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The Argentine Republic amazes me. I expected to find it something like the United States, but it is as different as lemons are different from pumpkins. Sometimes it seems to me that the United States is the lemon and the Argentine the pumpkin, but oftener the United States is the bigger of the two. We have a booming country. Things also boom in the Argentine, but the character and conditions of prosperity are entirely different here. We raise some wheat; so does the Argentine. We raise wool; the Argentine far outstrips us in sheep. We have the more land; but the Argentine has a territory which is almost all good for something, and it is in area at least one-third the size of our country, without Alaska and our new islands. The Argentine is longer from the north to south than the United States. It is almost twice as long. If we could fit it up at the corners, twist it around and spread it over our country from east to west, placing the lowest edge of Patagonia at New York, the borders of Brazil and Bolivia would be some distance beyond Salt Lake City. If we could cut it up into patch-work pieces and fit them upon the territory of the United States, every inch of our land east of the Mississippi would be covered, and the remnants would be larger than the area of a number of our states west of that river. The Argentine Republic is twelve times as big as Great Britain. It is five times as large as France, and it is greater in area than the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, California, Utah, Colorado and Kansas combined. This wonderful land is made up of mountains and plains. Its mountainous country is comparatively small, but its plains are almost the largest of the world, extending from the hot lands of the tropics on the edge of Brazil to the cool, terraced pampas of southern Patagonia.

The best part of the Argentine Republic have been built up by the wonderful systems of streams which has its outlet in the River Plate. These rivers are the Uruguay, Paraguay, Pilcomayo and Parana. They form a vast drainage system which has been carrying the lands down from the mountains for ages and building up this country. They drain a country larger than the basin of the Mississippi, and, in fact, as large as half of the whole United States.

The best lands of the Argentine lie along the rivers. The most of the country is a great plain gently sloping in the north and central part from the Andes to these streams. If you could see the Rio de la Plata, or River Plate, you could realize what a great earth builder it is. It is an immense river 100 miles wide at its mouth and 180 miles long to the point where it is formed by the junction of the Uruguay and Parana. It is so full of soil that it drops 10,000 tons of mud every hour into its bed. This is a load so great that if you

should load it on to two-horse wagons it would take a line of teams sixty miles long to carry it. I entered the Rio de la Plata on a German steamer, in which I sailed from the Falkland Islands to Montevideo. The waters of the sea were stained by the mud long before we reached the mouth of the river. It took us all night to sail across it, and in the morning we were still some distance from Montevideo. When I took my bath I found the tub filled with what looked like split pea soup, and when I let the fluid out there was a sediment in the bottom of the tub so thick that I left foot prints in it quite as plain as those which frightened Robinson Crusoe in the sand of his desert island.

The sea captains tell me that these enormous masses of mud are rapidly filling up the bed of the Rio de la Plata. Its depth varies from thirteen to thirty-six feet, but it has many banks and shoals. This silt has given it a bottom of fine sand. The big steamers which come to Buenos Ayres often have to plow their way through the mud, and already the people are talking of a jetty system similar to that which Eades built at the mouth of the Mississippi.

I can give you a better idea of the Argentine Republic by comparing it with parts of the United States. Take the great valley of the Rio de la Plata as you find it here and for hundreds of miles to the west and north of Buenos Ayres. If you will imagine yourself in Illinois south of Springfield along the Ohio and Mississippi rivers you will be in a country much like this. You must, however, cut out the cornfields, leave out the woods and make the lands all pasture. Take away forty-nine farm houses out of every fifty, tear down all the barns, and in the places of our neat country homes put huts of mud and straw and bricks, sometimes thatched and sometimes roofed with galvanized iron. Then put here and there a larger group of low buildings surrounded by flowers and trees belonging to the rich proprietor and you have the basin of the Rio de la Plata. You must spot the landscape with sheep and cattle in flocks of thousands and imagine vast fields, for the farms often include tens of thousands of acres and one man may own many square miles of land.

Further south the Argentine is a table-land very like northern Nebraska. It is covered with sand and grass. Streams twenty feet deep and eight feet wide cut their way through crumbling banks. The land rises in terraces from the sea to the Andes. The soil is poor and much of it is a sandy plain upon which nothing will grow except by irrigation.

Again, going from the basin of the Rio de la Plata westward the land rises gently to the Province of Cordoba, one of the seats of the old civilization, and still further west to Mendoza in the foot hills of the Andes. Cordoba is devoted largely to grazing. It has a mountain chain running through it and it is much like West Virginia, save that it is not wooded. The province of Mendoza is on the plateau of the Andes. It

is a grape and wine country, its vines producing a ton of grapes to the acre and every twenty vines a gallon of wine. Its general character is like that of Pennsylvania about Lancaster and York.

Going further northward the scenery of the Argentine changes. You get into the tropics. The province of Tucuman raises quantities of sugar cane. It produces 95 per cent of the sugar consumed in the Argentine. Its soil will yield one hundred bushels of corn to the acre. Much of it is wooded with tropical trees. It is mountainous, having an average elevation as high as Denver and a general appearance much like that of the country along the Pennsylvania railroad at the Horse Shoe Bend. Here the streams are dry half the year and boiling torrents during the remainder. The Tucuman valleys are hot in the summer and warm in the winter. Buenos Ayres got there to get away from the cold, a thing that seems ridiculous to me, for the city is never much colder than Savannah or Atlanta.

In addition to these sections there are other lands still nearer Bolivia heavily wooded, the Chaco and Formosa territories, for instance. They are tropical and wild and filled with half-naked Indians. These countries have been little explored and are comparatively unknown.

Further west in the Andes is a country unlike anything in the United States. It is both mountainous and tropical. The timber here disappears and mineral riches come to the surface. The finest of marble and the most beautiful onyx I have ever seen exist in this region. Here are mountains said to be rich in gold and silver. Some mines are now being worked. The mining engineers of the Rothschilds and others are prospecting in these mountains. The great drawbacks are the inaccessibility of the country, the lack of water and the enormous cost of carrying mining machinery into it.

The wheat region of the Argentine is comparatively a small part of the whole territory. I will write of it more fully in the future. It lies chiefly north of Buenos Ayres and east of Cordoba, in the basin of the Parana, and also in the province of Entre Rios, between the Uruguay and Parana rivers. This country is like Illinois along the Ohio river. It is divided into comparatively small tracts, and is largely farmed by colonies of foreigners.

Such is a bird's eye view of the Argentine Republic. I will fill out the picture in letters describing different parts of the country and the different industries.

The Argentine now has 4,000,000 people. It grows fast. It has trebled in within thirty years, and its people claim they will have 5,000,000 in 1900. More than 100,000 immigrants came in last year. More than one-third of all the people in the country are foreigners, and 70 per cent of the foreigners are Italians. More Italians are com-