BIG FARMS IN CHILE.

A Visit to Two Immense Estates Managed by Women.

Life and Work on a Chilean Hacienda—A Look at Horsi, the Famous Country Farm—Among the Peons or Farm Hands of Chile—They Work on Twenty Cents a Day and Get Drunk on Pure Alcohol Every Week—How They Live—Their Favorite Beverage and Their Wonderful Strength.

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SAN BERNARDO, CHILE, Sept. 18, 1898.—The Chilean farmers are perhaps the school of thrift that is to be the model for the feudal lords upon their great estates, and number their peasantry by the hundreds. They have herds of thousands of sheep, vast droves of cattle and horses, and their workings are housed like an army at the annual round-ups. They raise every year over 200,000 tons of wheat, stack millions of gallons of wine and make the finest horses and best cattle on the western coast of this continent. Some of them have the most modern machinery, and men who own a dozen American threshing machines are not uncommon.

WHERE 1,000 ACRES IS ONLY A GARDEN PATCH.

The conceit of the population of Chile is proverbial in newspapers, but one thing people are the tenderness, in the whole United States, with its thousand millions, only 11,000 men own farms of 1,000 acres and over. Here a thousand acres form a little more than a garden patch. I met only one who has two, twenty and thirty thousand acres of land, and I have talked a number of others worth more than one million dollars. I have a geography of Chile, just published, which gives the government valuations of the farms of each province. There are fourteen in nearly every state worth over $100,000, and in the country there are scores valued at over $50,000 apiece. I am now at the little railroad and farming town of San Bernardo, in the central part of Chile. San Bernardo is about 20 miles from Santiago, and about 1,200 miles south of the Peruvian frontier.

In coming here I rode through one of the chief agricultural sections of the country. This valley is from four to ten hundred miles wide and about six hundred miles long. It extends from Aconcagua, about 100 miles to the yellow north of this point, to the east of it are the snowy walls of the Andes, with Mount Aconcagua, the great cone of a dead volcano rising above the other peaks, and on the west are the three mountains and hills of the coast range, which rise sometimes with peaks. Between these almost parallel walls lies the rich valley of Chile. Its surface is rolling and it is cut by many streams and little rivers, which, fed by the Andean snows, carry with them to the sea loads of silt, so rich that it makes fat every inch of soil upon which it drops. In some places, and this is the chief, the amount of silt is so great that it is said to cost the lands by the irrigation ditches a dollar an acre per year. Other streams, such as the Maipo and some streams of south Chile, are as clear as crystal. The whole of the valley north of this point is irrigated and the country is like a vast garden made up of fields divided by canals along which hedges of Lombardy poplars have grown to be higher or nine feet and more.

Some of the estates are walled with stone. And it is only occasionally that you see fences of wire or boards. There are no barns standing out on the little ridge, and the only buildings are the great low stabling structures of the ranch, of the estate and the mud-walled houses of the laborers, which I will describe more fully further on. Here, everywhere, take up your abode horses or mules. Country carts drawn by oxen, heavy with yokes tied to their horns are the farm wagons, and the oxen are turned through the furrow by the same primitive power. The sickle was, as a rule, used for harvesting and threshing, the vines of which now abound, with the red leaves of winter, spoiled the landscape with bright color. The vines were dwarfed as they are in France, and in many cases were trained upon little stakes. The grapes, too, I am told, lie skilled Frenchman as winemakers. The vines are planted in rows about five feet apart, and there are not to mow them. The Chilean work, both white and red, are excellent, and the amount exported every year is increasing. The climate of Chile is just about the same as that of California. The soil is rich and the most valuable lands, and the most productive of successful farming are about the same latitude as that in California and most of the farms very small.

HOW ONE WOMAN FARMS IN CHILE.

What would one of the California women who have made their fortunes out of their farms think, for one person to take care of thirty? If she were asked to manage a farm worth a million dollars and comprising more than seven thousand acres? There is a woman who does just that. She is the sole manager of the estate of her sister, Madame Cousiño. She directs it herself, and this notwithstanding she is now considerable over 60 years and has lived in the city most of her life. The balances of each year of which run into the thousands of pesos, she keeps in her head, and she all the details connected with her estate and its numerous peasants. She is known to be a wonderful woman in the chateaux of Chile. Her name is Doña Emilia Herrera de Toro. She is known as one of the richest families of Chile, and the estate has been in her family for hundreds of years. It has grown in value with the years, and now, as is the case with most of the wealthy farmers of this country, the family fortune is only partly in the land, which it employs spending their winters in their mansions at the capital. It was in this way that I met Madame Cousiño and her sister that I visited Madame de Toro and had one of the most pleasant and interesting experiences I have had during my stay in Chile.

