

# WITH ROOSEVELT IN SOUTH AMERICA

His Scientific Expedition Through the Wilds of Paraguay and Brazil.

An Unexplored Region of Immense Possibilities—Matto Grosso and the Head Waters of the Tapajos—The Pilcomayo and the Gran Chaco—Savage Indians and Head Hunters—The Field for Natural History Finds—Immense Turtles and Their Millions of Eggs—Hunting Tapirs and Peccaries—In the Rubber Regions.

(By FRANK G. CARPENTER.)  
Washington, D. C., Dec. 6.—By the time this letter is published ex-President Roosevelt will be about starting upon his expedition into the tropical interior of South America. He will have already visited the civilized sections of the three greatest countries of our sister continent, and will have delivered addresses in Argentine, Chile and Brazil. He will have traveled over the vast coffee plantations about Sao Paulo, will have ridden with the hauchos or cowboys over the pampas of Argentina, and will have hunted the wild American ostriches in the desert of Patagonia. He will have climbed the Andes, have crossed over into the progressive bull moose country of Chile, and have made his way by rail north and south through that shoe string republic. He will, in short, have seen the best in modern progress that South America has to offer, and will be ready for that part of the continent which today is practically as wild as it was when Juan de Solis first made his way up the Rio de la Plata, and when Pinzon discovered the mouth of the Amazon.

South America has the greatest river basins on earth, and it is in the basins of the two largest of them that Mr. Roosevelt is to travel. The whole eastern and central half of the continent is composed of enormous river valleys and plains and plateaus. The Orinoco river, beginning in Venezuela, is longer than from New York to Omaha. It flows north and its head waters are in Brazil so near those of the Rio Negro that you can carry a canoe across from one stream to the other, and starting in at the Caribbean sea, cross Venezuela and Brazil and come out into the Atlantic ocean. The Rio Negro enters the Amazon a thousand miles from the mouth. It flows in just below the city of Manaus, and its black waters may there be seen moving along side by side with the yellow waters of the Amazon. They flow together for some miles before they mix, and then the black disappears. It is now fifteen years since I went a thousand miles up the Amazon and entered the mouth of the Rio Negro. The latter is an immense stream, and at its mouth it seems as large as the Amazon itself.

There are high bluffs lining the banks and a little farther up the stream is a succession of lakes, some of which are from twenty to thirty miles wide. The waters of the Rio Negro are as black as your hat, while those of the Amazon are as yellow as those of the muddy Missouri. I remember that our steamer cut the joining of the waters, so that you could look down over one side of the vessel into a stream of pitch and on the other into one of pale gold.

It is not far from the mouth of the Rio Negro that the Madeira flows into the Amazon, and one can go up that river during the rainy season about as far as from New Orleans to St. Louis. This is to the falls of San Antonio. By taking a boat around the falls he could go into the Beni and Mamore, two of the branches which reach to Bolivia, and by a short portage from the Mamore get into the Pilcomayo, which flows into the Parana system. I have seen the Pilcomayo where it enters the Paraguay river in the Gran Chaco, some distance above the Argentine boundary, and have traveled up the Paraguay almost to the plateau of Matto Grosso, where rises the Tapajos river, another tributary of the Amazon, which is about 1,200 miles long. I passed the mouth of the Tapajos when I traveled up the Amazon in 1898. It is about 500 miles from Para and about an equal distance from Manaus and the mouth of the Rio Negro.

It has not been reported as yet which of these courses ex-President Roosevelt will take in making his way from the Panama system to that of the Amazon. He might go up the Panama and Paraguay and enter the Pilcomayo, but it is more probable that he will travel up the Paraguay river to its source and thence trek across country and go into Tapajos and float down that stream for 1,200 miles into the mighty "Mother of Waters." He can go almost to the source of the Tapajos by the Panama system, and can reach Cuyaba, Brazil, which is not far from there, by steam. That town is just about as high above sea level as is the surface of Lake Superior, and there are comfortable

steamers which go about 1,100 miles North of Buenos Ayres to Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay, and smaller boats which run from there on to Cuyaba, above Cuyaba, the Paraguay narrows, but it can be navigated by canoes for a distance of 150 miles farther. I am told there are many rapids, however, and that portage will have to be made around some of them. The town of Diamantina is not far from Cuyaba, and it will probably be at that place that the Roosevelt party will cross to the headwaters of Tapajos.

The Tapajos has a branch called the Arinos, which rises near there. Roosevelt and his party will go down the Arinos into the Alto Tapajos and will have to carry their boats around the rapids and cataracts at Maranhao Grande, after which they can get large vessels which will take them down the broad and deep stream which leads from there into the Amazon at the town of Santarem.

The valley of Tapajos is very picturesque. It has high bluffs along the lower river, but they disappear within a few miles of the Amazon, and one comes out as it were, into a great flowing inland sea which extends from there to the ocean. A few miles above Santarem is the narrowest part of the lower Amazon. This is at the town of Obidos. I remember when I went up the great river that we were often out of sight of land until we reached Obidos, and that the channel there narrowed to about a mile. The waters below were peaceful and smooth flowing. At Obidos the great stream swept through with enormous force, and the captain told me that the river at that point was 240 feet deep. When we stopped at Obidos we could not rely upon the ship's anchor to hold us, and our boat was tied by cable to trees on the banks. Obidos is a rubber settlement with cocoa plantations nearby.

