architectural pretensions of Concepción are very moderate; but at the same time the commercial importance of the town as a depôt for the produce of northern Paraguay is considerable. Situated just to the north of the tropic of Capricorn, it is the northernmost Spanish town of importance on the south-eastern river system. Its only rival to the north, as a matter of fact, is the Brazilian town of Cuyabá, situated on the Cuyabá affluent of the Paraguay as far away as the neighbourhood of latitude 15° S., and thus not very remote from the spot where the headwaters of the Amazon and of the Paraguay begin to move on their respective northward and southward courses. Such a tremendous gap as this between the notable commercial centres on the river bank will serve to demonstrate the importance of Concepción.

The lesser cities of Paraguay have much to recom-

mend them, but as a rule their merits incline rather towards the picturesque than towards any striking features of architecture or of urban design. Descending again to the hamlets, many of these consist of little more than a collection of reed huts, the principal building of the majority of which is a long, low church with its slanting roof and line of outside cloisters. The belfry of many of these churches, erected at the side of the main edifice, usually stands apart as an independent, lightly erected tower of wood.

CHAPTER XIX

IMMIGRATION AND COLONIES

Terms offered to settlers by the Paraguayan Government—Transport facilities—Some hints concerning these—Advice concerning contracts of employment—Paraguay as the country of the small agriculturist—Foreign immigrants—Some statistics—Various nationalities concerned—Estimated foreign population of Paraguay in 1913—British immigrants and trade—The colony of "New Australia"—The great Australian strike—Its origin—William Lane—"Where Socialism Failed"—Ideas of the founder—The appeal to the workers—Paraguay as the home of experiment in socialism—A comparison with the Jesuit system—Land offered by the Paraguayan Government—Generosity of the authorities—The first colonists sail in the *Royal Tar*—An admirable type of immigrant—The arrival in Paraguay—Early symptoms of the breakdown of the system—Disillusioned colonists—Grievances of those who left—The work of honest visionaries—Lane seeks a remedy in autocracy—Definite split among the colonists—Foundations of the settlement of Cosme—Failure of the theories when put into practice—A wrecked casket of lost visions—The scheme is abandoned and the colony worked on a practical basis—Success brought by the change.

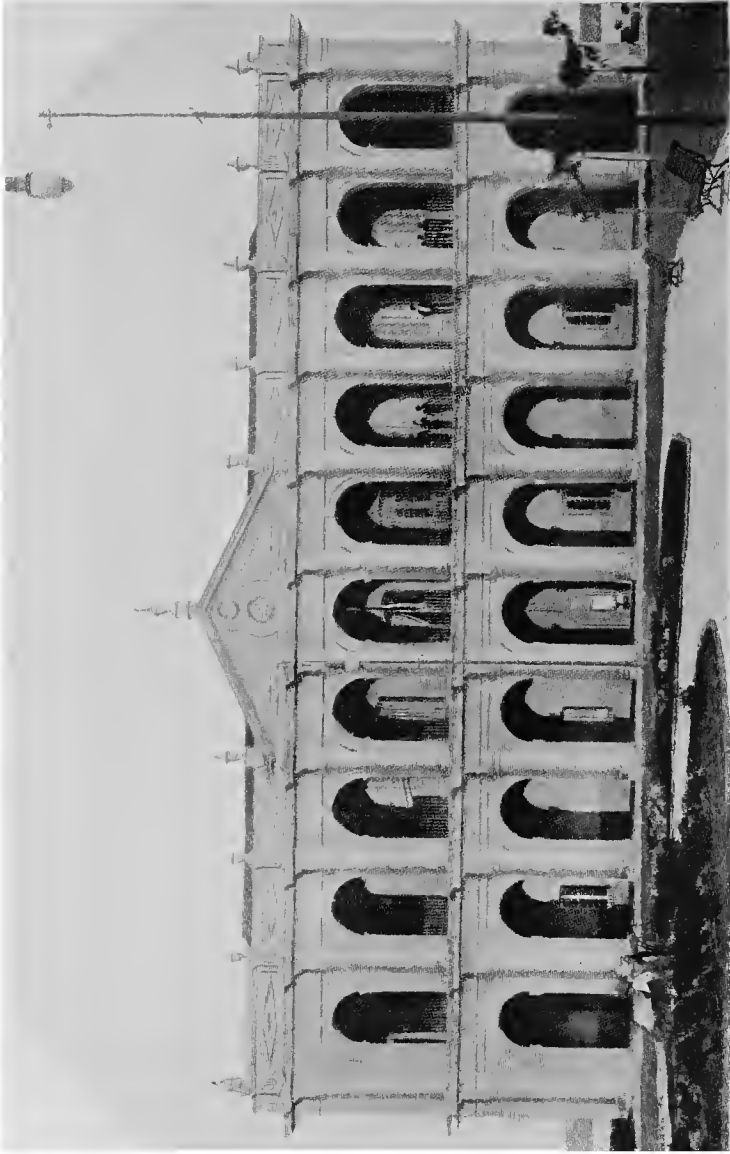
IMMIGRATION into Paraguay has naturally occurred on a far smaller scale than has been the case in the countries nearer the mouth of the great river. The Paraguayan Government has, from 1870 onwards, shown itself keenly alive to the value of competent foreign settlers, and the terms which it offers are liberal, every new arrival who elects to go on the land being entitled to an allotment of nearly forty acres, if a married man, and of about twenty acres if a bachelor. These lands are granted in various settlements, or colonies, established by

the Paraguayan Government, of which a full list will be found in the Appendix.

The Paraguayan Government, however, goes beyond this in its encouragement of immigrants. It provides a free second-class passage on the river steamers from the port of Montevideo to Asuncion. Arrived in Asuncion, they are maintained for a week at the expense of the Republic, and, provided that there is room available for them, they have the right to choose the colony which they prefer. Moreover, they are conveyed by rail or boat at the public expense to the nearest possible point to this.

These terms, of course, are sufficiently generous, but it is necessary for any British emigrant who might have the intention of proceeding to Paraguay to realize that the meaning of words in this part of the world does not always coincide with their significance in the homeland. Thus second class on the river steamer really means steerage, and, splendid as is the ordinary accommodation on these fine vessels, the quarters and company of their steerage are decidedly not of the kind which would suit an average family of British artisans or agriculturists. But the solution of such matters as these is generally merely a matter of arrangement, and it is certainly a wise hint that is given in one of those admirable recent consular reports on Paraguay to the effect that any intending British settlers in that country should apply to the Emigrants' Information Office, 34, Broadway, London, S.W. Another valuable piece of advice given in this report is that persons seeking employment in Paraguay should have a clear understanding as to the exchange, and that it is desirable that the contract should be made in gold, or in paper at the ruling commercial rate of exchange.

The advantages offered have not, however, so far had the effect of overcoming that reluctance on the part of the average foreigner to make his



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way to a country which is only now being exalted out of its state of isolation. With the important opening up of the railways which is now taking place, it is certain enough that this condition of affairs will undergo a rapid alteration in the future.

There is probably no country in the world which, from the point of view of soil and climate, is better adapted to the agriculturist of small capital than Paraguay. Indeed, when the public of the over-populous countries shall have been convinced that the benefits of stable government are likely to prove permanent, the influx of settlers from abroad cannot well fail to exceed very many times over the modest numbers who now annually enter Paraguay.

The number of foreign immigrants who entered Paraguay in 1908 was 1,024. In 1909 it had fallen to 830, and in 1910 to 578. In 1911 no more than 430 arrived. For 1912 no figures seem to be available, but in 1913 the total of immigrants had mounted to 1,448.

It must be admitted that these are sufficiently insignificant figures. As has been the case in the neighbouring Spanish-speaking republics, the Italians have led the way in immigration from the point of view of numbers. The Paraguayan statistics, however, reveal a somewhat unusual circumstance in the number of Argentines who have established themselves in the northern Republic. The proportion of German immigration, too, has been unusually large. The following figures are instructive :—

In 1908 the immigrants into Paraguay comprised 304 Spaniards, 279 Italians, 146 Germans, 106 Argentines, 40 Hungarians, 33 Uruguayans, 31 French, 23 Russians, 10 Brazilians, and 52 members of other nationalities. The figures given for the reduced number which arrived in 1911 would seem to show a rather less heterogeneous gathering. They

were : Italy 97, Spain 96, Argentine 94, Germany 61, United Kingdom 9, other countries 73.

The following figures will show the estimated foreign populations of Paraguay in 1913. It must be understood, of course, that the reliability of these can only be comparative, no census having been taken for twelve years :—

					Population.
Italian ...	...	...	...	...	20,000
Argentine ...	...	...	...	...	10,000
German ...	...	...	...	...	3,000
Brazilian ...	...	...	...	...	1,300
Spanish ...	...	...	...	...	1,000
French ...	...	...	...	...	1,000
Uruguayan ...	...	...	...	...	600
British ...	...	...	...	...	500
Other Nationalities	...	...	...	...	2,500

It will be seen that the numerical part played by the British here is very modest. But it seems to me that there need be no ground for uneasiness on this head. The mere predominance of her agriculturists in a foreign country surely does not of necessity improve the strategic position of the country that sent them out. In this particular instance, too, notwithstanding that the German residents in Paraguay exceed the British sixfold, the trade of the latter country would seem to be holding its own in quite a satisfactory fashion.

From the British point of view, the most notable colony ever established in Paraguay was that known as "New Australia"—to which was subsequently added the one known as "Cosme." The history of this affords one of the most remarkable examples of the various experiments carried out in socialistic theories.

The colony of New Australia in Paraguay had its birth in the uproar and confusion of the great Australian general strike, that for the time being

shattered the forces of capital and labour and of the Commonwealth itself. At the end of the long-drawn-out industrial battle, when the labourers, licking their financial wounds and surveying the empty coffers of their unions, were beginning to question the efficacy of the strike as a final remedy, a proposal was put to them by a large-hearted journalist, William Lane, who was wholly and honestly devoting his lifework to the cause of labour and to the betterment of the lot of the labourers.

The most able work dealing with William Lane and his momentous experiment is undoubtedly Mr. Stewart Grahame's "Where Socialism Failed," and for a sketch of the striking personality of this leader of men I will draw upon his remarks. Lane became one of the most successful free-lances on the Australian Press, and, says Mr. Grahame, "Wherever there was an over-crowded slum or a case of sweated labour William Lane would ferret it out and hold up to public scorn those who were responsible for such evil conditions. There probably never lived a more single-minded man, and his honesty of purpose was so clearly recognized that he won the confidence of the working classes completely.

"It was Lane's fervent desire 'to idealize labour, to conquer want, and hate, and greed, and vice, and establish peace on earth and good-will towards men.'

"Thousands of other thinkers have desired to see the same beautiful programme realized, though most have despaired of its possibility on this planet. With his optimistic temperament, however, William Lane was convinced that there really did exist, ready to hand, a simple remedy for all the ills that mar the civilized world. It was his firm conviction that, if capitalism and the wages system were utterly abolished, and a state established in accordance with socialistic theories, envy, hatred, malice, and all un-

charitableness would utterly disappear from the earth ; crime would be no more, human nature would be automatically purged of all its unlovely features, heaven on earth would be a fact for every man, woman, and child."

It was this man who, suffering intensely in spirit from the weight of the combined wrongs and hardships of the Australian workers, determined that their salvation could be brought about only by some daring feat of initiative and originality. He made up his mind to lead them into some new country, innocent of the capitalist, where an ideal community might be established, that should be subservient to no other law but that of its brotherly instincts, and that should suffer from no interference from without. Again I must quote from Mr. Grahame :—

"To tempt them to join his scheme he recognized that the appeal must be a personal one, and that the missionary of his movement must possess the enthusiasm and personal magnetism of an inspired prophet.

"'Is not the only hope in the rising of a better Napoleon?' he demanded. 'In the elevation of a leader with the brain of a Jay Gould and the heart of a Christ?'

"After careful consideration William Lane decided to undertake the work himself.

"Turning over the editorship of the *Worker* to other hands, he set forth upon his whirlwind mission, sustained by a perfect faith in the righteousness of his cause—for Lane believed every word of what he preached."

It is a remarkable thing that Paraguay should have been chosen as the home of this experiment in socialism. For it has already been shown in this book that the history of probably no other country of its size can produce such curious and whole-hearted examples both of co-operation in labour and

of State isolation. Neither of these, however, whether brought into being by the Jesuits or by Francia, resembled in reality a condition of affairs such as William Lane wished to inaugurate. The Jesuits were at the head of a community that divided its goods in specified shares among the various divisions of the State and of the populace. But the Guaranis who supplied the manual labour did not for one instant dream of asserting their equality with the Fathers who taught and led them. As for Francia, the reason why he erected barriers round Paraguay to shut it off from the outer world was decidedly not in order that an equal division of property, rights, and liberty should ensue. The process which actually occurred was quite the contrary,

It is of small consequence, however, whether William Lane was moved to select Paraguay for his venture by motives of sentiment or of expediency. As it happened, the choice could scarcely have been bettered from the practical point of view. The Paraguayan Government, when approached, showed itself cordially alive to the benefits which were to be expected from an influx of such settlers as those whom Lane had it in mind to bring. It promised every assistance in its power, including a free gift of land. How fully it redeemed its word may be gathered by a subsequent report issued from the British Legation in Buenos Aires :—

“ The settlement is situated on some rising ground, and looks over a long stretch of pasture land bounded by forest and dotted by clumps of trees. There is something very English in the landscape, and this is true of other parts of Paraguay. It appeared to my companion and myself that the Government had treated the association very well, not only as regards the quantity but as regards the quality of the land conceded. The association has secured 100 leagues (they have already received

the titles for 67 leagues) of what I believe to be the best land in Paraguay. It is well watered and well wooded, and in Paraguay, wherever there is forest the soil is very fertile, and will grow almost anything. The pasture land is also excellent, and I was informed, on good authority, that the district now occupied by the association was requisitioned by the Dictator Lopez during the Paraguayan War for 50,000 head of cattle—and met the demand.”

The deeds of the Paraguayan Government proved even better than their words, for they spent a large sum of money in buying out some local people who had settled in one or two corners of this vast tract of land, thus securing to the new-comers that absolute freedom from outside interference of which they were in search. The site of the settlement, it may be said, was rather more than a hundred miles distant from Asuncion. It was, as a matter of fact, in the neighbourhood of Villa Rica, and its frontiers were within fifteen miles of the railway line.

It was to this spot that came William Lane's pilgrims, the first party of which crossed the ocean in the specially chartered 600-ton sailing-vessel the *Royal Tar*. Even to the minds of the most critical the prospects of the venture seemed sufficiently rosy. The colonists were most eminently respectable folk, none of them fearful of hard work, and all of them skilled in the working of the land or in their own special trades. Their womenfolk, equally experienced in their particular walks of life, were prepared to back them up through thick and thin, and their children were as self-reliant as the average child of the colonies is wont to be. Each member of the community, moreover, set out from Australia imbued with the honest determination to do his duty by his neighbour—the maxim on which rested the entire foundations of the association.

Nevertheless, the colony of New Australia met with difficulties from the very start. The reason of this, it became clear after a while, lay neither with the people nor the land on which they worked. It was the system which, when applied to practical persons and to solid land, was found to leak almost at every pore. Granted that some reasonable form of socialism may well enough—and, indeed, surely must—form the ideal State of the future, this crude attempt at the equal division of labour and its fruits was rapidly seen to be productive of nothing beyond dissension and heartburning.

Very nearly 250 persons had taken passage in the *Royal Tar*, and it was estimated that with the arrival in Paraguay of the later parties the numbers of the community would soon become imposing. As it happened, the stream of the returning and disillusioned colonists began almost before the second batch of Australian enthusiasts had made its appearance in Paraguay. As a matter of fact, the seceders were deserving of quite as much commiseration as any of the rest. One of the primary rules of the association had been that a man, on joining the community, must hold nothing back. He had to throw into the common stock every bit of property and every penny of money he possessed, thus wedding himself—as it was thought, finally—to the fortunes of his brethren. When, bitterly disappointed or antagonized, he left, or was cast out, as the case might be, he found himself in a foreign country, thousands of miles from his home, with two or three pounds in his pocket that had been flung to him with something of the harshness of a grudging charity.

