

# IN SOUTHERN BRAZIL

BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT

THE SIXTH ARTICLE OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN SERIES

I—IN THE RANCH COUNTRY OF PARANÁ  
**F**ROM São Paulo southward to the Uruguayan frontier we were on the railway of the Brazil Railway Company, and were treated with more than courteous consideration by Messrs. Farquhar, Taylor, and Pereira, and the other officials connected with it. The railway is another monument to the new spirit, the energy and enterprise of Brazil, and citizens of the United States have been honorably prominent in its development and management. It traverses a country of which again it is hard not to speak in superlatives. Soil, water, and climate are all admirable. Brazil now offers much the same chances for settlement, immigration, and development that were offered by the valley of the Mississippi sixty or seventy years ago.

This does not mean that all people who go there will prosper, or that success will come save at the price of labor and effort, of risk and hardship. If any Americans have forgotten how our own West in the pioneer days appealed to an observer who was friendly but who had not the faintest glimmering of the pioneer spirit, let them read "Martin Chuzzlewit." Dickens represented the numerous men who foolishly hope to enjoy pioneer triumphs and yet escape pioneer risks and hardships and the unlovely and wearing toil which is the essential prerequisite to the triumph; and every one should remember that in a new country, which opens a chance of success to the settler, there always goes with this the chance of heartbreaking failure. Brazil offers remarkable openings for settlers who have the toughness of the born pioneer and for certain business men and engineers who have the mixture of daring enterprise and sound common sense needed by those who push the industrial development of new countries. Both classes have great opportunities, and both need to be perpetually on their guard against the swindlers and the crackbrained enthusiasts who are always sure to turn up in connection with any country of large developmental possibilities. On the frontier, more than anywhere else, a man needs to be able to rely on himself and to remember that

on every frontier there are innumerable failures.

After leaving the province of São Paulo we went south through the province of Paraná. We stopped at Morungava to visit the great ranch of the Brazil Land, Cattle, and Packing Company. The head of this company, Murdo Mackenzie, for many years one of the best-known cattlemen in our own Western cow country, was an old friend of mine. During my term as President he was, on the whole, the most influential of the Western cattle-growers. He was a leader of the far-seeing and enlightened element. He was a most powerful supporter of the Government in the fight for the conservation of our natural resources, for the utilization without waste of our forests and pastures, for honest treatment of everybody, and for the shaping of Governmental policy primarily in the interest of the small settler, the home-maker.

We rode first to Mackenzie's home ranch, about a mile from the railway, and then to an outlying set of ranch buildings ten miles off. At the home ranch were Mr. and Mrs. Roberts and their children. The buildings and the food and the whole life were typical of all that was best in the old-time "Far West," in the days when I knew it as a cattle country. Mrs. Roberts gave us a most delicious lunch, including all the fresh milk we could drink; and her husband piloted us over the immense stretches of rolling country, and in every action showed himself the born cattleman, the born and trained stockman. Half of the employees were men from the Western ranches, from Montana, Colorado, Texas, or elsewhere; and they and the stock and the vast, pleasant, open-air country were enough to make any man feel at home who had ever lived in the West. The children round the ranch-house were already speaking fluent Portuguese!

It was a beautiful country, well watered, with good grass and much timber. I was assured by both the men on the ranch and their wives that the climate was better than that of our own Western cattle country, for the heat is not as extreme as during summer in the southern part of our country, and the winters are mild, with only occasional touches

of frost. Much care has to be shown in dealing with the ticks and certain other insect plagues, but not materially more than in some of our own Southern regions. While we were at the outlying ranch we saw the cattle being dipped in familiar ranch fashion.

Cattle, horses, and hogs all thrive. All the native stock offers material on which to improve. The company is carefully breeding upward, following precisely the same course which in Texas, for instance, has effected a complete substitution of graded beef and dairy cattle for the old longhorns. The native cattle are very distinctly better than the old Texan cattle—the native Mexican cattle. The Durham and Hereford bulls introduced from the States will in a very few years completely change the character of the herds. Good cows are kept in sufficient numbers to insure a constant supply of the breeding bulls. In the same way Berkshire boars are being crossed with the native pigs, and blooded stallions with the native mares. In short, everything is being done exactly as on our advanced and successful ranches at home. The country is still largely vacant, and opportunities for development will be almost limitless for at least another generation.

Aside from the extreme interest of seeing the ranch itself, the twenty-mile ride was most enjoyable. The country was like our own plains near the foothills of the Rockies, except that there was more water and a greater variety of timber. The most striking trees were the occasional peculiar flat-top pines, which grew more common as we went southward, and there were also beautiful casuarina pines through which the wind sang mournfully, and there were many flowers. In one place we saw a small prairie deer, and in galloping we had to keep a lookout for armadillo burrows, just as we keep a lookout for prairie-dog holes in the West. The birds were strange and interesting, some of them with beautiful voices. Out on the plains there were big birds like African bustards, but noisy. I think they were probably screamers. One sparrow sang loudly, even at midday, round the corrals. He was a confiding, pretty little fellow, with head markings somewhat like those of our white-crowned and white-throated sparrows. He sang better than the former, and not as well as the latter.

In the afternoon we resumed our railway journey. At the different picturesque little towns along the railway we were received

with the courteous good will so characteristic of the Brazilians, and every leading man whom we met was as interested in the development of the country, as interested in bringing in immigrants and in the chances for investments of foreign and native capital, as if he had been one of our own citizens.