I envy ex-President Roosevelt his power to make a comfortable trip down the Tapajos, or perhaps by the Pilcomayo into the Madeira. I have traveled somewhat in the interior of the Amazon basin and think it is quite as interesting as the highlands of Central Africa, through which region I went a year or so before ex-President Roosevelt and his expedition landed at Mombasa. I visited the same region in that country through which he traveled, but I did not have the great retinue, with mosquito-proof tents and doctors and scientists and comforts galore.

This expedition is to be a scientific one, and it will probably add greatly to our knowledge of the wilds of South America, and to the collection of the American Museum of Natural History, to which the beasts, birds and reptiles captured are to be given. He will have a chance to shoot tapir all the way from Paraguay to Brazil and will probably bring back many specimens of the collared peccary, which is found almost everywhere in South America. The peccary is a kind of wild hog, which, when grown, is about three feet in length. It is of a dark gray color and the collared variety has a white band extending across the chest from shoulder to shoulder. It goes about in herds or droves and is not difficult to shoot. We have some tapirs in Panama and they are found in many parts of the Amazon and Parana basins. I saw some during my travels in South America. They make me think of a cross between a hog and a pony. They are usually found in forests and in the lowlands near the rivers. They like to bathe and run for the water when attacked. They are not at all dangerous.

And then the alligators and turtles. There are alligators almost everywhere in the Rio de la Plata system. I had a shot at a score or so during my trip up the Paraguay river, and I saw some on the Amazon, although that stream is so large that one only comes into sight of them when near the shore or on the banks. There are also sea porpoises in the Amazon and its branches. There are snakes of enormous size and all kinds of fishes, from the great cowfish to the sardine. Those rivers are the homes of big turtles, which lay vast quantities of eggs on the banks. The natives collect the eggs and stack them up in piles like cannon balls in a navy yard. Some of the piles are twenty feet in diameter and three times as high as a man

Later the eggs are thrown into canoes and broken with sticks in order to make turtle egg butter. When a canoe is half full of these broken eggs, water is poured in and the whole is left in the heat of the tropical sun after a short time the oily matter of the eggs rises to the surface, when it is skimmed off and clarified. It then looks like butter and is used as such by the Indians and some of the other natives. It is said that several hundred millions of turtle eggs are thus gathered every year in the Amazon basin.

But come with me and let us take a trip to the Parana system from the mouth of the Rio de la Plata, between Uruguay and Argentina, and on through Paraguay to where former President Roosevelt will leave the river, in Matto Grosso, Brazil. We shall start at Buenos Aires. It is a city bigger than Philadelphia and it has as fine buildings as Chicago. Our steamer is a side-wheeler and it will take us more than twelve hundred miles up the stream.

During the first day's voyage we steam past the mouth of the Uruguay river and then go into the Parana. The word Parana means "the mother of the sea," and this river system drains a large part of eastern South America. We sail up it to where the Paraguay flows in or as far as from New York to Cleveland. This part of the stream is from one to three miles in width and it carries a great volume of water. It has the whole of the Paraguay system, as well as that of the upper Parana, which flows about sixteen hundred miles through Brazil before it reaches the mouth of the Paraguay. It is one of the branches of this part of the Parana that lies the Niagara Falls of South America. They are far in the interior, but they can be reached, and it is probable that ex-President Roosevelt will go to them. The falls are wider than either the Zambesi Falls or Niagara, and the river makes a leap which is thirty or forty feet more than that of Niagara Falls, and it is said that the spectacle is equally grand.

All the way up the Parana to the Paraguay we pass floating islands. The floods tear the vegetation away from the banks and great masses of grass and trees go floating down stream. Sometimes one sees an alligator lying on the shores of one of these islands, and wild animals are often carried on them out of the wilds into the regions of comparatively thick population.

This trip up the Parana takes one northward from the temperate zone, in which Argentina lies, and on into the tropics. The vegetation grows more dense as you go northward. Great vines and lianas bind together the trees, and as the steamer moves along the banks you can see birds of brilliant plumage, including mocking toucans and shrieking parrots. There are plenty of monkeys almost everywhere in the wilds of Paraguay and Brazil, and so many alligators that I often mistook them for logs lying on the banks of the stream.

After entering the Paraguay you pass frequent orange groves, and at the towns there are piles of oranges lying on the ground near the wharves waiting to be loaded upon the steamers which will take them down to Buenos Aires. In Paraguay the oranges grow wild in the woods, though the trees are probably from seeds which have been dropped by birds.

Ex-President Roosevelt will undoubtedly stop at Asuncion, the capital of Paraguay. This is a most interesting city of about 80,000, lying right on the bank of the river. It is there that he will change to the smaller steamer which will carry him northward into Matto Grosso, and go on into the wilds. His trip as far as Cuyaba will be over the route traveled by Capt. Thomas Page of our navy. He was the first man to take a steam launch into that region, and it is now more than fifty years since he made his way from the Atlantic ocean for 2,7000 miles up the Parana and Paraguay system. There are now little mail steamers leaving Asuncion twice a month for Cuyaba, and it is likely that Mr. Roosevelt will go north upon one of these.