As an object-lesson the enterprise was certainly well worthy of every ray of light that has been cast on it—most especially in view of the fact that it was the work of honest visionaries who were acting

in complete good faith. But scarcely had the community been established when it was found that nothing short of autocracy had to be applied to those whose only acknowledged law was that they should serve each other. In how many ways this apparently simple doctrine could be applied to real life was only discovered by actual experience, when William Lane, who had rebelled against the sordid laws of prosaic humanity, found himself under the dire and bitter necessity of making his own—and a fairly rigorous set, moreover—which should control the idiosyncrasies of his respectable, but obstinate and argumentative, colonists.

The outward stream of humanity continued from New Australia. William Lane himself, saddened and broken, finally left the place. A split occurred among the remaining colonists, and the settlement of Cosme was founded some miles from New Australia in opposition to the senior colony. But all this was to no purpose. The most vigorous theories, the most arduous dissensions, planted no seeds, nor cleared an acre of forest. Perhaps it is a tragic testimonial to human nature to find that both in New Australia and in Cosme a quite negligible amount of work was done by those very folk who in the circumstances of their everyday life had been notable for their industry. Nevertheless, so it was! It seems to be a fact that so frail was the incentive of working for the benefit of the community, at large that its co-operative results in a fertile land failed to support the community.

Only one end, of course, was possible to this; for not only had the theory failed to work out, it had sown dislikes and feuds among the various members, bound together by artificial rules, such as could only be softened by the snapping of the ties. It was necessary to throw up the sponge, and to abandon the wrecked casket of lost visions. For

the ending of this curious drama I will once again quote Mr. Stewart Grahame, whose experience of the affair was a first-hand one, and therefore especially valuable :—

“As soon as the resolution, abolishing socialism, was carried, Frederick Kidd, under whose sane and practical administration the change was brought about, set off to Asuncion to interview the Government, whom he found sympathetically disposed and prepared to do all in their power to assist the colonists. Withdrawing the original grant of territory, the President confirmed them in possession of the twenty-five square miles on which they were actually settled, and approved a scheme whereby every man was entitled to select for himself an allotment of sixty squares of agricultural ground, for which he would be given title-deeds when he had built a house and complied with the usual conditions. The right of grazing over the grass lands was reserved in common for all, so that it was possible for every individual colonist to become a big cattle farmer if he could find the necessary capital. This fact created fresh ambition in the heart of every family, and there was a general exodus of able-bodied men to the railway works at Sapucay, to Asuncion, or Buenos Aires—anywhere where good wages could be earned by a man willing to work his fingers to the bone.

“One colonist, who now owns many hundred head of cattle, worked as a butcher in an Argentine meat works, where wages are high, living on the odd halfpence of his pay and remitting the balance to his wife, to be carefully invested in lean cattle, for which a ready market could be found when fattened. The administrator himself looked for work as a bootmaker’s assistant in Asuncion (he had once had a prosperous business of his own), but, to his delight, a leather merchant set him up with a stock

of leather, and even became responsible to a third party for the value of the necessary tools. Being a good workman, he soon made headway, and became a cattle owner also, though it was principally on his trade that he relied for a living. The story of other colonists was similar."

CHAPTER XX

PARAGUAYAN CATTLE

Effects of the Paraguayan War on the livestock of the country—Figures showing the subsequent increase of cattle—Questions of census and estimates—Cattle values—Favourable position of the cattle-breeding industry—Prospects for the future—How the demand for beef has affected the Paraguayan herds—The Argentine market—The danger of over-selling—Export duty as a preventive measure—Present methods of the Paraguayan *estanciero*—Pedigree stock—A comparison with Argentina—Prices of land—Estates in Paraguay proper and in the Chaco—Advantages and drawbacks of the latter district—Questions of capital—Financial necessities incidental to cattle-breeding and agriculture—*Criollo* cattle—Measures taken to improve the breed—The introduction of Cebu cattle—European strains—The Durham—Origin of the name Tarquino—Acclimatization of pedigree stock in Paraguay—*Tristeza*—A serious disease—Land companies—The chief markets for Paraguayan cattle—Influence of the railway—Some statistics—Exportation of hides—Financial advances and drawbacks of the present situation—Horse-breeding—*Mal de Cadera*—Remaining domestic animals.

THE Paraguayan War played much the same havoc with the cattle of the inland Republic as it did with the human population of the country. At the end of that very strenuous struggle the few herds of horned survivors found themselves roaming over destroyed pastures and the overgrown surface of what had once been arable land.

The war once at an end, however, the numbers of the cattle rapidly increased again, as the following figures, taken from a Paraguayan source, will show :—

Year.					Number of Cattle.
1870	...	...	...	...	15,000
1877	.	...	...	...	200,000

PARAGUAY

Year.					Number of Cattle.
1886	...	...	...	...	729,836
1899	...	...	...	...	2,625,496
1900	...	...	...	...	2,850,000
1901	...	...	...	...	2,950,000
1902	...	...	...	...	3,104,453
1903	...	...	...	...	3,425,343
1904	...	...	...	...	3,800,000
1905	...	...	...	...	4,400,000
1906	...	...	...	...	4,900,000
1907	...	...	...	...	5,400,000
1908	...	...	..	...	5,900,000
1909	...	...	...	...	6,500,000
1910	...	...	...	...	7,200,000

The later figures, it must be said, are not official, and their compilation is based to a certain extent on estimates. Of recent years it must be admitted that the internal unrest in Paraguay has made almost impossible anything in the nature of a reliable cattle census. These estimates would seem to have been calculated on a gross increase of 20 per cent. annually, from which the normal proportion of losses has to be deducted—a calculation which would seem sound enough.

According to the same authority, the value of the Paraguayan cattle in 1906 was estimated at some \$46,000,000 (gold), the equivalent of £9,200,000. Five years later, however, the increase both in the numbers of the herds and the price of the cattle caused this estimate to be advanced to some £14,000,000.

It will be evident from this that the cattle industry in Paraguay is an important and increasing one. Surveying it first of all from an international point of view, there has probably never been a period when its future appeared more assured, or when the demand for beef and hides on the part of other countries was so keen. At the present moment the cattle-owner in Paraguay, as is the case too in the neighbouring countries, is in the fortunate posi-

tion of possessing that for which the demand is greater than the output. In the past the greatest fortunes in southern South America have been made out of cattle, and there is no reason to suppose that history will not repeat itself in this matter

It is, indeed, this great demand which has been instrumental of quite recent years in reducing the numbers of the Paraguayan herds. In 1912 the Argentine Republic, which had been a closed field to Paraguayan livestock, threw open its markets to the cattle from the north, with the result that the rapid rise in price began to show a tendency to strip the country of an undue proportion of its cattle. This phase, as a matter of fact, is one which has been undergone by all the cattle countries of South America. The temptation to dispose of enormous quantities of livestock at a vastly favourable price is, of course, difficult to be withstood by the breeder. The process, nevertheless, cannot fail to be detrimental to the industry in the long run, and in the majority of cases it has been checked by legislation.

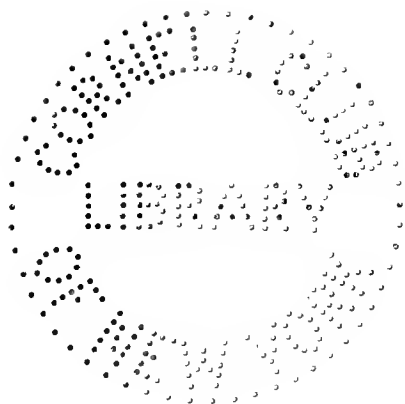
In Paraguay the effect of this movement, accentuated by the losses sustained in the course of a visitation of foot-and-mouth disease, has been considerable, and there are some who maintain that the present numbers of cattle in the Republic do not much exceed the half of the 7,200,000 estimated (perhaps somewhat generously) as the numbers of the animals in 1910. In order to prevent a further undue depletion of its herds the Paraguayan has now placed an export duty on each beast sent over the frontier. By this means it is hoped eventually to bring the cattle population of the Republic up to a reasonable numerical basis, and to give the recently established local *saladeros* that full scope of working which the very marked

shortage of cattle had hitherto denied these establishments.

Of recent years great strides have been made in Paraguayan cattle-breeding. But he who travels north from the mouth of the great river to inspect the cattle farms of Paraguay must not expect to find there a condition of affairs such as now prevails in Argentina and, to a lesser extent, in Uruguay. In Paraguay there has so far been no attempt to compete with those great *cabañas* of the south, where almost priceless Durham bulls, and aristocratic brethren of other strains, live in the pampered luxury that is due to their importance and cost, waited on by assiduous experts, and provided with every convenience for health that modern hygienic science can devise.

In Paraguay it is possible to launch out into the breeding of cattle on a much smaller capital than is now required in the southern republics. In the first place the cost of the land is very much cheaper; and in the second place, although an increasing amount of cross-breeding with foreign stock is now being carried on, such valuable importations of pedigree cattle as are the rule in the Argentine and Uruguayan Republics are not yet known in Paraguay.

To pay two or three thousand pounds for a league of land in the latter country would mean the acquiring of some of the finest pastures in the whole Republic, while some of the less promising estates are to be obtained at rates descending to a cost of about a quarter of this. This applies to Paraguay proper, of course; for in the Chaco it is possible to obtain land far more cheaply. But in many of the districts here the disadvantages of periodical inundations have to be reckoned with. On the other hand, the Chaco offers rather special opportunities in that many of the districts which are suitable for cattle are in





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parts covered with marketable timber, including the valuable quebracho, and thus offer at the same time a double field of importance.

It must be said, however, that the majority of lands such as these have already been snapped up by large companies, that have themselves erected factories on their estates for the extraction of the tannin from the quebracho. In fact, any attempt at the combined industries is not to be dreamed of without capital. The pastoral occupation itself, indeed, should on no account be entered into, even in a small way, without a capital approaching a thousand pounds or so. In agriculture, of course, the circumstances are very different, and here the new-comer, if he be prepared to rough it for a considerable time, and if he be reasonably proficient at his calling, may cheerfully settle himself upon a small holding if he possess two or three hundred pounds at his disposal.

Cattle-breeding in Paraguay, as a matter of fact, is fairly simple work, and, comparatively few of the more complicated methods having been introduced as yet, the cattle roam more or less at their own will over the pastures. Thus a periodical round-up, or *rodeo*, is made to suffice for the needs of supervision in the majority of estates. The principal basis of all the Paraguayan herds is formed by the *criollo* cattle, the descendants of the original stock brought over by the Spaniards. These, under the influence of the climate, have naturally degenerated to a considerable extent from the stamp of beast represented by their forefathers when fresh from Europe. Rather bony and lean, and with a surprisingly large spread of horn, they fell for the most part considerably beneath the standard now demanded by the meat-chilling companies. When the increasing demand for meat demonstrated the necessity of bringing the type of cattle up to modern

requirements a certain amount of livestock was introduced from Europe, and another course was adopted, moreover, which was in a sense a compromise and a concession to the climate.

This, occurring almost entirely to the north of Asuncion, took the form of the introduction of the Cebu cattle from Brazil. This Cebu, or Zebu, stock was in turn originally introduced into Brazil by the Portuguese from India. Although lacking the bulk and the admirable butcher qualities of the European cattle, the importation of the Cebu strain has had the effect of levelling up the *criollo* to a certain extent in the northern half of Paraguay. In the southern half of the Republic the European breeds have made their appearance, and the most important of these is almost certainly the Durham, often locally known as the *Tarquino* or *Talquino*—a somewhat curious feat of nomenclature arising from the generally forgotten fact that the first pure-bred Durham bull to be introduced into the provinces of the Rio de la Plata, about the middle of the nineteenth century, was named "Tarquin," a name that became a generic term and that still obtains among the *gauchos* and others in the remoter spots.

Unfortunately, the acclimatization of pedigree stock is not such a simple matter in Paraguay as it is farther to the south. In the case of this imported stock a disease prevails in the inland Republic which is also the cause of considerable concern in the northernmost districts of Argentina. This is a fever known as *tristeza*, the illness being brought about by the *garrapata*, or tick. The disease is a very serious one, and the imported animal generally dies of it. *Tristeza* is said frequently to attack its victim in three different seizures. If the animal survive the first, he appears to have a fair chance of pulling through altogether, for each attack is less violent than the last.

Notwithstanding such disadvantages as these, the type of Paraguayan cattle tends steadily, if slowly, to improve. It is, of course, impossible to speak with any certainty of the situation at the present moment, but it may be said that the general tendency in the inland Republic is for the pastoral lands to pass into stronger financial hands than those which were accustomed to own them in the past. Several important companies have now interested themselves in this particular branch of industry, and some North American cattle-breeders, moreover, have taken a hand in the enterprise.

Turning to the commercial side of the industry, a study of the markets at the present time is by no means without interest. Briefly, there are three main outlets for Paraguayan cattle. The first is the exportation of the live animals to Argentina; the second is their sale to the Paraguayan packing companies, and the third is their disposal to the local jerked-beef factories, which deal with the meat in the old-fashioned and obsolescent way.

As regards the first method, the exportation of the live animals to Argentina, the new railway line has now been called into requisition, and there is no doubt that this particular form of traffic must increase very much in the future. The following figures are sufficiently instructive on this point. It is impossible to ascertain the destination of all the animals carried; but it may be taken for granted that they were all good animals in killing condition destined for a *saladero*, or important market, otherwise their carcasses would not have been worth the freight. In 1913, 5,554 heads were carried; in 1914, 10,048 head; and in 1915, 15,919 head. In a period such as the present, when all things militate against the development of the general run of industries, these figures, though modest, are by no means unsatisfactory.

A Paraguayan authority gives the undermentioned figures as those representing the numbers of hides exported from the Republic in the course of the first ten years of the nineteenth century :—

				Salted Hides.	Dried Hides.
1901	...	...	...	128,501	104,831
1902	...	...	...	147,001	90,941
1903	...	...	...	177,990	65,931
1904	...	...	...	184,580	64,103
1905	...	...	...	200,685	81,678
1906	...	...	...	193,712	60,172
1907	...	...	...	185,589	58,691
1908	...	...	...	177,872	79,921
1909	...	...	...	213,060	90,014
1910	...	...	...	211,835	77,005

The present dislocation of the world's commerce provides a peculiarly unfavourable moment to discuss the future of any ordinary industry. Yet that of cattle-breeding differs from the majority in that it is not necessarily affected adversely by war or any other social upheaval. Neither is it one of those other industries which, having benefited by international struggles, finds itself in a depressed condition when the period of normal living is resumed. To the Paraguayan cattle-breeders the European War has been productive of a certain amount of financial advantages, which have been counteracted to a large extent by a corresponding set of drawbacks.

Thus against the benefits brought about by the increased demand and the rise in price must be set the dislocation of the ordinary markets, the difficulties which for the time being attend the new method of transport to the coast, and the temporary shortage in the available ocean tonnage. Regarded, however, apart from all such artificial influences, the future of the Paraguayan cattle industry may be regarded with all that confidence which is due to a favourable field that has not yet been fully developed.

Cattle-breeding, as a matter of fact, is the only Paraguayan livestock industry of importance. Sufficient horses, of course, are bred for the local needs ; but the numbers of these are by no means imposing, and occasionally considerable loss is experienced from the disease known as *Mal de Cadera*. Few attempts have as yet been made to introduce sires of a really aristocratic stamp ; and, indeed, the conditions which prevail make any such enterprise improbable, save in the southernmost districts of the Republic. Mules, it may be said, are to be met with in small numbers.