A VISIT TO A GREAT HACIENDA

Leaving Santiago on the train, we rode under the walls of the Andes, through Renaca, after a hacienda by the company of Rood and vines, by which time we had left behind all cattle and sheep until we came to the station of the Agua Santa. Here we were met by a coach and team, a boy and other to a side or a on the estate for us to come to the home. This rented of the ranch of Doña Emilia, low one-story building, with coils of red tiles on the roof, painted stucco with brick, running along the front and gardens. A grove of trees in front of the house hedged about the place, and the long leaves of a great palm waved gracefully and rustled a welcome as we rolled upon the porch. There was a large, old home, but we had to be content in the house, and all the rooms opened upon the porch, with regard to comfort more than the appearance of show, which you see in all of the houses of Chile. And we at once were made to feel that we were in Country Hall and that free to go and come as we pleased. There were about three children and grandchildren of Madame de Toro visiting, and we lived in the house with them. We were duly introduced, and from the day dress with Rosa Rodriguez de Toro, who is the daughter of the Doña Emilia, we were the great farm in quite close relation.

IN THE FARMHOUSE OF A KING.

Our correspondence with a king who was brought to King Lear Philippe, and of which the commander of the Chilean navy, Admiral Grant, Vicente, and is kept in the Windsor palace, dwelt in Toro family with the Doña Emilia Toro, the daughter of Louis Philippe, and it had been in her that it had so well remembered the Chilean in her home. We had six large bedrooms, the furniture is heavy and comfortable, and the beds are as soft as down. Nearly wife, attendant of Lemberto, passed by the Don lakes which supply the family with fish. Sightseeing the ducks and swans, which are there feeding, on to the rose garden, which family with fish. Sightseeing the ducks and swans, which are there feeding, on to the rose garden, which family with fish. This a hundred varieties of roses, and we spent more than an hour in gathering them. Here and there of eucalyptus trees planted for their leaves, made an oblong grove of about a hundred acres. Here we walked and partook of a cultivated well-kept vines. The head of the fields were cultivated by antiquated steam wains, and there lay of the certain neatness carefully and economically. Here and there stood a Chilean windmill and some in Toro had no be used American pumps and other machinery. This estate is to a large extent a dairy farm. It has about 2,000 cattle and 500 British cows. The milk is delicious, produce something like $5,000 worth of milk and $1,000 worth of butter a year.

The farm of the estate are 200 hours, although all the farm work is done by oxen, which are the only beasts of burden on the farm. The oxen are used for breeding and the use of the family and guests. It is necessary to have a very fine horse, and the Toro family one, for other purpose of Chile or rather so horseback riding is the same thing. The Toro family estate is management for the benefit of the family that for profit, so it is not a financial way it is a very profitable farm.

HOW SHE TREATS HER FRIENDS

Madame Cousiño is fond of good practice. She is a good cook, and she sometimes rises early in the morning and makes baskets to be sold in selling presents to her friends and to be given to guests with fruit when they leave. Her place for sale 100,000 oranges a year, but 50,000 are always left on the trees for the use of herself and her guests. All of the million orange on her estate is of her own raising and she sells them to the Chilean people for herself and friends. She raises great quantities of onions, squashes and other vegetables which she gives away and sends them to the Santiago hospitals and her friends by the ox cart load. A side dish of such vegetables stacked up like the pyramids of the house. There was enough to have fed a good sized Americanized party. Mutton, pumpkins, great piles of squashes, bags of walnuts and cartloads of corn all awaiting their disposal in the store. Madame Cousiño is a woman of the ancient ways of doing things, and the table is chiefly supplied from the estate. Even the wines come from the estate, and the only buildings are the great low stabling structures of the ranch, of the estate and the mud-walled houses of the laborers, which I will describe more fully further on. Here, everywhere, take up your abode horses or mules. Country carts drawn by oxen, heavy with yokes tied to their horns are the farm wagons, and the oxen are turned through the furrow by the same primitive power. The sickle was, as a rule, used for harvesting and threshing, the vines of which now abound, with the red leaves of winter, spoiled the landscape with bright color. The vines were dwarfed as they are in France, and in many cases were trained upon little stakes. The grapes, too, I am told, lie skilled Frenchman as winemakers. The vines are planted in rows about five feet apart, and there are not to mow them. The Chilean work, both white and red, are excellent, and the amount exported every year is increasing. The climate of Chile is just about the same as that of California. The soil is rich and the most valuable lands, and the most productive of successful farming are about the same latitude as that in California and most of the farms very small.

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MADAME COUSIÑO'S SANTIAGO RANCH.

I also paid a visit during my stay at Santiago to the ladies' estate of Madame Cousiño, known as Mosul. You have heard of Madame Cousiño. She has been pointed out to me as the richest woman of the country. Her money comes from the coal mines of Lota, and she is said to be worth a million dollars, and comprising more than seven thousand acres? There is a woman who does just that. She is the sole manager of the estate of her sister, Madame Cousiño. She directs it herself, and this notwithstanding she is now considerable over 60 years and has lived in the city most of her life. The balances of each year of which run into the thousands of pesos, she keeps in her head, and she all the details connected with her estate and its numerous peasants. She is known to be a wonderful woman in the chateaux of Chile. Her name is Doña Emilia Herrera de Toro. She is known as one of the richest families of Chile, and the estate has been in her family for hundreds of years. It has grown in value with the years, and now, as is the case with most of the wealthy farmers of this country, the family fortune is only partly in the land, which it employs spending their winters in their mansions at the capital. It was in this way that I met Madame Cousiño and her sister that I visited Madame de Toro and had one of the most pleasant and interesting experiences I have had during my stay in Chile.

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