He might enter the Pilcomayo, near Asuncion, and make his way up the highlands of Bolivia into the Amazon, but there are no steamers, and the upper portions of the river have not yet been explored. Indeed, it is safe to say that he will go north into Matto Grosso, and probably outfit for the wildest part of his trip at Cuyaba.

Some of the most interesting features of this journey will be the Indian tribes, of which Mr. Roosevelt may bring back many original photographs. The Gran Chaco, which lies on the western side of the River Paraguay, is inhabited almost altogether by savages, some of whom are practically unknown to ethnology. I was told that the Indians there often go naked from one year's end to the other, and that those of some tribes pull out all the hair on their bodies except that on the head. Indeed, it is said that there is one tribe which has done this for so many ages that it has become naturally hairless. Its people can grow hair upon their heads only. I doubt this. Another tribe is the Tobas, who wear no clothes except when they come in the presence of white people. At home they often

have a blanket about the waist, but they also go about as the sculptors say of their models in "the altogether."

A recent report from the Brazilian rubber region states that some of the Indians there are cannibals, and there are branches of the Amazon upon which the famous head hunters live. The latter Indians are not at all like the head hunters of Formosa and Borneo and such of our savages who inhabit the northern part of the Philippine Islands. They are of a copper color, and have Indian features. They have a way of curing the heads which preserves them forever. The bones of the head are taken out and the skin then so shaped with the hand that it retains its features in life. It is dried and baked, and after this it is, so they claim, practically indestructible. I saw one of these heads in Panama City only two years ago, and I was offered one for \$100 Mexican during my travels in South America in 1898.

There are other Indians in Brazil who wear plugs as big around as the bottom of a tumbler in the lobes of the ears and in the skin of the lower lip, which are gradually stretched for that purpose. Only a small hole is made at first and a stem of grass or wood is inserted. Larger pieces of wood are put in from time to time until the skin and the holes grow into these horrible deformities. This tribe is known as the Botacudo.

The Indians of eastern South America are altogether different from those of the Andes. Their civilization at the time America was discovered compared with that of the Incas as the civilization of darkest Africa compares with that of the United States now. The Incas, after centuries of oppression and practical slavery, have degenerated into hewers of wood and drawers of water. The Indians of the Amazon and the Parana have remained stationary, and the most of the tribes are not much more advanced in this year, 1913, than they were in 1497, when the South American continent was discovered.

## NEWS OBSERVATIONS

Washington.—For the first time since the Civil War the enlisted strength of the navy has passed the 50,000 mark. The present total is 50,136, representing a net gain of 50,136 since July 1 last year. Officials said today they expected the Navy in a short time to be recruited to its maximum strength of 51,500.

Washington.—An examination and survey of the Norfolk and Portsmouth harbor and of the entrances to them from the Virginia capes was asked for in a bill introduced today by Senator Swanson. The purpose of the survey is to bring about a deepening of the channel to forty feet from the Norfolk Navy Yard to the Virginia capes. Representative Holland of Virginia, introduced a similar bill in the House.

Washington.—Democrat Senate leaders, with the aid of ten Republican votes, succeeded today in forcing a program of thirteen hours a day sessions for the currency bill. Two hours recess from 6 to 8 p. m. will be the only break in the daily work from 10 o'clock in the morning until 11 o'clock at night. Senators Borah, Brady, Brandegee, Cummins, Gronna, Kenyon, LaFollette, Norris, Perkins and Smoot, all Republicans joined the Democrats voting for the long daily session.

Bluefield, W. Va.—The prompt action of W. C. Sale, a railway mail clerk, probably averted a serious wreck on the Norfolk and Western Railroad near here today. The boiler of the engine pulling passenger train No. 15 exploded while the train was speeding down the mountainside. O. Verdi, fireman, and F. Linkous, engineer, were hurled from the cab. Verdi was killed instantly. The train was running away when Sale discovered the engineer and fireman were missing. He pulled the emergency cord and stopped the train.

## WILL REACH 20,000,000 POUNDS

Thus Far, This Season, 17,500,000 Pounds of Tobacco Sold on Wilson Market.

Wilson, Dec. 6.—For the past week between 17,500,000 and 17,750,000 pounds of tobacco have been sold on the Wilson market this season, and the average prices have been the highest since Wilson became a tobacco market. Warehousemen say the 20,000,000 pound mark will be reached before the market closes, though much of the remainder will be shipped stuff.

Sales for the past week amounted to 130,000 pounds which averaged \$23 per hundred.

## Holidays for Star Route Carriers.

(By the Associated Press.)  
Washington, Dec. 6.—A federal holiday for rural mail carriers at Christmas was proposed in a bill today by Representative Young, of Texas. Representative Small, of North Carolina, introduced a bill to grant to mail carriers on star routes the same holidays as are now observed for rural mail carriers.