The remaining domestic animals which are bred in Paraguay are sheep, goats, and pigs. The numbers of none of these are in the least important. This is readily understood in the case of sheep, which never consent to thrive to any appreciable extent in the latitudes approaching the heat of the subtropics. But this is by no means the case with goats and pigs, and the breeding of these will no doubt increase very largely in time to come.

CHAPTER XXI

YERBA MATÉ AND TOBACCO

Part played by yerba maté in the early colonial history—Wide popularity of the beverage—Seventeenth-century markets of the Paraguayan tea—Area of its growth—Preparation of the yerba maté—Method of drinking—Some expectations and actualities of the industry—Export figures—Questions of appreciation—Eastern teas as rivals—The fate of yerba maté as a national beverage—Its merits as a stimulant—Its importance in the Argentine "camps"—Future of the industry—Collection of the leaf—Yerba plantation—Difficulties in propagation—New method of planting out the seedlings—Yerba maté and the possibilities of its "booming"—The tobacco industry—The Paraguayans as smokers—The ubiquitous cigar—Gathering of the crop—Shipments to Europe—A loss of individuality—Amount of the average annual crop—Popularity of Paraguayan tobacco in Argentina and Uruguay—Questions concerning the development of the industry—The Paraguayan cigar in Europe.

THE industry, in yerba maté is the one of oldest standing in Paraguay. Very shortly after the Spanish *conquistadores* had first made their way by river to the inland province there are records of the gathering and marketing of yerba maté, more commonly known in England as Paraguayan tea.

Yerba maté, as a matter of fact, played a very important part in the early colonial history of the south-east of the continent. So rapidly did the dried, fermented, and pounded leaves of the *Ilex Paraguayensis* attain to popularity that even in the early part of the seventeenth century the beverage had penetrated to provinces of South America quite remote from the forests where the tree flourished, and in consequence the value of this national product

became greatly enhanced. As has been seen, too, the collection of yerba maté formed one of the chief industries of the Jesuit mission settlements, and many a barge or raft which went floating down from Asunción to the market of Buenos Aires was deeply laden with Paraguayan tea that had been picked and prepared by the Indians.

According to the geography of modern times, Paraguay is by no means the only country in which the *Ilex Paraguayensis* flourishes. In extensive portions of Brazil it is equally abundant, while in the north of Uruguay and in the north-eastern corner of Argentina are lesser areas where the yerba maté obtains.

Of recent decades the felling of considerable stretches of forest has tended to alter the yerba maté area somewhat; but the districts in which it has always flourished may, very roughly speaking, be said to be bounded on the north by a line running from the neighbourhood of the estuary of the Rio Grande River, in southern Brazil, to a point not far from the town of Villa Rica, in southern Paraguay. To the south the corresponding line would pass through the north of the Republic of Uruguay and the centre of the Argentine province of Corrientes. To the west the tree would not seem to flourish to any extent in its natural state when the banks of the rivers Paraná or Paraguay are approached, and, once across the stream, in the Chaco, the *Ilex Paraguayensis* does not seem to have been met with at all. On the other hand, the soil of the country, as far west as the Argentine province of Salta has proved itself eminently suitable for the growth of the tree, and it is likely enough that further experiments will reveal a considerably wider field adapted to its plantation. Before going further into such matters as these, it may be as well to consider the actual nature of this Paraguayan tea and

the manner in which it is drunk. The leaves of the yerba, when ground and prepared, are placed in the maté, or gourd, boiling water is poured upon them, and the infusion is then drawn up through the *bombilla*, a silver tube.

Many of these gourds, it may be said, being heavily ornamented with silver, present a very handsome appearance, and a collection of maté bowls, such as the author has seen in more than one household, can be made to afford an object-lesson in the art which can be introduced into these vessels. Extensive collections such as these, as a matter of fact, are wont to be gathered together as a hobby rather than for practical use. For the ethics of maté drinking are of the simplest. If the ceremony be conducted in the accepted and time-honoured fashion, the same maté and the same *bombilla* will be made to serve for two drinkers or for a dozen. Like the pipe of peace of the departed redskin warriors, it is passed from hand to hand, and each sips his fill, while the bowl is replenished as often as may be necessary. In the more populous centres of these modern days it may occur that two or three maté enthusiasts, drinking together, may each be provided with a separate bowl and *bombilla*. But this, from the hardened maté toper's point of view, is the rankest degeneracy. It is most emphatically against all the ethics of maté sociability—as deep a crime as it would be for a guest at a Livery Company's dinner of the City of London to attempt to introduce a new method of imbibing the loving-cup! But perhaps it is needless to explain that in many of the out-of-the-way corners of the southern half of South America the convivial groups are of a rather more heterogeneous order than those which sit about a white tablecloth somewhere to the east of Temple Bar.

From the commercial point of view, yerba maté



BRINGING HOME YERBA.



PACKING YERBA.

has not been without its disappointments. From the beginning of the nineteenth century, it has always been supposed that, when once the merits of the Paraguayan tea became widely known outside the boundaries of South America, the increase in the trade of yerba maté would increase by leaps and bounds. That the industry has grown to a certain extent will be evident from a glance at the figures representing the annual quantities exported in certain years from Paraguay.

In the 1820's the average export of yerba maté from Paraguay was estimated by the famous French naturalist Aimé Bonpland at about 2,500 tons. Bonpland, as a matter of fact, was in a situation which enabled him to judge of this with unusual accuracy, for, owing to a whim of the Dictator Francia's, he was held a prisoner within the yerba maté districts for ten years.

We may pass from this period to the year 1886, when the Paraguayan exports of the tea amounted to 5,500 tons. In 1887, they had risen to 7,000 tons; but ten years later they had fallen to 4,000 tons, and in 1911 the total had dropped to 3,000 tons, although it rose again in 1913 to 4,000 tons.

It must be admitted that this advance in the course of nearly a century is a very modest one, in view of the confident predictions that have been so frequently made to the effect that the future of the Paraguayan tea industry could not fail to be of world-wide importance. The two principal reasons for its comparative want of progress are concerned purely with demand. So far it must be admitted that yerba maté has not met with that appreciation outside of South America that was anticipated for it. Secondly, the disagreeable fact has to be faced by the yerba maté exporters that in some of the large southern centres of South America itself the habit of maté drinking has yielded largely to

the imbibing of ordinary tea in the European fashion, a circumstance which has gone far to neutralize the benefits which the large increase in these populations must otherwise have assured to the industry. In capitals such as Buenos Aires, for instance, where the hotel and domestic life now begins to challenge comparison with London, Paris, and New York, yerba maté as a national beverage has practically ceased to exist; although many good Argentines, notwithstanding their cosmopolitan surroundings, refuse to surrender their taste for a beverage which in a few years' time promises to become a rarity in a town where it once reigned supreme.

A situation such as this, it should be said, is not in the least commensurate with the real merits of yerba maté. It is true that the beverage is seldom, if ever, appreciated at its first drinking, and that it falls within the category of those things that claim an acquired taste. Nevertheless, it is by no means only South Americans who are addicted to the drink. There are very few British *estancieros* throughout the entire south-eastern extent of the continent who have not grown to regard it as their staunchest liquid friend, and who do not greet with affection that faint bitterness of taste which is generally resented by those who try it for the first two or three times. There are probably no other men, as a matter of fact, who give such enthusiastic testimony to the power of yerba maté as a recuperative agent as these *estancieros*, whose lot it frequently is to gallop for dozens of leagues in the broiling summer's heat.

Curiously enough, it is to the south of its own proper home that the benefits of yerba maté have been chiefly felt. In the glades of Paraguay itself vegetables and fruit have never been lacking to any appreciable extent, and, indeed, have generally been remarkable for their abundance. In the treeless

pastoral plains of Argentina it has been otherwise. There, where the real gaucho—who is now to all intents and purposes extinct—would no more have troubled to plant a vegetable than he would have bothered to pare the hoofs of despised, foot-rotted sheep, the continuous and unbroken diet of meat, and nothing but meat, could scarcely fail to have been followed by lamentable consequences to the health of the cattlemen, had it not been for the frequent sippings at the maté, which proved itself a most admirable corrective and health preserver.

The stimulating properties of yerba maté, moreover, would seem to serve their purpose without being followed by that reaction which inevitably accompanies the indulgence in so many beverages of the kind. There may be cases where an over-indulgence in the yerba has been followed by disastrous consequences—the Jesuits of old appear to have issued a number of warnings to this effect—but, if so, these must be very rare. Indeed, their proportion must be less than that of those coffee-drinkers who partake of that sufficiently harmless bean with detrimental enthusiasm.

Considering the real esteem in which this yerba maté is held by all nationalities in South America, it is indeed difficult to understand the reason why the taste for it should still be confined to the southern continent. I have no doubt that, sooner or later, the day will arrive when all those predictions of the past—as well as the rather less confident assertions of the present—will be justified, and that the period will arrive when yerba maté will be shipped from Paraguay in tens of thousands, instead of simple thousands, of tons.

An expansion of this kind could be contemplated by Paraguayans with a greater equanimity now than ever before. For the history of yerba maté resembles that of many other forest growths of the

kind. Attacked in the first place with that wasteful energy which its very abundance provoked, the plant soon grew rare in the neighbourhood of the settled centres, and it became necessary for the Indian collectors to proceed to its groves, the *yerbales*, farther and farther afield. In the end these distances became so great that the missionaries determined to attempt the plantation of the *Ilex Paraguayensis* in order that the commodity might again be at hand in the neighbourhood of their towns. They succeeded in this, and ultimately the yerba derived from these plantations turned out to be the finest that grew, realizing in price double that obtained for the ordinary forest leaves.

But this propagation of the yerba maté was always a difficult matter, and during the disturbed period through which the country passed this naturally suffered from a good deal of neglect. The chief difficulties experienced occur during the first eighteen months or two years of the plant's life. Modern science has now, however, been brought to bear on this subject, and the employment of pasteboard pots has greatly reduced the dangers attending the planting out of the seedlings, for it enables this to be effected without any disturbance of the roots.

Thus, whenever the long-expected "boom" in yerba maté comes about, the countries of its origin will be prepared for it. In the meantime, from the point of view of the gigantic advertisers, here is a beverage lying fallow that would afford an almost unique opportunity to one accustomed to deal in such matters on a world-wide scale. It is no exaggeration whatever to say that yerba maté contains all the qualifications and essentials for this. The only thing that it lacks is a place on the hoardings and in the pages of the Press!

The tobacco industry is as essentially a part and parcel of Paraguay, as is that of yerba maté.

Paraguay without tobacco would resemble the Burgundy district without grapes, or Kent shorn of its hops! As a matter of fact, the goddess of nicotine is worshipped by almost every Paraguayan, irrespective of sex and age. A picturesquely clothed young girl of the inland Republic, whether she be riding across the countryside or plodding, barefooted, along the Asuncion streets on her way to the market, will almost certainly be puffing smoke from a lengthy dark cigar stuck jauntily between her lips. Babes in their mothers' arms will begin life enveloped in this same blue smoke, and having thus been cured of any tendency to cough at it in their tenderest years—or months!—they will begin to take a cigar within their own lips at an incredibly early age. In this respect I suppose that the race most akin to the Paraguayans are the Burmese; and, indeed, in some respects the Paraguayan cigars are not unlike the cheroots of the East.

The Paraguayan tobacco crop is gathered in the months of February and March—which are, of course, equivalent to the northern periods of August and September—and the seven different classes of leaves, having been dried and fermented, are then made up into the various types of cigars, or retained in their crude form to be sent to the larger factories or to be shipped abroad.

It is not generally known that rather more than half of the entire Paraguayan tobacco crop has been wont to be shipped to Europe, Germany in the past having been the principal recipient of this article. Once arrived on the soil of this latter country, it seems to have lost its individuality—so far as nomenclature is concerned. Paraguayan cigars, in the minds of the general public, are, I believe, an unknown luxury in Europe, where the leaf from the South American inland State doubtless masquerades under many, a supposed, or actual, Cuban name.

Perhaps there is more justification for this than appears on the surface ; for Havana seed was introduced into Paraguay in 1900, and has been brought more and more into use ever since.

That the amount of this Paraguayan leaf is sufficiently important may be gleaned from the fact that the average Paraguayan crop of tobacco is estimated at some 7,000 tons, of which about 4,000 tons find their way to Europe. In Argentina and Uruguay, on the other hand, Paraguayan cigars and cigarettes are permitted to sail under their rightful colours, and in these countries they enjoy a wide and deserved popularity.

Given internal peace and a modern system of organization, there would seem no doubt but that a most flourishing future must await this tobacco industry of Paraguay. At the present moment, as we have seen, this stream of nicotine, on entering Europe, disappears as completely, as do the waters of a river on entering the sea. At this rate it is, of course, clearly out of the question that Paraguayan tobacco should ever attain that fame on this side of the Atlantic which it enjoys in Argentina and Uruguay, to say nothing of its own country.

There would, as a matter of fact, seem no reason why Paraguayan tobacco should not eventually take its place among the noted growths of the world. As regards this, however, it will undoubtedly be necessary first of all to overcome certain disadvantages which have been put in the way of the growth by the bountiful climate itself of the country. For one of the numerous paradoxes applying to Paraguay lies in the fact that the more liberal the gifts of Nature, the less strenuous are wont to be the efforts of man. It is undeniable that a greater amount of attention paid to the seeding and cultivation of the tobacco plants here would result in an improvement in quality such as might well result in the com-

pling of a hitherto unconscious world to acknowledge the merits of the nicotine weed of the inland State.

But until some enterprising beings come forward to found a regular Paraguayan brand of cigars it is only the unreasonably optimistic who would look forward to any such development as this. Here again, as in the case of yerba maté, is an opportunity to assist a deserving article, which undoubtedly has a right to a greater amount of publicity than it obtains. Nothing is more profitable than a sufficiently studied charity of the kind!

CHAPTER XXII

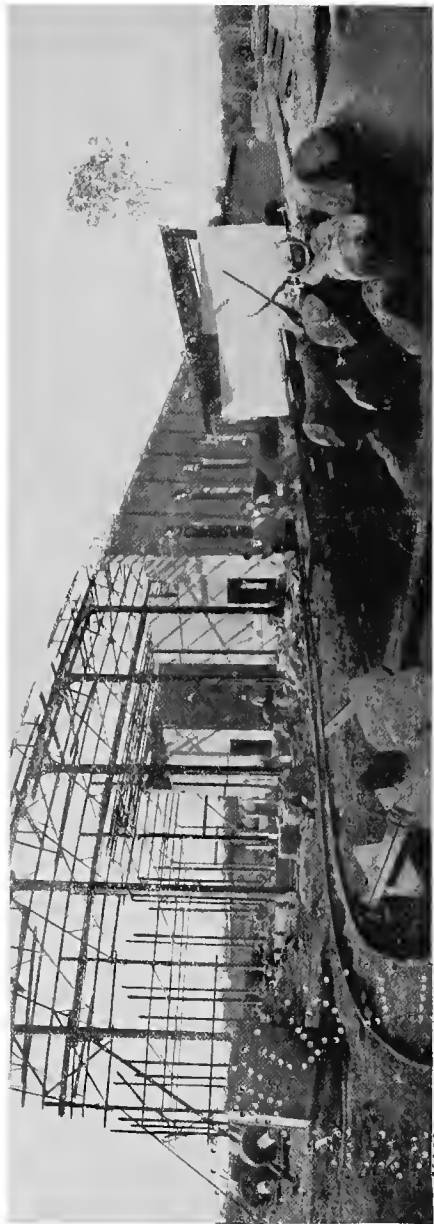
TIMBER, FRUITS, AND CEREALS

The forests of Paraguay—Various types of timber—Demand for this in the treeless south—Hard woods—Cabinet woods—Medicinal growths and textile plants—Dye-plants—A curious circumstance connected with rubber—The lumber industry—Difficulties presented by the Paraguayan forests—Shortage of local carpentry—The quebracho industry—Districts in which the tree is found—Nature of the wood—Various uses to which it is put—Its tannin properties—Advantages of these—A comparison with oak bark—The chief quebracho factories—Important concerns—The light railways of the Chaco—The Paraguayan fruit industry—The orange—Excellence of the Paraguayan specimens—Orange-growing as an old-standing industry—Theory concerning an indigenous variety—Proof by nomenclature—Export of the fruit—Inadequate financial return yielded by the industry—Some surprising figures—Banana-growing—Increasing importance of the plantations—Pineapples and lemons—Cereals, agricultural products, and vegetables—Maize—Sugar-cane—Present limitations of the industry—Probabilities of the future—Mandioca—Other growths.

