

Recent events have caused many friends of THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC, CONSERVATIVE to make enquiries concerning the Argentine Republic. Therefore the editor answers them collectively.

In 1516, twenty-four years after the first landing of Columbus on the Island of San Salvador Juan Dias de Solis, pilot-in-chief of the King of Spain, made the discovery of the Rio de la Plata, or River of Silver. Sixty-four years after Solis sailed into the river of Silver the city of Buenos Aires was founded by Don Juan de Garay. That was in the year 1580. And now Buenos Aires has a population of more than a half a million of people many of whom are Europeans.

The Argentine Republic is bounded on the north by Paraguay, Bolivia and Brazil; on the west and south by Chile and on the east by Brazil, Uruguay and the Atlantic Ocean. It has an area of one million one hundred and eighteen thousand (1,118,000) square miles. It has a population of five millions.

The province of Buenos Aires, the most important of all, is bounded on the north by Entre Rios, Santa Fe, and Cordoba, on the east by the Atlantic Ocean, on the south by the territory of La Pampa and the province of Cordoba. Its area is 63,000 square miles and its population 1,500,000.

With the exception of a few hills in the southern part of the province, it presents the aspect of a general plain, with many small lakes, crossed and recrossed with streams that constitute a natural system of irrigation. Its soil is principally adapted to grazing purposes, although of late, agriculture has also made great progress. In 1891, there were in the province 70,000,000 sheep; the cattle numbered 9,600,000, valued at \$50,000,000; and the horses 1,860,000, valued at \$10,000,000, the value of all amounting to \$135,000,000.

Without counting the city of La Plata, capital of the province, the value of the pastoral and agricultural industries in 1891 was estimated to be \$341,000,000. In 1886, the value of the land, sheep, cattle, and horses of the province of Buenos Aires, exception being made of La Plata, amounted to about \$700,000,000. The cultivated area, in 1891, was 3,420,000 acres. It was distributed as follows: Maize, 1,610,000 acres; wheat, 1,160,000; linseed, 100,000; lucerne, 200,000; barley, 40,000; potatoes, 60,000. The total value of the crop of 1891 was \$33,000,000.

A great quantity of maize is employed by the different distilleries established in the province, a fact which contributed to make the crop too small for the internal needs of the province. The rapid increase of the cultivated area has, of

late, remedied this evil, permitting wheat, maize and other cereals to be exported from Buenos Aires as well as from other provinces.

In 1885, the nineteen *saladeros* then in existence slaughtered 243,375 head of cattle, 200,000 head of horses, and 200,000 sheep.

Of all the South American cities, Buenos Aires is the one which has lost, to a greater extent than any other, the Spanish aspect, which had characterized it for three centuries.

A long time ago, it broke the chains which bound it to Seville and Cadiz. The civilians seem to have forgotten the time when they furnished every commercial commodity to the cities of Spanish America. When Buenos Aires receives a cargo of salt from Cadiz it little thinks that this is a last vestige of the exclusive commerce which, in former times, was transacted between the two cities.

The axis of international relations has changed its position. The Argentine Republic, after having received everything from Spain, its laws, its public spirit, its private customs, its cuisine, etc., now takes nothing from Spain. Even its language is not pure Castilian.

During the last three centuries, Spanish literature has remained stationary and has produced few good works. The Argentines have therefore been obliged to look elsewhere for such works, preferring to read them in their own original languages rather than wait for translations. This has caused the Argentines to take something from every language, consequently producing a certain change in their style of writing.

It is now difficult to find in Buenos Aires the old-fashioned Spanish house. Even the houses built by the natives thirty or forty years ago, have almost disappeared, having been replaced by modern buildings.

The Government House is modern, being a mixture of Italian and French renaissance. One half of it, which for a time was used for the postoffice, is a reproduction, on a small scale, of the Tuilleries, and the other half, built afterwards, resembles an Italian palace of the sixteenth century.

The plaza or square, which was laid out in 1580, in accordance with the Spanish laws, has the classic 150 meters in breadth by 300 meters in length. It continues to serve the purpose for which it was intended. Many public buildings face upon it; among others, the Government House, the custom house, the city hall, congress hall, the cathedral, the palace of the archbishop, the Colon theatre and the bourse.

The great traffic of this part of the city overflows into the adjacent streets. At every step traces of the old city are found. Sometimes, one imagines himself in a city of Andalusia, but this il-

lusion soon vanishes at the sight of the exceedingly active traffic on all sides, and the noise produced by innumerable carts, tramways, and carriages of every description, very few of which carry idle people, for who could remain idle in the midst of so much activity when, at every step, one is reminded of the struggle for life?

There has scarcely been time to rebuild this portion of the city. Several old structures are yet to be found, the rental of which is sufficient to satisfy their owners, who do not care to go to the expense of building new houses. But alongside of these old houses, which are destined to disappear, palatial buildings have been raised, most of which, although originally destined for other purposes, have been claimed by the increasing demands of business.

The part of the city occupied by private residences surrounds the business part, and the farther one gets from the business center, the greater number of modern houses are found. New thoroughfares spring up every day, and grounds which not long ago were used to raise lucerne, are now covered with fashionable dwellings. Everywhere, new buildings are seen entirely different from the antique style of architecture. Many rich families have set the example by building beautiful homes, in which they display a luxury unknown before.

These residences are designed from the Parisian private hotels, the chalets of Norway, the Moorish alcazars, the Italian palaces, the great seignorial castles of France, while some are modeled after Spanish castles. From Paris, principally, comes the furniture for these residences, splendid *tapisseries*, paintings of the best masters, and objects of art, *dernieres nouveautes*, etc.

Several Parisian houses have sent their own men to superintend the furnishing of these dwellings, which the most gorgeous private hotels of Paris can not rival.

Vain would be the attempt to distinguish among the new and old-fashioned houses those which are occupied by the high officials of the government, the president himself, or the foreign diplomatic ministers. The difference of fortune only, and not of official rank, marks the difference of dwellings. The state does not provide residences for officials. A man occupying a high position in the government is not required to have a grand establishment. The president and his ministers go every day to the Government House to transact the business of the day; but they all live in their own houses, more or less elegant according to their private means, their salary not being sufficient to allow them to live with greater luxury.

The principal driving park of Buenos Aires is Palermo, where over 8,000 car-