## II—AMONG THE BACKWOODS SETTLERS OF BRAZIL.

All the next day we passed through a beautiful forest country with many rivers. In the early morning these rivers were affluents of the Paraná. Then we passed into the State of Santa Catalina, and the rivers were part of the Uruguay system. It is only within a couple of years that the railway has been open through this region. Naturally, the latter-day travelers who have visited and written about South America from the tourist's standpoint have gone by sea from Montevideo to Santos and Rio de Janeiro. In consequence they have known nothing, except by rather vague reports, of the extraordinarily rich country which extends from São Paulo to the Uruguay boundary. This is the country which has been opened by the Brazil Railway Company. It is part of the last great stretch of land in the temperate zone with a fertile soil and good climate which is open to settlement by men of the white race—for this is what temperate South America is.

Portions of temperate Brazil are open prairie, portions are forest. The climate is never very hot, nor is there ever severe cold. The colonists with whom I conversed had not found the insects specially troublesome; not much more, and in places rather less, troublesome than in Louisiana and Texas. The general effect in the forest country, while of course the species of plants are entirely different, reminds the observer of the Louisiana and Mississippi cane-brake lands and the country along the Nueces. The activities of the settlers in the open country are substantially those with which I was familiar thirty years ago in the cattle country of the West. In the forests one is reminded more of early days on the Ohio, the Yazoo, and the Red River of the South. Certainly this is a country with a wonderful future. It offers fine opportunities for settlers who desire with the labor of their own hands to make homes for themselves and their children, and there are good openings for business men of the right type.

Now, to say this of a new country does

not mean that any one can be guaranteed success. Men who are not prepared for labor and effort, persistence and self-denial, are out of place in a new country; and foolish people who will probably fail anywhere are more certain to fail badly in a new country than anywhere else. During the whole period of the marvelous growth of the United States there has been a constant and uninterrupted stream of failure going side by side with the larger stream of success. Unless there is a revolution of some kind, which I do not believe will occur, the future holds for southern Brazil much what half a century ago the future held for large portions of our country lying west of the Mississippi.

This day the landscape was very beautiful. The most conspicuous tree in the forest was the flat-topped pine, the shaft of which rose like that of a royal palm, and the branches spread out at the top just where the palm leaves spread out on the palm, only instead of drooping they curved upward like the branches of a candelabra. There were many other trees in the forests which I could not recognize or place. Some of them looked like our Southern live-oaks. Then there were palms, and multitudes of big tree-ferns. In places where these tree-ferns grew thickly among the tall strange candelabra pines, with palms scattered here and there and other queer ancient tropical plants, the landscape looked as if it had come out of the carboniferous period—or at least as the carboniferous period was represented as looking in the more attractive geologies of my youth.

There were also flowers of brilliant and varied hue. We saw but few orchids, but in the spots of open prairie there were immense patches of lilac and blue blossoms, and the flowering trees were wonderful. Many of them were purple, others yellow. The most beautiful of all the flowering trees flamed brilliant scarlet, and in places where many of them were scattered through the woods they made splashes of burning red against the rich green of the hillsides, as we looked at them while the train ran along the brink of some rushing river.

From time to time we stopped at towns, sometimes fairly old but very prosperous towns, and at other places new settlements of Poles, or Germans, or Italians. At three of these I got off and visited them, in one case riding half a dozen miles so as to see the farms. The director of one colony was

Frenchman, of another a Pole. The Poles

proper, the Italians, and many of the Germans were Catholics. There were Ruthenians and Lithuanians who belonged to the Orthodox Greek Church, and some of them were Uniate Catholics, with married priests. Some of the Germans were Lutherans. I met a very pleasant little Lutheran minister who had come specially to the station to meet me, for he had long dwelt in the United States. As I have before explained, there is real religious freedom and toleration in Brazil. I met a number of native Brazilians who were Protestants, belonging to congregations which had been started by American missionaries. I was interested at being told by one Catholic gentleman of the country, a very able man standing high in the Government, that he believed that the presence of the few Protestant congregations had been a positive benefit to the Catholic Church, and had helped him and other zealous Catholics to put the Church on its mettle as an agent for social well-being and progress.

Most of the colonists whom, as it happened, I saw this day, and whose houses I visited, were Poles. They were doing well. Their houses were clean and comfortable, and they were working hard, just as old-time American pioneers worked. They cleared the forests by burning, just as our own people used to do. It made me rather sad to see the great trees destroyed, but it was necessary in order that the farms might be established. Wheat and rye, corn and peas, were among the crops the settlers were raising, and they had cattle and swine. In this province I met for the first time Germans born in the country who could speak only German. These came from isolated German colonies. The descendants of the Germans where the colonists were at all intermixed for the most part spoke Portuguese as their native tongue.

The Germans born in the country are fine-looking, healthy men, just as healthy as in the north temperate zone. I was told by the colonists that they had not suffered from sickness save in a few cases; no more, I should gather, than our own colonists in the early days on the Western river boundaries. They told me that there were occasional sharp frosts, but that the low temperature never lasted for more than an hour or so. I expressed some surprise at this in view of the tropical character of the vegetation, and asked how the frost affected such plants as palms and the tree-ferns. They explained

to me that the frosts prevented coffee being grown, but that they had no effect on the palms, and, rather curiously, no effect on the tree-ferns if they were under big forest trees,

but that if they were in the open the fronds were killed, the trees themselves not being injured, and new fronds taking the place of the old ones.

*A succeeding article in Mr. Roosevelt's series will take the reader into southernmost Brazil*