THE forests of Paraguay are undoubtedly one of the chief assets with which a bountiful Nature has supplied the inland Republic. Paraguay, moreover, is fortunate in her forest possessions in more senses than one. There are many countries, both in South America and in other continents, where the great wealth of timber is to a large extent wasted owing to the lack of facilities for transporting the lumber to centres where it can be dealt with from a commercial point of view.

Paraguay—with half its total area forest-covered—not only possesses an abounding wealth of magnificent cabinet woods and useful coarser timber, but





A QUEBRACHO FACTORY.



A QUEBRACHO FACTORY.

she has the means of transporting them most conveniently at hand. No finer highway for this purpose could be met with than the Paraguay, assisted by its numerous affluents, to say nothing of the Alto Paraná and its lesser tributaries. It is true that many of the hardest and most valuable of these woods are of a specific gravity which does not allow them to float on the surface of the water. But here again the variety of her products comes to the aid of the State. For Paraguay produces great quantities of lighter timber such as the cedar, and it is this which serves as the foundation of those rafts which go floating down the Paraguay and the other streams. On this buoyant surface are placed those marvellously hard and heavy logs, which have been so eagerly imported by the central pastoral plains of Argentina, that at one time were for all practical purposes treeless, and that even now refuse to grow any timber of a harder texture than the eucalyptus, poplar, paraiso, and similar light woods. Of late years, however, owing to the increasing use of reinforced concrete for building and of iron sleepers for railroad permanent ways, the demand for the coarser timbers has somewhat slackened in the south, although that for the finer kinds remains as keen as ever.

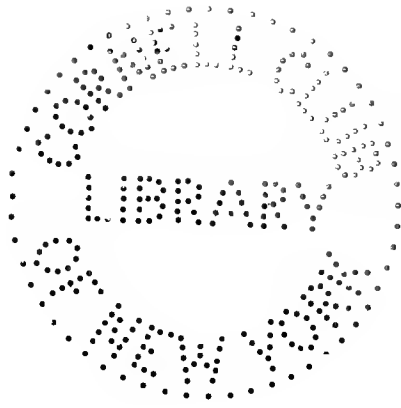
Among the principal hardwoods of Paraguay are the quebracho, palo santo, lapacho, caranday, ñandubay, curupay, guayacan, peteriby, urunday, ibirapyta, and palo blanco. Some of the chief of the cabinet woods are various species of laurel, the palo de rosa, a black laurel which closely resembles ebony, the yacaranda, and the tatayba.

There are in addition many medicinal trees and plants such as the castor oil, papaw, coca, jaborandi, ipecacuanha, sarsaparilla, and many others. The textile plants are very important, including as they do various kinds of cotton, the majority of a very fine quality, ramie, caraguatá—a species of pine-

apple, the leaves of which, it may be said, hold rain-water within them for very long periods, and thus in some of the more arid districts are apt to prove of the greatest benefit to travellers; the ibyra—a plant closely resembling the caraguatá—the silk-cotton tree, and many beyond these.

Paraguay, moreover, is very rich in dye-plants, of which some thirty different species would seem to exist. The rubber-tree is found to a certain extent, more especially in the northern parts of the Republic. A rather curious circumstance in connection with this product is that, although the tree is indigenous to Paraguay, the manufactured rubber would seem to degenerate and rot with quite an unusual rapidity in various districts. Of this fact, at all events, I have been assured by various residents of Asuncion who had had considerable personal experience of the matter.

As regards the general lumber trade of Paraguay, it may be said that this—apart from the quebracho industry, to which reference is made later—is only now beginning to arrive at its first stage of infancy. There is no doubt whatever that in the near future much progress will be made in this. There are, nevertheless, some features in the more luxuriant of the Paraguayan forests which present certain difficulties to those who desire to exploit them. From the lumberman's point of view the enormous variety of the trees here constitutes a disadvantage. A lumberman, for instance, who happens to be in search of a thousand or so ñandubay trees has naturally no interest at the moment in any other timber but ñandubay. But in the densest forests of the Republic a single ñandubay-tree may be separated from its nearest brother by two, twenty, or any number of growths of other species. This circumstance would offer fewer difficulties were the timber trade here conducted on a scale which will undoubtedly occur





TIMBER FELLING IN THE CHACO.

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in the future ; but in the meantime its effect on a budding industry is somewhat discouraging. At the same time, it must be said that this condition of affairs is not universal throughout the forests of Paraguay, and does not apply to the quebracho lands.

Notwithstanding this abundance of magnificent timber, Paraguay has been accustomed to import practically the entirety of its manufactured wooden goods from Europe or North America. It is needless to explain that the cause of this has been the local shortage both of skilled labour and of machinery. A start has now been made, however, in the business of joining, turning, and carpentry in general. This has so far been largely confined to the cars and fittings of the tramway and railway companies, but no doubt an opportunity for the manufacture of general furniture will occur before long. Decidedly for this purpose no timber could be better suited than some of the extraordinarily handsome cabinet woods of these sub-tropical forests.

The quebracho industry differs entirely from that of any other kind of Paraguayan timber, in that it has already undergone a very marked development, and already gives work to a number of important factories and to many thousands of hands. Quebracho timber abounds only in the Chaco, on the western side of the great river. The area of its growth here is, however, very great, since it is to be met with in Argentine territory, and it abounds as far south even as the province of Santa Fé.

The nature of quebracho wood may be gathered from its name, which signifies "break-axe." It is, indeed, one of the toughest even of the numerous hard Paraguayan woods, and was formerly in great demand in Argentina for such purposes as fence posts, *corrales*, and other agricultural uses. But its most popular employment was for railway sleepers, owing

to the extraordinary length of time which this timber can remain in the earth without rotting.

In such guises as this quebracho timber has long been familiar to the *estancieros* and railway officials of the Argentine *Campo*. Towards the end of the last century, however, the extent of the very valuable tannin properties of this wood began to be realized, and after 1890 the quantities which were available for agricultural and railway uses rapidly diminished. The demand for this, in consequence, has exceeded the supply since then, although as many logs as could be spared for the purpose have been shipped not only to the southern republics of South America, but to Europe and the United States as well.

The latest development of the quebracho industry is, however, the most important of all. This is the manufacture from the timber of an extract which contains those tanning substances for which the timber is now so famous. It is claimed for this quebracho tannin that it is unique in quality, and that its power is far greater than that of oak bark. The quebracho experts maintain on its behalf that a single tree, weighing a ton, will yield 600 lbs. of extract, and that this extract will tan as much leather as almost double its quantity of oak bark—for the growing of which latter, by the way, about half an acre of land is required. In fact, to quote from a pamphlet issued by one of the chief companies concerned with this industry: "the high quality and enormous quantity of tanning substances contained in the wood of the quebracho-tree make it at once both the best and cheapest tanning material in the world, giving to the leather a fine colour which cannot be secured from any other known ingredient."

The process of extracting tannin from the quebracho contrasts rather curiously with the method employed for extracting the similar substance from the oak. In the case of the oak the bark is relied

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on for the purpose ; the bark of the quebracho, on the other hand, is not used at all in this process. Here the wood itself is reduced to sawdust, and the tannin is extracted from this. It is then made up into solid cakes, in which shape its commercial form is complete, and delivered to the tanneries, where it is rendered liquid in preparation for actual use.

Some of the chief of these quebracho factories are situated at Puertos Galileo, Casado, Sastre, and Max and Maria. Some years ago these factories were said to employ a capital of some three million pounds, and to be responsible for a monthly output of three thousand tons of extract. It will be evident from this that the industry is now worked on a large scale. The factories, as a matter of fact, are important concerns containing an imposing bulk of machinery, and each is supplied with a certain mileage of light railway for the transport of the timber; either to the factories for the purpose of tannin extraction, or to one of the small river ports to be shipped abroad.

These light railways, it should be said, are now playing a leading part in the development of the Chaco, and have already demonstrated to what an extent they are able to counteract the difficulties of transport for which the peculiar soil of this district is responsible. It has been said, and no doubt correctly, that these light railways will in course of time prove more useful in the alluvial soil of Argentina than the ordinary highways of a country entirely innocent of stone. That this same remedy applies to the Chaco there is no doubt, as, indeed, has already been proved by the number of light railways that are already in use there.

From the popular point of view one of the most fascinating national assets of Paraguay is represented by its fruit industry. Although the soil of the inland Republic has proved itself so admirably adapted to so many other purposes, it is nevertheless for the

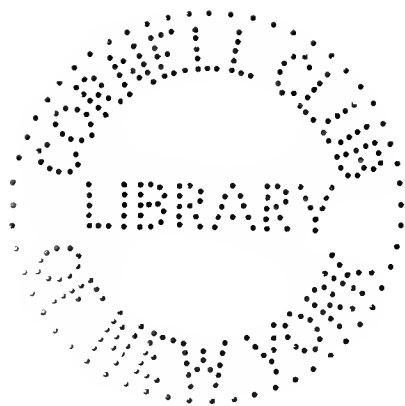
growing of its numerous and luscious fruits that the red earth and the balmy airs would seem most of all suitable.

The most notable fruit of Paraguay is undoubtedly the orange. Those who are interested in the industry claim that the orange yields finer results both in quantity and quality in Paraguay than in any other part of the world. This is perhaps rather a bold statement, since, as regards quantity there are some districts in the north of the continent where the wealth of the fruit is perhaps even more phenomenal, and in the matter of quality some of the central Brazilian specimens of these golden globes are altogether remarkable and quite unsurpassed.

But it may safely be said that Paraguay is second to no other country in the world in orange production. The Republic, indeed, is peculiarly fortunate in that its fruit possesses that somewhat rare combination of both quantity and quality. Orange-growing, as a matter of fact, is one of the oldest occupations of the kind in Paraguay. It is generally supposed that the Jesuits brought with them from Europe the ancestors of those countless orange groves which to-day flourish in Paraguay. Dr. E. de Bourgade La Dardye, however, who paid much attention to this subject during his stay in Paraguay, stoutly maintains that one species, a very pleasant one, is indigenous to Paraguay. He remarks concerning this:—

“I have met with it in the most remote places, in the unexplored valleys of the Ygatimi, and on the margin of the Upper Paraná, where it could certainly never have been introduced by human agency. So abundantly does it grow on the Paraná above the Salto de Guayra, that during a flood I have seen numbers of them drifting down the stream.

“The Guaranís call it *apépu*, which is a very ancient word in their language, and in my opinion carries with it an argument for the tree being of





THE TIMBER INDUSTRY.



A PIONEER FACTORY.

American origin, for all other varieties of the orange, without exception, are distinguished by Spanish names. It may, I think, be taken as almost an invariable rule, that whatever has been imported into the country by the invaders has retained its Spanish name, the aborigines not having been at the pains to assign it any name of their own. At most, the final syllable has undergone a slight change to suit local phonetic laws."

Whether it be accurate or not, this is, at all events, a very interesting theory on the part of a writer well qualified to speak on the subject.

The orange has from the earliest days of Paraguay formed part and parcel of the European settlements in the country, and the dark-green foliage of the trees helped to beautify both the lay centres and the Jesuit townships. The site of many of these latter, ruined and demolished, is marked to this day by these spreading groves that still continue to yield their fruit.

In the commercial Appendix will be found a table showing the export of oranges. From this it will be seen that the average annual export of this fruit from Paraguay during the past few years has been in the neighbourhood of twelve millions of dozens. This is a sufficiently striking total; but at the same time it must be explained that it only represents a fraction of the produce of the country, as those enormous quantities grown at an inconvenient distance from rail or steamer are not exported. Were these available to be sent across the frontier the revelation concerning the numbers of Paraguayan oranges would undoubtedly astonish the world.

It is fortunate for the industry that orange-growing in the inland Republic can be carried on at the expense of so little time and trouble, for the financial return of the fruit is at the present moment altogether inadequate to its quality. It was recorded, for

instance, that in 1913 the growers at Villa Rica obtained an average price of the equivalent of 13s. 4d. for a cartload of five thousand oranges! It is true that the price for the same quantity of selected fruit at the port of San Antonio on the River Paraguay was £1 17s. 6d. On the other hand there were many less favoured points where the fruit fetched a lower price even than the one first quoted. In 1914 matters were much the same, and at the port of Villeta on the Paraguay River the price per cartload of five thousand oranges varied between £1 10s. and £1 15s.

Figures such as these are not likely to induce many agriculturists to leave Europe in order to take up orange-farming in Paraguay. One of the main reasons why such astonishingly low prices prevail is that the growers, widely scattered and for the most part individually of minor financial importance, have not yet been able to organize their industry so as to make a stand against a fruit trust, which at the present time appears to be able to buy practically at its own figure. It is probable, of course, that the increasing facilities will eventually come to the aid of the growers—if they themselves have failed to solve the problem in the meantime—and will place the industry on that proper economical basis which its importance deserves.

From the point of view of export the fruit which comes next to the orange in order of importance is the banana. But the gap between the bulk of the two is very great—so marked, indeed, that no official account is kept of the consignments of bananas to the south by rail or river. Nevertheless Paraguay is admirably suited for the culture of the banana, and some of the plantations are now of considerable importance. It is probable, as a matter of fact, that some millions of bunches are now exported from the Republic, and, since the fruit ripens all the year round, the trade should be a remunerative one. The

species of banana, it may be said, which thrives best of all in Paraguay is known as the "Banana de Oro."

The only other Paraguayan fruits which are exported are the pineapple and the lemon.

Among the main cereals and agricultural products of Paraguay are maize, sugar-cane, mandioca, cotton, rice, coffee, beans, pea-nuts, millet, and a considerable number of European vegetables. The alfalfa, it should be said, which is such a feature of the agricultural lands of the south of the continent refuses to thrive in Paraguay, and the lack of this magnificent fodder is not a little regrettable so far as the cattle industry is concerned.

Two varieties of maize are cultivated in the Republic, where this cereal is made to do the duty as much as possible of wheat. The climate and soil would seem to suit the growth very well, and it is regarded as a staple food.

It is a somewhat remarkable circumstance that, although the sugar-cane flourishes so freely in Paraguay, it is not cultivated on a sufficiently large scale to meet the local demand. The total area of land under sugar-cane is estimated at less than ten thousand acres. By no means the entirety of this, moreover, is used for the manufacture of sugar, as the majority of the smaller growers turn their produce into *caña*, or rum. Thus it comes about that Paraguay, an ideal sugar-producing country, imports sugar occasionally to the annual tune of over four million tons from Germany, Austria-Hungary, Spain, and France. It is needless to point out that, as soon as the population of the inland Republic increases to any reasonable extent, this anomalous situation must alter.

Mandioca is a staple product of Paraguay. This root has proved itself invaluable both as a vegetable and for the by-products derived from it. Care, of course, has to be taken to distinguish the poisonous

varieties of this growth from the edible, a feat which is not invariably easy.

Cotton, rice, and coffee are not yet produced in any notable quantities, and, from the commercial point of view, these products are still in their experimental stage. It is unlikely, indeed, that any really important advances will be made in these growths until the increase in population and communications warrant them.

The cultivation of beans, pea-nuts, millet, and other minor growths is at present carried on on a small scale.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE TRADE OF PARAGUAY

Circumstances which have influenced imports and exports—Consequences of political unrest—Elasticity of the Paraguayan trade—Figures in proof of this—A table of imports and exports—Paraguay's most important customers—British share of the total imports—Proportion of British merchants in Paraguay—A tribute to the quality of British goods—Questions concerning commercial travellers—German competition—The German plan of campaign—Great Britain's opportunity—Length of credit extended by the British and Germans respectively—Temptations of the system—Necessity for first-class salesmen—The importance of the Spanish language—How this reacts on commercial travellers and catalogues—Questions of local weights, measures, and currency—Unnecessary disadvantages under which the sale of British goods has suffered in the past—Sympathies of the Paraguayan.

IN reviewing the trade of Paraguay it is necessary to take into account many circumstances the existence of which is not revealed in the mere tables of statistics. In Paraguay it is not matters of commerce alone which have affected the various tables of imports and exports. The most patriotic inhabitant of the inland Republic will not attempt to disguise the fact that the political unrest which from time to time has made its appearance in that fertile and rich land has been responsible for an infinitely greater amount of commercial depression than any drought, flood, disease, or any other catastrophe of nature from which it has ever suffered.

It is these circumstances of revolution and civil war which have so often upset the calculations of Paraguayan and foreigner alike, and which have more

than once produced such strange and disconcerting results, at a time, perhaps, when all other circumstances promised an industrial harvest of the first water. The sum totals of only too many years of Paraguayan trade show signs of "in and out running," when these under steadier circumstances could not well have failed to maintain a steady increase.

For all that, it cannot be said that the condition of Paraguayan trade is in the least unhealthy. The following figures, if they show little else, will at least demonstrate its elasticity and recuperative power. They represent the combined value of the imports and exports, and thus give the grand totals of Paraguayan foreign trade.

Value of Foreign Trade.				
£				
1907	...	...	...	2,149,722
1908	...	...	...	1,588,010
1909	...	...	...	1,784,918
1910	...	...	...	2,267,258
1911	...	...	...	2,261,481
1912	...	...	...	1,917,265
1913	...	...	...	2,750,185

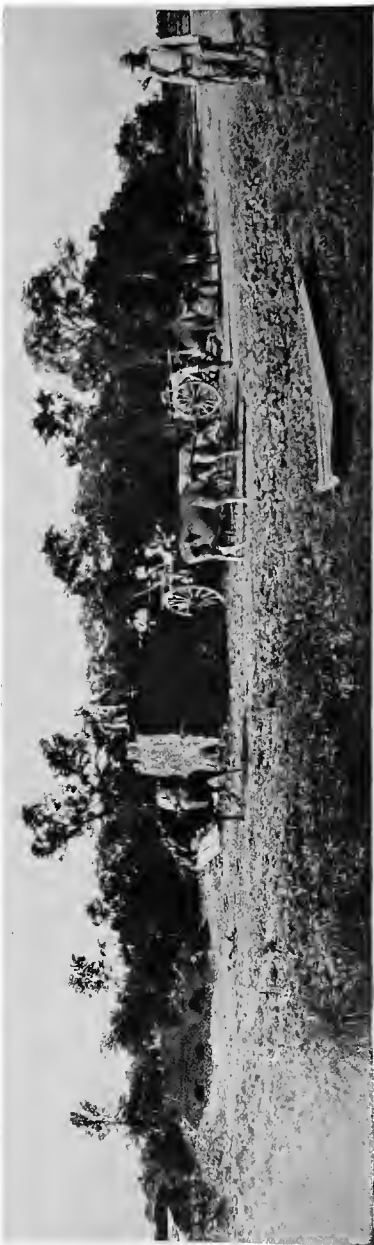
Even to one totally unacquainted with the affairs of the country these figures will explain themselves to a certain extent, while to one familiar with Paraguayan circumstances such fluctuations can come as no surprise. It is essential to note, nevertheless, that the general tendency is an upward one.

Dissected into imports and exports, these totals stand as follows :—

				Imports.	Exports.
				£	£
1907	...	...	...	1,502,500	647,222
1908	...	...	...	814,591	773,419
1909	...	...	...	757,590	1,027,328
1910	...	...	...	1,283,877	983,381
1911	...	...	...	1,295,699	965,782
1912	...	...	...	1,070,120	847,145
1913	...	...	...	1,623,999	1,126,186



THE TRACK OF ENTERPRISE.



BRICK KILN : CHACO.

THE TRADE OF PARAGUAY 307

So far as exports are concerned, it may be said that Paraguay's most important customers in the recent past have been Argentina, Germany, and Uruguay. The proportions for which these were respectively responsible in 1912 were:—

			£
Argentina	...	...	703,283
Germany	...	...	247,151
Uruguay	...	...	138,924

These figures, it should be explained, do not show the complete process in connection with Paraguay's exports, for a very large proportion of the goods sent to Argentina as well as to Uruguay are reshipped to their ultimate destination, whether this be Great Britain, the United States, or any of the European countries.

The above figures are quoted from the report of Mr. F. Oliver, the British Consul in Paraguay, published in 1914. The detailed figures of the total imports for the years 1911, 1912, and 1913, taken from the same source, are:—

Country.	1911.	1912.	1913.
	£	£	£
United Kingdom ...	370,040	268,341	464,806
Germany ...	363,533	311,079	448,785
Argentina ..	154,992	140,622	218,031
France ...	86,300	75,622	107,419
Italy ...	70,371	63,546	98,959
United States ...	77,905	63,189	97,665
Spain ...	82,725	66,571	86,005
Belgium ...	22,086	26,588	37,986
Uruguay ...	10,227	7,328	12,033
Brazil ...	11,674	8,699	9,244
Austria-Hungary ...	21,863	25,793	17,549
Other countries ...	23,983	12,742	25,537
Total ...	1,295,699	1,070,120	1,623,999

Thus it will be seen that out of these totals the British share was 28 per cent. in 1911, 25 per cent.

in 1912, and 28·6 per cent. in 1913. In 1908 it may be remarked that the British share was only 21 per cent., while that of Germany amounted to 29 per cent. These figures afford considerably more satisfactory reading than those concerning many other parts of South America, where the tendency of the respective shares of Great Britain and Germany has tended only too frequently to develop in the opposite direction.

It is, indeed, a matter for considerable wonder, not that the British trade with Paraguay be not greater than it is, but rather that its volume should have attained to its present dimensions. It is said—I believe with perfect accuracy—that out of nearly seven hundred commercial firms—nearly all owned by Germans, Italians, Spaniards, and French—only two firms are British !

To emphasize this point I will quote from a recent report of Mr. Consul Oliver's a paragraph which seems to me conspicuous for its soundness:—

“ That British trade is not (so far as can be gathered from the available figures) on the increase is, however, not surprising ; it is, on the contrary, somewhat remarkable that it maintains its present level, because in the whole Republic there are only two British importing firms. It may be regarded as a tribute to the quality of the British goods that they are largely imported by foreign houses and foreign agents, but at the same time the conclusion is irresistible that the British share in the total import trade might be still larger if a larger number of British houses were established in this country. Many more travellers and representatives are said to have been sent during the last year or two to Paraguay from other European countries such as Germany, France, Italy, etc., than from the United Kingdom, and British firms are also said not to give such easy terms of credit as the foreign ones. In cases where

goods are bought from samples, some Continental firms are said to send out larger assortments of samples (which, other than those of textiles, are bought by the importers, subject to a large discount) than is customary with British firms, thereby facilitating a selection and affording a more precise indication to the exporter of the class of articles desired in this market. These small points are mentioned because Continental competition appears to be likely to grow still keener than at present. The German community is said to be continually increasing its numbers. They are occupied in trade and in many other ways, having apparently satisfied themselves that Paraguay offers a good field for their enterprise and activity. . . . The United Kingdom imports practically no products of Paraguay, presumably because there are no British firms in the country exporting hides, tobacco, etc., like the German and Spanish firms."

Undoubtedly the case has been accurately and fairly put here. The reason why British trade with Paraguay has not grown as it should is owing rather to a shortage of British merchants in the inland Republic than to the want of enterprise on the part of those already engaged in this branch of commerce. British interests, however, cannot permit the situation to remain as it is when the real development of Paraguay occurs, an operation that must come about with a surprising rapidity on the resumption of a normal general commercial situation.

There is no doubt that this development had been very shrewdly anticipated by our rivals the Germans, and that they had taken very comprehensive measures to obtain control of that great increase in Paraguayan commerce which they foresaw. The outbreak of hostilities in Europe has, of course, delayed this development of the inland Republic. Beyond this, the new situation cannot well fail to disconcert the pre-

arranged German commercial plan, and should therefore allow sufficient breathing space for Great Britain to organize her commercial resources on an improved basis, and thus make up the ground she has lost in this direction.

To enter into a trade technicality, among the matters in which our chief rivals have shown an elasticity that much exceeds our own has been that of the granting of credit. Of recent years the length of the credit offered by the British to their Paraguayan customers has frequently been extended to six months. The Germans, on the other hand, would seem to be prepared to extend this credit to a term of eighteen months. This is a subject which depends, of course, entirely on the finances of each individual merchant or company, and on the standing and needs of their customers. No doubt a too lengthy system of credit may bring about an unhealthy situation—in such matters it is clearly impossible to generalize. At the same time the tempting influence on the purchaser of so long a credit as this must carry an enormous weight in the competition between British and Germans, and the matter is one to which manufacturers and merchants at home should give a far closer attention than they have in the past.

Another matter to which it seems to me that the British manufacturers and merchants should devote themselves with an enthusiasm which has been notoriously lacking in the past is the manner in which their goods are offered to their customers in Paraguay. The subject is one to which I have referred before now, but its importance is such as to warrant not one but a thousand repetitions if any good would arise from the process.

In the first place, then, really first-class salesmen are now essential to cope with the commercial situation in South America. Moreover, not only must these salesmen possess a sound knowledge of their



A RIVER SCENE.



PIONEER INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS.

business and a certain social standing, but they must be conversant with the Spanish language if any really notable success is to be obtained in these days of increasing competition. Too much stress cannot be laid on the handicap suffered by even the most efficient salesman who is ignorant of Spanish. To be at the mercy of an interpreter in the course of important business conversations is equivalent to physical fighting with an arm tied behind one's back, and the advantage in securing an order under these conditions must inevitably lie with a rival who is proficient in Spanish, even if his actual commercial backing were a trifle less sound.

It is a matter of only slightly less importance that the catalogues of the various British goods sent out to South America should be printed in Spanish, and that the quotations should be made out in the weights, measures, and currency of the country to the inhabitants of which it is desired to sell. I have noticed of late with no little satisfaction that these maxims have been laid down with emphasis by the British consular body not only in Paraguay, but in many other States of South America. In maintaining trade against competitors who are completely free from any scruple so long as their end be attained, it is surely the worst policy willingly to leave gaps of this kind in the commercial armour of the nation!

It is now, however, probably becoming clear to British merchants and manufacturers to what an extent their trade has suffered in the past from circumstances of this kind—disadvantages under which the sale of their goods has laboured quite unnecessarily. It is clearly essential that they should be removed before the commercial campaign in Paraguay is fully resumed on the basis which must now prevail. Notwithstanding its considerable German commercial population, the sympathies of

Paraguay in general run as strongly, as elsewhere in the continent in favour of the Allies. Great Britain has never known a more favourable moment to consolidate her business relations with the inland Republic. It is to be hoped that she will see to it that the opportunity be not lost.

APPENDIX

Tables showing the recent progress of the chief Paraguayan industries—
Countries concerned in the imports—The principal articles imported
into Paraguay and their respective values—Consular hints concern-
ing competition in trade—Paraguayan State estimates for the year
1914—Statistics of the Paraguay Central Railway—The State
Colonies of Paraguay—Departments of Paraguay with their districts
—List of the Spanish Governors of Paraguay from the time of the first
settlement of the country to the end of the Spanish dominion—
Eighteenth-century European ignorance concerning Paraguay—
William Hadfield on Carlos Antonio Lopez—Sufferings of the
soldiers in the Paraguayan War—The Paraguayan Press.

COMMERCIAL STATISTICS

THE following tables will show the recent progress of the chief Paraguayan industries. The cause of many of the fluctuations has been explained in the earlier part of the book, and it is merely necessary to repeat here that it is in most instances political rather than industrial. Many of the higher totals in these tables are therefore striking, in that they demonstrate the capabilities of the Paraguayan industries in circumstances which are in themselves discouraging, and which, in fairness to the State, cannot reasonably be regarded as permanent.

EXPORTS OF DRIED BEEF

					Cwts.
1907	...	...	...	...	20,340
1908	...	...	...	...	19,040
1909	...	...	...	...	12,100
1910	...	...	...	...	17,481
1911	...	...	...	...	34,269
1912	...	...	...	...	37,547
1913	...	...	...	...	20,102

EXPORTS OF BEEF EXTRACT

					Lb.
1910	...	...	...	...	8,960
1911	...	...	...	...	10,616
1912	...	...	...	...	3,863
1913	...	...	...	...	31,629

EXPORTS OF QUEBRACHO EXTRACT

					Metric Tons.
1907	...	...	...	...	9,209
1908	...	...	...	...	13,136
1909	...	...	...	...	10,680
1910	...	...	...	...	11,538
1911	...	...	...	...	8,121
1912	...	...	...	...	7,298
1913	...	...	...	...	11,721

EXPORT OF HIDES

				DRIED. Pieces.	SALTED. Pieces.
1907	...	...	...	58,691	185,589
1908	...	...	...	79,921	177,872
1909	...	...	...	90,014	213,060
1910	...	...	...	77,005	223,877 ¹
1911	...	...	...	66,572	194,132
1912	...	...	...	114,570	183,308
1913	...	...	...	93,554	218,978

¹ It will be noticed that this figure, which, taken from Consular sources, we may assume to be correct, differs slightly from that given in the table in the chapter on cattle.

EXPORTS OF ORANGES

						Dozens.
1907	...	...	...	...	...	4,307,550
1908	...	...	...	...	...	10,682,466
1909	...	...	...	...	...	14,139,441
1910	...	...	...	...	...	10,895,379
1911	...	...	...	...	...	12,137,247
1912	...	...	...	...	...	10,529,575
1913	...	...	...	...	...	13,689,716

TANGERINES

						Dozens.
1909	...	...	...	...	...	289,654
1910	...	...	...	...	...	442,340
1911	...	...	...	...	...	2,259,333
1912	...	...	...	...	...	505,687
1913	...	...	...	...	...	314,012

EXPORTS OF TOBACCO

	Pará.	Pito.	Negro.	All kinds.
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.	Cwts.
1907	—	—	—	30,500
1908	—	—	—	100,280
1909	20,500	73,980	1,660	—
1910	22,942	77,587	109	—
1911	23,380	103,659	746	—
1912	13,333	62,253	135	—
1913	18,681	87,545	287	—

EXPORTS OF YERBA MATE

				GROUND.	UNGROUND.
				Lb.	Lb.
1907	...	...	...	504,000	8,713,600
1908	...	...	...	508,480	8,749,440
1909	...	...	...	336,000	6,569,920
1910	...	...	...	237,263	6,106,159
1911	...	...	...	294,044	6,594,478
1912	...	...	...	192,143	2,592,167
1913	...	...	...	184,172	9,053,932

COUNTRIES CONCERNED IN THE IMPORTS

Articles and Countries from which Imported.	1911.	1912.	1913.	Remarks.
	£	£	£	
Food-stuffs	Flour, grains, potatoes, sugar, petroleum, preserved fruits, vegetables and fish, butter, cheese, hams, tea, coffee, cocoa, macaroni, biscuits, sweets, candles, soap (toilet), oil, olives, condiments, etc.
United Kingdom	5,806	7,200	10,323	
Germany	55,167	42,667	72,954	
Argentina	98,819	92,974	127,429	
France	8,895	8,419	11,073	
Italy	20,530	13,456	20,997	
United States	16,340	16,952	18,871	
Spain	28,475	21,915	23,745	
Belgium	— ¹	1,457	3,325	
Uruguay	3,019	2,386	4,750	
Brazil	10,663	8,000	8,207	
Austria-Hungary	21,188	22,071	15,905	
Portugal	1,647	— ¹	1,979	
Netherlands	— ¹	1,044	2,597	
Other countries	9,975	4,273	7,276	
Textiles	Prints, greys, whites, blankets, woollen and cotton cashmeres, cloths, sheetings, flannels, silks, fancy dress stuffs, linen goods, etc.
United Kingdom	199,833	173,195	268,920	
Germany	90,829	82,158	99,165	
Argentina	— ¹	2,086	2,578	
France	14,286	13,355	23,967	
Italy	18,293	17,227	32,077	
Spain	8,327	7,511	15,793	
United States	1,455	— ¹	1,665	
Belgium	4,211	5,041	5,192	
Other countries	5,299	2,508	3,226	
Hardware	Tools, wire, ships' fittings, corrugated tin, household and kitchen utensils, etc.
United Kingdom	28,927	55,728	129,011	
Germany	36,737	76,329	99,473	
Argentina	2,848	6,847	9,974	
France	4,564	5,272	4,704	
Italy	— ¹	2,157	1,417	
United States	18,597	21,444	43,122	
Belgium	6,514	16,910	20,022	
Spain	5,101	— ¹	1,107	
Other countries	3,117	3,925	2,192	
Wines, etc.—				
United Kingdom	1,767	2,318	3,159	
Germany	3,674	2,379	3,103	
France	11,887	12,567	14,272	
Italy	13,266	12,685	15,588	
Spain	26,667	25,631	37,054	
Portugal	— ¹	1,339	1,887	
Other countries	2,093	1,452	2,725	

¹ Included under "Other countries."

COUNTRIES CONCERNED IN THE IMPORTS—*Continued*

Articles and Countries from which Imported.	1911.	1912.	1913.	Remarks.
	£	£	£	
Fancy goods	Haberdashery, stationery, perfumery, dolls, ornaments, plated goods, buttons, artificial flowers, etc.
United Kingdom	16,551	12,616	22,824	
Germany ...	31,528	35,605	52,772	
France ...	24,145	17,432	21,317	
Italy ...	4,399	3,376	5,621	
Spain ...	1,425	3,867	2,626	
Argentina ...	1,726	4,117	5,372	
United States ...	1,328	— ¹	1,079	
Other countries	313	1,851	3,431	
Drugs and chemicals	
United Kingdom	4,795	9,161	10,725	
Germany ...	15,567	10,142	14,811	
Argentina ...	2,468	2,941	3,605	
France ...	7,410	6,856	12,726	
Italy ...	2,203	1,176	2,038	
United States ...	4,973	8,753	14,543	
Other countries	2,908	5,556	3,293	
Hats	European styles of hard and soft felts, straws, Panamas, tropical hats and helmets
United Kingdom	2,676	1,676	1,110	
Germany ...	1,387	1,705	2,472	
France ...	1,825	— ¹	2,318	
Italy ...	7,237	7,589	17,432	
Uruguay ...	3,113	1,818	1,797	
Other countries	717	2,236	442	
Fire-arms	Revolvers, shot guns, accessories and ammunition
United Kingdom	2,495	115	2,751	
Germany ...	3,489	4,574	4,186	
France ...	— ¹	2,165	— ¹	
United States ...	5,901	6,276	3,992	
Spain ...	2,343	1,463	975	
Belgium ...	— ¹	1,672	1,206	
Other countries	1,127	104	443	
Clothing	Chiefly underwear (the import duty on ready-made clothes is high)
United Kingdom	2,278	2,760	4,036	
Germany ...	5,345	7,559	10,446	
Argentina ...	10,194	4,208	12,988	
France ...	2,104	2,526	5,318	
Italy ...	2,016	1,008	1,375	
Spain ...	5,744	1,661	1,291	
Other countries	104	134	890	

¹ Included under "Other countries."

COUNTRIES CONCERNED IN THE IMPORTS—*Continued*

Articles and Countries from which Imported.	1911.	1912.	1913.	Remarks.
	£	£	£	
China and glass-ware—				
United Kingdom	1,183	1,441	1,327	
Germany ...	10,620	13,431	15,820	
France ...	— ¹	1,538	992	
Argentina ...	— ¹	— ¹	1,582	
Other countries	2,546	1,465	1,355	
Boots and shoes—				
United Kingdom	— ²	— ²	1,303	
Germany ...	— ²	— ²	2,211	
Argentina ...	— ²	— ²	3,475	
United States ...	— ²	— ²	4,117	
Other countries	— ²	— ²	2,822	
Cattle—				
Argentina ...	— ²	— ²	26,757	
Uruguay ...	— ²	— ²	128	
Free of duty ...	273,933	— ³	— ³	Railway materials, agricultural machinery and implements, machinery for industrial purposes and ships, telegraph wire, wire fencing (barbed and plain), windmills, stock cattle, naphtha, calcium carbide.
Other articles ...	27,141	59,872	59,622	Tobacco, leather, saddlery, furniture, jewellery, electrical fittings, musical instruments, etc.
Unclassified ...	9,626	24,767	79,413	Entered free by order of the Government
Total ...	1,295,699	1,070,120	1,623,999	

¹ Included under "Other countries."² Included under "Other articles."³ Included under the several classes of articles to which they belong respectively.

The principal articles imported into Paraguay, and their respective values, are summarized in the following table :—

Articles.	1911.	1912.	1913.
Food-stuffs	£ 280,524	£ 242,814	£ 329,431
Textiles	342,533	303,081	452,583
Hardware... ..	106,405	188,612	311,022
Wines, spirits, etc.,	59,354	58,371	77,788
Fancy goods	81,415	78,864	115,042
Drugs and chemicals	40,324	44,585	61,741
Hats	16,955	15,024	25,571
Fire-arms	15,355	16,369	13,553
Clothing	27,785	19,856	36,344
China and glassware	14,349	17,905	21,076
Boots and shoes	— ¹	— ¹	13,928
Cattle	— ¹	— ¹	26,885
Free of duty	273,933	—	— ²
Other articles	27,141	59,872	59,622
Unclassified	9,626	24,767	79,413
Total	1,295,699	1,070,120	1,623,999

¹ Included under "Other articles."

² The principal articles imported free of duty in 1913 are stated to have been: Hardware, fancy goods, drugs, clothing, glass and china, cattle, saddlery, and electrical goods, to the value of £251,550.

The following extract from a Consular Report on Paraguay published in 1913 should be of special interest to British traders who are anxious to extend their connection with Paraguay :—

British Trade.—The total imports from the United Kingdom declined from £370,040 in 1911 to £268,341 in 1912, but the relative proportion of the import trade from British sources fell only from 28 to 25 per cent. British textiles showed no further decline, but did not recover the ground lost in 1911. The apparent increase in the imports from the United Kingdom of hardware is due principally to the inclusion in the table of the hardware imported free of duty. There was some decline in fancy goods, and an increase in drugs and chemicals.

As regards the chief competitors with British goods, Germany competes most strongly in food-stuffs, textiles, hardware, fancy goods, drugs and chemicals, fire-arms, underclothing and garments, china and glassware (nearly 75 per cent. of the total of the latter). Italy is still the chief purveyor of hats, the United Kingdom supplying only hats of the better class. The import of fire-arms (£16,369 in 1912) appears to be increasing, but the British article seems to have almost disappeared from this market. The competition of other countries in textiles is not formidable. In hardware, however, both the United States and Belgium are gaining ground. The consumption of British spirits, which is still only trifling, is on the increase. France competes strongly in fancy goods and in drugs, and in the latter branch as well as in fire-arms the United States is also obtaining a firmer hold.

The import trade is handled mainly by European houses, among whom the German, French, Spanish, and Italian predominate, while the British are the least numerous. A larger number of British travellers and representatives visited Paraguay in 1912 than of late years, but the confidence maintained by some British firms in catalogues (in English) appears to be still fairly general. In the meantime their competitors, who reside in the country and have personal knowledge of the financial standing of their clients, and consequently know when to give or to withhold credit, are taking measures to place their goods for sale at all the best stores throughout the country districts and establish branches at the more important centres. In this way they lay the foundation of a trade the development of which is liable to be realized when the progress of the country is more advanced. In the course of long residence in the country they become intimately acquainted with the tastes and habits of the population, and are in a position to understand the class of goods for which there is a demand.

ESTIMATES FOR THE YEAR 1914.

					REVENUE.	
					£	
Import duties	...	...	...	...	523,200	
Export duties	...	...	...	...	167,400	
Transit dues, etc.	...	...	...	...	14,460	
Taxes	...	...	...	...	223,260	
Post and telegraph...	...	...	...	...	19,900	
Sundries	...	...	...	...	136,851	
					<hr/>	
Total	...	...	...	...	1,085,071	
					<hr/>	
					EXPENDITURE.	
					£	
Legislature	...	...	...	...		24,112
Interior—						
Presidency	...	...	...	...	3,400	
Ministry...	...	...	...	...	16,735	
Post and telegraph	...	...	...	...	50,601	
Public Health Department	...	...	...	...	4,363	
Police of capital	...	...	...	...	76,932	
„ provinces	...	...	...	...	44,125	
Sundries...	...	...	...	...	25,049	
					<hr/>	221,205
Foreign Affairs—						
Ministry, etc.	...	...	...	...	20,200	
Diplomatic and Consular services	...	...	...	...	37,290	
Annual contributions and reserves	...	...	...	...	2,319	
					<hr/>	59,809
Finance—						
Ministry...	...	...	...	...	4,893	
National Accountancy Department and Treasury	...	...	...	...	8,171	
Inland Revenue Department	...	...	...	...	68,545	
Fomento	...	...	...	...	32,960	
Claims Commission	...	...	...	...	2,666	
Reserve	...	...	...	...	2,000	
					<hr/>	119,235
Justice, Worship, and Public Instruction—						
Ministry...	...	...	...	...	6,543	
Administration of Justice	...	...	...	...	38,164	
Registrar-General	...	...	...	...	2,277	
Worship...	...	...	...	...	7,830	
Secondary and Higher Education	...	...	...	...	22,991	
Library, Museum, and National Archives	...	...	...	...	4,266	
Primary Education	...	...	...	...	65,172	
Buildings	...	...	...	...	10,133	
Natural History Museum, Botanic and Zoological	...	...	...	...
Gardens	...	...	...	...	2,000	
Reserve	...	...	...	...	2,000	
					<hr/>	161,376

War—						£	£
Ministry ...	...	...	...	...	...	67,952	
Army ...	...	...	...	...	...	74,871	
Navy ...	...	...	...	...	...	29,635	
Clothing and Provisioning Department	...	...	...	...	...	105,925	
Reserve ...	...	...	...	...	...	2,053	
						<hr/>	280,436
Service of public debt—							
External—							
London loan, 1871-72 ...	...	...	...	...	...	35,617	
Banco Nacional Argentino	...	...	...	...	...	2,400	
French River Plate Bank	...	...	...	...	...	44,183	
Loan authorized by law of November 28, 1912	...	...	...	...	...	75,600	
Internal—							
Post and Telegraph Office, final instalment	...	...	...	...	...	6,666	
Loan from Banco de la Republica for 500,000 dol. gold, January, 1912, at 9 per cent., balance with interest ...	...	...	...	...	...	60,000	
Proportion of Government profits in Banco de la Republica carried to conversion fund ...	...	...	...	...	...	8,400	
						<hr/>	232,866
Total ...						<hr/>	<u>1,099,039</u>

PUBLIC DEBT, DECEMBER 31, 1913.

EXTERNAL.				Accounts in	Accounts in
				Gold.	Paper.
				£	£
London loan, 1871-72 ...	...	...	...	729,057	—
Loan from Banco Nacional Argentino ...	...	...	...	13,646	—
Loan from French River Plate Bank ...	...	...	...	40,000	—
INTERNAL.					
Debt of the revolution of 1904 ...	...	...	...	5,984	30,882
Floating debt of administration, 1905-09...	...	...	...	48,378	69,248
Ditto 1910 to March 1912 ...	...	...	...	63,135	68,255
Loan from the Banco de la Republica for 500,000 dol. gold, January 1912, at 9 per cent., in current account ...	...	...	...	55,000	—
Paper and nickel money in circulation, viz., 65,000,000 dol. ...	...	...	...	—	722,222
Treasury notes (<i>órdenes de pago</i>) in respect of administration ...	...	...	...	10,500	6,429
Ditto in respect of judicial decisions ...	...	...	...	713	4,239
Treasury bills...	...	...	...	11,028	—
„ overdraft ...	...	...	...	92,194	34,304
Total ...				<hr/>	<hr/>
				1,069,635	935,579
Grand Total ...				<hr/>	<hr/>
				—	2,005,214

PARAGUAY CENTRAL RAILWAY
ANALYSIS OF FREIGHT AND LIVESTOCK TRAFFIC

Year ended June 30, 1914.		Description.	Year ended June 30, 1915.		Difference.					
Tons.	£		Tons.	£	Amount.		Per Cent.			
			Tons.	£	Tons.	£	Tons.	£		
3,364	7,827	PARCELS AND EXCESS LUGGAGE	2,632	4,695	-	3,132	-	218	-	400
27,820	11,853	GOODS—	16,853	5,963	-	5,890	-	394	-	497
4,850	1,929	Timber in Logs, etc.	3,893	1,484	-	445	-	197	-	231
604	327	" sawn	-	-	-	327	-	-	-	-
25,772	4,960	Sleepers	22,964	2,941	-	2,019	-	109	-	407
74	31	Firewood	85	27	+	4	-	149	-	129
59,120	19,100	Tanning Bark	43,795	10,415	-	8,685	-	259	-	455
6,235	4,493	Total Forest Products	5,277	3,104	-	1,389	-	154	-	309
15	20	Hides	10	10	-	10	-	333	-	500
41	64	Wool	28	41	-	23	-	317	-	360
300	112	Hair	98	32	-	80	-	673	-	714
364	506	Bones	317	415	-	91	-	129	-	179
7,067	4,009	Grease	7,072	3,457	+	552	-	0'1	-	137
14,022	9,204	Meat	12,802	7,959	-	1,220	-	87	-	233
9,643	1,466	Total Stock Products	8,592	1,124	-	342	-	109	-	233
6,180	1,975	Bricks and Tiles	9,327	1,003	+	3,147	-	509	-	1'1
1,179	739	Stone	681	452	-	498	-	422	-	388
-	-	Lime	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
-	-	Sand	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
17,002	3,280	Total Building Materials	16,600	2,639	+	1,598	-	641	-	195
5,187	2,828	Oranges	6,091	2,450	+	904	-	174	-	134
18	14	Bananas	62	34	+	44	-	2444	-	1428
24	7	Other Fruits	113	28	+	80	-	3708	-	3000
166	125	Vegetables	129	67	-	37	-	223	-	464

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS
TRAFFICS.

Year ended	Miles Open.	PASSENGERS.		GOODS IN TONS.						
		Number.	Receipts.	Maize.	Yerba.	Tobacco.	Oranges.	Meat.	Timber, Firewood, Charcoal and Tanning Bark.	Bricks, Stone Lime, and Sand.
April 30, 1906	155	975,477	23,529	2,906	739	2,727	2,550	6,042	46,904	12,552
June 30, 1907	155	1,002,690	30,554	2,146	784	2,598	2,921	6,323	60,147	15,207
June 30, 1908	155	962,250	37,038	2,393	836	4,891	2,608	7,222	40,476	14,186
June 30, 1909	155	603,231	29,927	2,483	715	4,522	1,501	7,167	34,342	11,677
June 30, 1910	155'66*	518,709	32,990	3,182	934	5,124	2,698	6,916	54,424	7,052
June 30, 1911	168*	470,686	42,585	2,649	960	5,404	2,398	6,916	62,830	10,217
June 30, 1912	332	394,660	37,037	1,875	742	5,222	2,471	6,362	45,118	4,766
June 30, 1913	232	532,807	59,936	2,819	1,086	5,048	2,112	7,119	71,210	12,580
June 30, 1914	240'4*	623,368	62,157	3,295	1,890	5,987	5,187	7,067	59,120	17,002
June 30, 1915	255	564,941	35,884	2,189	1,016	6,475	6,091	7,072	43,795	18,600

* Average.

STATISTICAL.

Year ended April 30th.	Average Rate of Exchange.	TOTAL TRAFFIC RECEIPTS.		Working Expenses.	Profit.
		Currency.	Sterling.		
1906	1,083	3,003,720	55,208	32,639	22,569
1907	1,118	3,994,388	71,453	46,851	24,602
* 2 months May and June, 1907 } ...	—	738,893	12,226	9,889	2,337
Year ended—					
June 30, 1908	1,288	5,568,130	86,208	50,627	35,581
June 30, 1909	1,622	6,305,212	77,446	45,029	32,417
June 30, 1910	1,496	7,308,365	97,126	48,789	48,337
June 30, 1911	1,286	7,744,708	120,023	68,602	51,421
June 30, 1912	1,342	7,217,080	111,983	67,474	44,509
June 30, 1913	1,498	11,057,962	146,511	80,574	65,937
June 30, 1914	1,719	13,420,425	156,204	90,074	66,166
June 30, 1915	3,072	14,307,200	100,774	61,087	39,687

* Added to the financial year 1907. New financial year commencing 1st July.

OF WORKING

TRAFFICS.

GOODS IN TONS.									LIVESTOCK.			
Rice, Bran, Mandioca, Starch.	Flour.	Hay.	Hides.	Wool, Hair, Bones, and Grease.	Sugar, Wine, and Spirits.	Sundries.	TOTAL.	Receipts.	Number.			Receipts.
									Cattle.	Other Animals.	TOTAL.	
487	—	2,452	8,058	633	2,903	19,511	108,464	28,199†	—	—	278	—
801	—	3,014	5,972	663	1,709	23,343	125,628	36,896†	65	284	349	—
727	2,399	2,906	6,821	587	3,125	16,189	105,286	40,754	1,103	1,097	2,200	287
648	1,456	1,735	7,205	681	3,254	26,085	103,471	41,292	1,870	1,420	3,290	262
656	1,490	2,036	7,984	644	2,231	39,598	134,969	54,627	1,994	1,560	3,554	352
437	2,053	1,872	7,606	558	2,678	33,657	140,235	64,873	764	1,529	3,293	347
720	1,612	1,720	6,239	462	1,948	17,964	97,221	53,494	282	2,017	2,299	322
994	2,719	1,980	7,275	768	3,440	35,821	154,971	75,116	5,554	5,065	10,619	1,639
1,125	3,186	2,328	6,235	720	4,046	38,723	155,911	71,566	10,048	4,049	14,097	3,113
833	1,573	3,413	5,277	453	3,012	35,683	135,482	43,351	15,919	1,138	17,057	4,517

† Includes Receipts from Livestock.

STATISTICAL.

Working Percentage.	Train Mileage.	PER TRAIN MILE.			AVERAGE RECEIPTS.	
		Receipts.	Expenses.	Profit.	Per Passenger.	Per Ton of Goods.
59.17	159,393	s. d. 6 11½	s. d. 4 1½	s. d. 2 10	s. d. 0 5½	s. d. 5 2
65.57	176,415	8 1½	5 3½	2 9½	0 7½	6 3
—	—	—	—	—	—	—
58.73	168,234	10 3	6 0½	4 2½	0 9½	7 9
58.14	165,037	9 4½	5 5½	3 11½	1 0	7 11
50.23	179,918	10 9½	5 5	5 4½	1 3½	8 1½
57.16	185,601	12 11½	7 4½	5 6½	1 9½	9 3
60.25	186,218	12 0½	7 3	4 9½	1 10½	11 0
55.00	207,177	14 1½	7 9½	6 4½	2 3	9 8½
57.65	227,825	13 8½	7 11	5 9½	2 0	9 11½
60.62	219,654	9 2	5 6½	3 7½	1 3½	6 11½

PASSENGER TRAFFIC

Year ended June 30, 1916.		Description.	Year ended June 30, 1915.		Difference.			
No.	£		No.	£	Amount.		Per Cent.	
					No.	£	No.	£
163,928	21,203	Ordinary, 1st Class ...	141,306	12,266	- 22,622	- 8,937	- 13.8	- 42.1
430,069	34,188	" 2nd Class ...	348,422	17,790	- 81,647	- 16,398	- 19.0	- 48.0
—	—	" 3rd Class ...	46,405	913	+ 46,405	+ 913	—	—
13,536	1,905	Excursion, 1st Class ...	14,160	1,204	- 624	- 701	+ 4.6	+ 36.8
13,090	1,302	" 2nd Class ...	12,343	626	- 747	- 676	- 5.7	- 51.9
1,613	2,719	Interchange, 1st Class ...	1,277	2,392	- 336	- 327	- 20.8	- 12.0
1,132	840	" 2nd Class...	1,028	693	- 104	- 147	- 9.2	- 17.5
623,368	62,157	Totals ...	564,941	35,884	- 58,427	- 26,273	- 9.4	- 42.3

PASSENGER TRAFFIC

Year ended June 30, 1914.	Description.	Year ended June 30, 1915.	Difference.	
			Amount.	Per Cent.
11,436,013	Passenger Mileage	9,119,114	- 2,316,899	- 20'3
18'35	Average Miles per Passenger	16'14	- 2'21	- 12'0
1'30d.	" Receipts per Passenger Mile	0'94d.	- 0'36d.	- 27'7
23'43	" Number of Passengers per Car	20'79	- 2'64	- 11'3
488,907	Passenger Car Mileage	438,473	- 50,434	- 10'3

FREIGHT AND LIVESTOCK TRAFFIC

Year ended June 30, 1914.	Description.	Year ended June 30, 1915.	Difference.	
			Amount.	Per Cent.
£71,725	Receipts for Parcels	£4,573	- £3,152	- 40'8
£102	" Excess Luggage	£122	+ 20	+ 19'6
£71,566	" Goods Traffic	£47,351	- £24,215	- 33'8
£3,113	" Livestock Traffic	£4,517	+ £1,404	+ 45'1
165,433	Total tonnage	146,521	- £18,912	- 11'4

THE STATE COLONIES OF PARAGUAY

The settlements are not only intended to attract workers to the country, but are also expected to create agricultural centres in which work can be organized on more or less European lines. These settlements, known locally as colonies, are consequently for the most part composed not only of foreigners, but of foreigners and natives combined. In order to obtain the advantages offered by the Government, foreigners should apply to the nearest Paraguayan Consul and satisfy him that they are under fifty years of age, capable of manual labour, of good conduct, and in possession of the sum of at least £10.

Some of the principal of these colonies are :—

Cosme.—Sited in the Department of Caazapá. This colony has already been fully described in the chapter on Immigration and Colonies.

Gaboto.—In the Department of Villa Franca. The colony is populated by both Paraguayans and foreigners. The principal industry here is timber.

Hohenau.—In the Department of Jesus y Trinidad, distant rather more than twenty miles from Villa Encarnación. The colony, largely populated by Germans, is devoted to general agricultural pursuits.

Elisa.—A small and apparently semi-private colony in the neighbourhood of Asuncion.

Nacional or **Yegros.**—One of the most important of the Paraguayan colonies. Sited in the Department of Caazapá, on the Asuncion line of railway.

New Australia.—Sited in the Department of Azos. This colony has already been described in the chapter on Immigration and Colonies.

Nueva Germania.—The principal industry here is fruit-growing.

Nueva Italia.—Sited on the River Paraguay, between Lambaré and Angostura.

San Bernardino.—Sited on the bank of Lake Ypacarai. This was one of the earliest of these settlements to be established in the Republic.

Villa Hayes.—Sited on the right bank of the Paraguay River in the district of the Chaco. This settlement is principally populated by French, Swiss, Belgians, Italians, Germans, and Austrians.

Trinacria.—In the Department of Villa del Rosario. It is populated principally by Paraguayans, but there are also a few Italians, Austrians, and North Americans.

Veinticinco de Noviembre.—One of the most notable of these colonies. Sited in the Department of Azos, eight leagues from the city of Villarica. The settlement is populated principally by Paraguayans. The following statistics will show its possessions and ramifications as they were a few years ago. Its population, it may be said, is six thousand.

ASSETS OF THE VEINTECINCO DE NOVIEMBRE COLONY

LIVESTOCK.

Cattle	...	...	...	...	...	3,800
Horses	...	...	...	...	...	300
Mares	...	...	...	...	...	170
Mules	...	...	...	...	...	120
Sheep	...	...	...	...	...	120
Goats	...	...	...	...	...	150
Pigs	...	...	...	...	...	300

AGRICULTURE.

					Hectares.	
Tobacco	...	...	...	...	...	265
Sugar-cane	...	...	...	...	...	52
Mandioca	...	...	...	...	...	338
Maize	...	...	...	...	...	452
Beans	...	...	...	...	...	193
Rice	...	...	...	...	...	83
Maní	...	...	...	...	...	54
Onions	...	...	...	...	...	12
Potatoes	...	...	...	...	...	66
Cotton	...	...	...	...	..	35
Coffee	...	...	...	...	...	210

NUMBERS OF FRUIT TREES.

Orange	...	...	...	...	...	21,248
Banana	...	...	...	...	...	23,920
Pineapple	...	...	...	...	...	6,566
Peach	...	...	...	...	...	738
Lemon...	...	...	...	...	...	396
Other fruits	...	...	...	...	...	460

¶ In addition to this the Veintecinco de Noviembre colony possesses seven *petit grain* factories, four sawmills, two tanneries, and one brickyard.

DEPARTMENTS OF PARAGUAY WITH THEIR DISTRICTS

1. Department of Concepción. Capital : Ciudad de Concepción. Districts : Concepción, Horqueta, Belén, Pedro Juan Caballero, Loreto, Bella Vista.

2. Department of San Pedro. Capital : San Pedro. Districts : San Pedro, Villa de Rosario, San Estanislao, Unión, Lima, Tacuatí, Igatimí, Curuguaty, Itucurubí.

3. Department of Caraguatay. Capital : Caraguatay. Districts : Caraguatay, Barrero Grande, Caácupé, Arroyos y Esteros, Emboscada, Altos, Atyrá, Tobatí, San Bernardino, Pirebebuy, San José de los Arroyos, Valenzuela, Itacurubí de la Cordillera.

4. Guairá. Capital : Ciudad de Villarica. Districts : Villarica, Mbocayaty, Yatyty, Hiaty, Ibytimí, Itapé.

5. Department of Yhú. Capital : Yhú. Districts : Yhú, Azos, Carayaó, San Joaquin, Caáguazú.

6. Department of Caázapá. Capital : Ciudad de Caázapá. Districts : Caázapá, Ihacanguazú, San Juan Nepomuceno, Yegros, Iturbe, Yuty.

7. Department of Encarnación. Capital : Ciudad de Encarnación. Districts : Encarnación, Jesus y Trinidad, Carmen del Paraná, San Cosme, San Pedro de Paraná, Bobí.

8. Department of San Ignacio. Capital : San Ignacio. Districts : San Ignacio, Santa Rosa, Santa María, Villa Florida, San Miguel, San Juan Bautista, Santiago, Ayolas.

9. Department of Guiindy. Capital : Guiindy. Districts : Guiindy, Ibyquí, Caápucú, Mbuyapey, Quyquyó, Acahay.

10. Department of Paraguari. Capital : Paraguari. Districts : Paraguari, Carapeguá, Tabapay, Caballero, Escobar, Yaguarón, Pirayú, Ypacarai, Itauguá.

11. Department of Villeta. Capital : Villeta. Districts : Villeta, Areguá, Itá, Guarambaré, Capiatá, Ypané, Villa Oliva, Villa Franca.

12. Department of Pilar. Capital : Ciudad de Pilar. Districts : Pilar, Humaitá, Laureles, Paso de la Patria, Desmochados, Guazucua, Pedro Gonzalez, San Juan Bautista de Ñeembucú, Tacuaras, Isla Umbú, Yabebyry.

LIST OF THE GOVERNORS OF PARAGUAY FROM THE
TIME OF THE FIRST SETTLEMENT OF THE COUNTRY
TO THE END OF THE SPANISH DOMINION

	Year in which Office was assumed.
1. Pedro de Mendoza	1536
2. Domingo Martínez de Irala	1538
3. Alonso Núñez Cabeza de Vaca	1541
4. Domingo Martínez de Irala ..	1544
5. Diego de Abreu	1548
6. Domingo Martínez de Irala	1549
7. Gonzalo de Mendoza	1557
8. Francisco Ortiz de Vergara	1558
9. Juan Ortiz de Zárate	1574
10. Juan de Torres	1581
11. Alonso de Vera y Aragón	1586
12. Fernando de Zárate	1592
13. Juan Ramirez de Velasco	1597
14. Hernando Arias de Saavedra	1598
15. Diego Rodriguez Valdez	1599
16. García Mendoza	1602
17. Hernando Arias Saavedra	1605
18. Francisco Alfaro	1606
19. Diego Martínez Negrón	1611
20. Manuel de Frias	1619
21. Pedro de Lugo y Negrón	1629
22. Luis de Céspedes	1634
23. Martín de Ledesma Valderrama	1636
24. Gregorio de Hinestrosa	1641
25. Diego Escobar Osorio	1647
26. Fray Bernardino de Cardenas	1648
27. Sebastian de León y Zárate	1649
28. Andres Garabito de León	1650
29. Cristobal Garay y Saavedra	1653
30. Juan Blásquez de Valverde	1656
31. Alonso Sarmiento de Figueroa	1659
32. Juan Diez de Andino	1663
33. Francisco Rege Corvalán	1671
34. Diego Ibañez de Irala... ..	1673
35. Juan Diez de Andino	1681
36. Antonio de Vera Múgica	1684
37. Francisco Monforte	1685
38. Sebastian Felix de Mendisla	1692

		Year in which Office was assumed.
39.	Juan Rodríguez Cota	1696
40.	Antonio Escobar Gutierrez	1702
41.	Sebastian Felix de Mendiola	1705
42.	Baltazar García Ros	1706
43.	Manuel de Robles	1707
44.	Gregorio Bazán de Pedraza	1713
45.	Diego de los Reyes Balmaseda	1717
46.	José de Antequera y Castro	1722
47.	Bruno Mauricio de Zavala	1725
48.	Martin de Barúa	1725
49.	Ignacio Soroeta	1731
50.	Manuel Agustin de Calderón	1733
51.	Bruno Mauricio de Zavala	1735
52.	Martin Echáuri	1736
53.	Rafael de la Moneda	1740
54.	Marcos José Larrázabal	1747
55.	Jaime Sanjust	1749
56.	José Martínez Fontes	1761
57.	Fulgencio Yegros	1765
58.	Carlos Morphi	1766
59.	Agustin Fernando de Pinedo	1772
60.	Pedro Melo de Portugal	1778
61.	Joaquin Alós y Bru	1787
62.	Lázaro de Ribera y Espinosa	1796
63.	Bernardo de Velasco	1806
64.	Manuel Gutiérrez	1807
65.	Eustaquio Giannini	1809
66.	Bernardo de Velasco	1809

EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY EUROPEAN IGNORANCE CONCERNING PARAGUAY

The following extracts from a standard work, "The Present State of all Nations," published in 1739, will show the ignorance which prevailed in Europe concerning Paraguay even in the eighteenth century :—

"La Plata may be thrown into two grand divisions almost equal in extent, viz. (1) the provinces on the east side of the river *Paragua* ; and (2) those that lie west of the said river. The provinces on the east side of the *Paragua* are those of (1) *Paragua Proper*, (2) *Guayra*, (3) *Parana*, (4) *Uragua*. Those on the west side of the *Paragua* are (5) *Tucuman*, and (6) *La Plata Proper*.

"1. *Paragua Proper* is bounded by the country of the *Amazons* on the north, by *Brazil* on the east, by *Guayra* on the south, and by the river *Paragua*, which separates it from *Tucuman* and *Peru*, on the west ; at least these are the boundaries assign'd by geographers. But it must be acknowledged that *Paragua Proper* is a perfect *Terra Incognita*. I meet with no author or traveller that pretends to give any description of it, or to know the extent of it : and our map-makers are so ingenious as not to incurber their maps with the name of one town in all the country.

"2. *Guayra* is bounded by *Paragua Proper* on the north, by *Brazil* on the east, by *Parana* on the south, and by the river *Paragua* on the west. The chief towms whereof are—

"1st, *Guayra*, situate on the river *Parana*, in 24 degrees south latitude.

"2ndly, *St. Xavier*, situate on the confines of *Brazil*, about an hundred leagues to the eastward of *Guayra*.

"3rdly, *Conception*, situate on a river about an hundred leagues to the eastward of *Guayra*."

It will be seen from this that such information as was available was of the vaguest order.

WILLIAM HADFIELD ON CARLOS ANTONIO
LOPEZ

Mr. William Hadfield has an interesting contemporary account of Carlos Antonio Lopez.

“The first Consul, Don Carlos Antonio Lopez, is a rich landed proprietor. He received in his youth, at the College of Assumption, such education as during the first years of this century could be met with in the American colleges. When his studies were concluded, he gave lessons in theology at the same college, and was installed in a chair of, what at that time was termed, philosophy. He afterwards devoted himself particularly to the study of jurisprudence, and to the profession of an advocate, and exercised it, according to general report, with zeal, impartiality, and disinterestedness, which acquired him credit, friends, and a select number of clients. When it became dangerous, under the tyranny of the Dictator, to exercise a profession so independent as that of advocate, M. Lopez retired to his estate, forty leagues from Assumption, and gave himself up entirely to agriculture, and to the perusal of the few books which he had been able to procure. He very rarely went to the capital, and then only for a few days. His retired life, the description of seclusion to which he had condemned himself, providentially saved him from the distrust and terrors of the Dictator, and from imprisonment or death, which were their usual consequences. M. Lopez has never quitted his country, and previously he had not taken the smallest share in public affairs. He was unable to make acquaintance with the excellent works published on numerous branches of public administration and political economy, or to obtain the least intelligence of the events which had occurred in Europe and America during the preceding twenty years, for the Dictator persecuted, with more rigour than the Inquisition itself, men of learning and their books, and neither one nor the other had been able to penetrate Paraguay. Nevertheless, the acts and writings of M. Lopez have shown that he was no stranger to sound doctrines of administration, and that he had meditated in his retreat on the situation of his country, its necessities, the evils it suffered and their causes, as well as on the remedies which it would be possible to apply to them. Such qualities would naturally acquire for him an ascendancy and preponderance in the management of affairs; and, thus acquired, he has exercised them discreetly and vigorously.

“The second consul, Don Mariano Roque Alonzo, was a soldier who reckoned many years’ service in barracks and garrisons. He commanded a corps or battalion of the troops which occupied the capital when his companions in arms appointed him Commandant-General in the interval between the death of the Dictator and the assembly of Congress. During this short period he maintained public order, and protected the tranquillity of the citizens with zeal and moderation. Like a man of good sense and honour, and of docile character, he at once acknowledged the superiority

of his colleague, which of itself is a merit, and always deferred to it, in which he rendered a great service to his country. . . .

"What the Consular Government did sufficed to create legal order and to put an end to the reign of force and arbitrary sway, which the Dictator had substituted for the rule of justice ; but in criminal trials an innovation was introduced, which, although imperfect, will be perfected in time, when education has made greater advance, and which will incontestably serve as a basis for the institution of the jury, the source of so many benefits. It was ordained that, in order to pronounce criminal sentences the judge should associate with himself two individuals, drawn by lot out of a list previously made. The confiscation under the Dictator, the enormous fines which he imposed, and which were equivalent to confiscation, had reduced a great number of families to misery ; the Consular Government restored such property as yet existed, and adjudged some indemnities for those which had been disposed of ; the rural estates which had been applied to the public service, and which it would not have been convenient to withdraw, were purchased from the former and legitimate possessors. This striking act of equity alone completed a revolution in the social and administrative order of Paraguay.

"The Government which succeeded Francia's despotism, and of which M. Lopez was the head, did not allow the least sign of blame or disapprobation of the Dictator's conduct to transpire. It would indeed have been useless, and have set a bad example, to abuse his memory, and awaken a remembrance of irreparable evils.

"From the death of the Dictator to the installation of the Consulate, all persecutions, as well as the sanguinary executions and fusillades, so common during Francia's tyrannical sway, had ceased. But the political prisoners, to the number of more than six hundred, had not been released with four or five exceptions, and suffered the same evils in the dungeons and casemates. When the consuls, however, were elected, they released all these political prisoners and sent them to their families. It was a significant act. It showed to all that the reign of cruelty and terror had given place in the counsels of the government to principles of mildness and sound policy."

SUFFERINGS OF THE SOLDIERS IN THE PARAGUAYAN WAR

The following paragraphs from a former work of the Author's will give some idea of the harsh measures adopted by Lopez towards the end of the great struggle :—

“ When marched to battle, the Paraguayan soldiery understood that it was to victory or death. Every soldier was responsible for the good conduct of five others. Each, as he advanced to the attack, was aware that if he lagged or faltered, or attempted to desert, his two comrades next him must shoot him on the instant, or in turn be shot themselves. The non-commissioned officer of the section was responsible for all, and, should one of them escape, he would be either flogged or shot immediately the battle was over. Then the captain, or lieutenant, was in turn responsible for his larger company, and the higher officer in command had to answer for every man under him. Desertion, therefore, was scarcely possible ; and as surrender to overpowering odds was considered desertion, the men fought with utter desperation, knowing that their only chance to live was in victory.

“The greatest danger was always in the rear. The distrust was so universal, that though the members of a squad might all individually be anxious to desert or be captured, and might also be completely cut off from the main army, no one would dare to suggest surrender. They must all fight until they were killed, for if some were captured and others were not the latter were almost certain to be inhumanly flogged and then executed. In the early part of the war the punishment for those who fought bravely themselves but yet could not, or did not, prevent defection among those near them was generally limited to flogging. Afterwards shooting was the rule for all delinquents of this kind, except when a repulse was general. Then the officers were all shot and the men decimated !

“Lopez was in constant dread of assassination ; a triple guard surrounded his house at night, which in the daytime was transferred to a kind of shed outside : here it was that visitors were obliged to await an audience with the President. Thompson says that once, while waiting his turn, he entered into conversation with the sergeant, who asked him questions about England. The latter was arrested, and Thompson was required to write down every word that passed between them, which was very difficult to do, as the conversation had been most trivial. Early the next day the sergeant was shot, and all his soldiers punished—the reason given was that the unhappy man was a conspirator ! Although, adds Thompson, he had not the look of one.”

THE PARAGUAYAN PRESS

Some idea of the very important role played by the press of Paraguay—the same applies to that of the remaining South American Republics—may be gathered from the following remarks of a Paraguayan writer, Don Enrique Solano Lopez. That his comments reveal an enthusiastic Paraguayan does not, of course, lessen the interest of his views :—

The history of the Paraguayan press may be divided into four periods.

The first from 1845 to 1852.

The second from 1852 to 1865.

The third from 1865 to 1870, and

The fourth from 1870 to the present day.

FIRST PERIOD. INDEPENDENCE OR DEATH !

The national spirit owes its being largely to the first organ of the Paraguayan press, *El Paraguayo Independiente*. In its columns are reflected the deep tribulations of Paraguayan sentiment in the face of the obstinate and persistent refusal to recognize our independence. When the danger threatening the very existence of our country was at its height, when Don Juan Manuel Rosas, in one of his messages to the legislature of the Province of Buenos Aires, referred to the Republic of Paraguay as an Argentine Province, the *Paraguayo Independiente* replied with virile courage, adding to its title the words "Independence or Death," which thirty years later were fulfilled almost to the letter by the Paraguayan people in their resistance to the invasion of the Triple Alliance.

The *Paraguayo Independiente* was edited by the President of the Republic himself, Don Carlos Antonio Lopez.

The first number made its appearance on Saturday, the 26th of April, 1845, and the one hundred and eighteenth, and last, number on Saturday, the 18th of September, 1852. It was a weekly publication, although from time to time more than a week elapsed between the issue of the numbers. In addition to the regular editions appeared supplements, containing manifestos and proclamations of historical interest.

SECOND PERIOD.

The *Semanario* took the place of the *Paraguayo Independiente*, which had fulfilled its mission with the treaty of the 15th of July, 1852, in which the Argentine Confederation acknowledged the national independence of Paraguay.

In size and appearance, during the first four years, the *Semanario* was identical with its predecessor.

The mission with which it was charged was clearly expressed in the following paragraphs, taken from the message of Don Carlos Antonio Lopez to the Congress in 1854 :

"The Government has caused to be made known, with that noble frankness and loyalty which it professes in all its acts, the social and political situation . . . and the necessity that arose of abandoning all other affairs in favour of the defence of our beloved country, threatened with invasion and conquest, and of postponing until normal and peaceful times all efforts concerned with political and social improvement.

"The peace which the nation enjoys as the result of the treaty of the 15th of July, and the relations which we have established with the leading powers of the civilized world, have brought about this normal and tranquil period which the Government was awaiting in order to find itself in a position to think of our own affairs, and to found and establish that which circumstances have not hitherto permitted. The nation is not yet independent in the full sense of the word. In order to attain to this lofty and glorious position it is necessary that the nation should suffice for itself; it is necessary that it should shelter within its bosom all the elements of knowledge, power, and responsibility, and that it should be able to display all that intellectual and moral force to be expected from the excellent qualities which form the basis of the Paraguayan character. To achieve this we should first of all regenerate the people in order to place it and guide it on the road it should go in order to arrive, without straying and falls, at the point where the dominating ideals of the century and the force of example must lead it onwards."

At its beginning the *Semanario*, like its predecessor, was edited by the President of the Republic; but when the latter's official labours became too onerous to permit this, Dr. Andrés Gelly assumed the editorship. When Don Ildefonso Bermejo arrived in the country he assisted in the task. Dr. Gelly became ill, and the publication ceased, being replaced by the *Eco del Paraguay*, under the editorship of Bermejo. This continued from 1855 to 1857, its numbers counting one hundred and eight.

In that year the *Semanario* again saw the light, its editor-in-chief being Señor Bermejo.

The principal topics to which both publications especially devoted themselves were those of public instruction and of agriculture, which they viewed from the standpoint of the Government.

In number 132 of the *Semanario* are to be found the constitution of the first ministry and the regulations affecting the powers of the ministries in general. In number 17 of the *Eco del Paraguay* is the decree referring to the liberty of the press.

At this period the students of the Literary Academy published a review entitled the *Aurora*. In this review are to be met with the first literary flights of Natalicio Talavera, Mariano Aguiar, Mateo Collar, Enrique López, and Germesindo Benítez.

THIRD PERIOD. "CONQUEST OR DEATH!"

When Paraguay was forced to defend its territorial integrity, the *Semanario* abandoned its agricultural and educational themes, and changed its peaceful legend for that of *Conquest or Death*. If the Paraguayans could not conquer, they knew how to die, as was demon-

strated by the bones which whitened the land from Paso de Patria to Cerro Corá. The war correspondence, edited by Natalicio Talavera, will always stand as a source of information for the historians of the great war.

The *Semanario* continued to appear until the national capital was transferred for the second time from Luque to Piribebuy in 1868. Its last number was 753.

The *Cabichui*, a satirical publication written in Spanish and Guaraní, was issued from the encampment of Paso Pucú, and even appeared in San Fernando. It was edited by Natalicio Talavera, the priests Espinosa, Bogado, and Maiz, Colonel Centurión, and others, its principal illustrator being Satorio Ríos. This publication was printed by the army press.

The *Cacique Lambaré* and the *Centinela* ably seconded the *Cabichui*. The former, published in Guaraní, constituted in common with the *Cabichui* the joy of the troops in their long hours of duty. The *Centinela* was edited by Dr. Tristán Roca, and was provided with illustrations.

Thirteen numbers appeared of the *Lambaré*, and the *Centinela* existed for rather more than a year: from the 25th of April, 1867, to the 23rd of January, 1868, closing with its fortieth number.

On the 1st of March, 1869, was published in Piribebuy *La Estrella*, its principal editor being the priest Gerónimo Becchi. The *Estrella* continued to be published until the storming of this third capital of the Republic. It ended with its thirty-seventh number on the 30th of June.

During the occupation of Corrientes by the Paraguayan forces was published the *Independiente*, the official organ of the Triumvirate established in that Argentine province.

In Buenos Aires the Paraguayan residents published two periodicals: *El Clamor de los libres* ("The Cry of the Free") and *El Grito Paraguayo*.

FOURTH PERIOD. THE MODERN PRESS.

The modern press was initiated by the *Regeneración*, edited by Juan José and José Segundo Decoud, Juan Silvano Godoi, Jaime Sosa Escalada, and others. It was followed by the *Voz del Pueblo* and the *Pueblo*, which defended the interests of the two parties into which public opinion was then divided.

From that day to this numerous daily papers have made their appearance, and the energy displayed by the various editors has been great. Political passions have at times caused these to resort to an extreme violence in language, but, save on two or three occasions, we must admit that the authorities have demonstrated a cultured respect for free thought.

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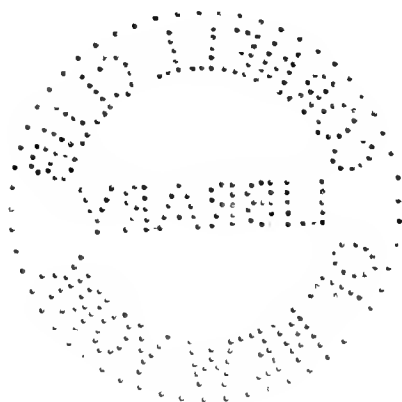
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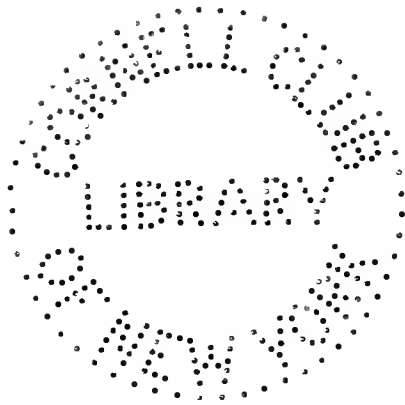
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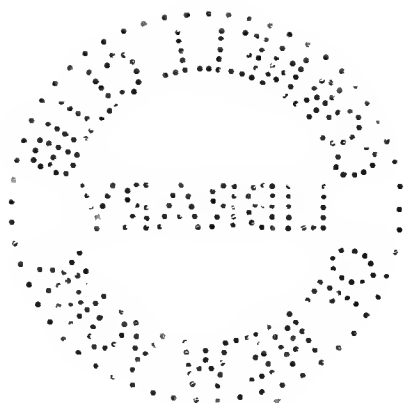
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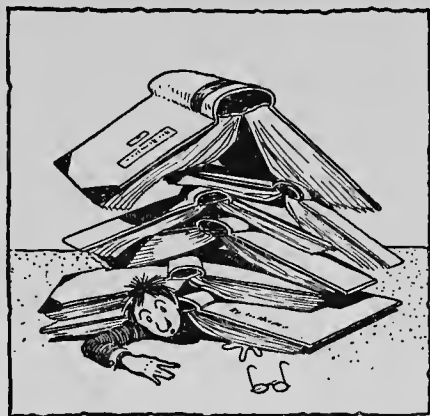
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