

The River Plate and the Argentine Republic.

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CHAPTER I.

(CONTINUED.)

A LITTLE above San Pedro is the Obligado Pass. It was here that the Tyant Rosas put the boom across the river to stop the trade and force the different states to unite under his rule ; the English and French governments protested against the obstruction to the river traffic and Rosas, ignoring the protest, their ambassadors ordered the united English and French fleet to remove the barrier by force. An engagement lasting nine hours was the result before the boom was finally cut.

San Nicholas (240 miles above Buenos Ayres) is the next place of importance. It is a city of some 20,000 population and has a large trade ; a large meat freezing establishment is the first thing to catch the eye as we approach. Moored to the river bank in front of it is a magnificent ocean steamer into whose frigid hold the carcasses of frozen sheep may be seen to glide as if instinct with life, for a long steep chute connects the high "barranca" (bank) with the ship's hatch; down this the cargo slides in an almost steady stream by the force of gravity. Large flour mills are in operation as the back country is a fertile grain-growing region. The stream of the Parana is here undivided and its volume is immense—a three knot current even on the surface of a river thirteen fathoms deep and nearly a mile wide, will give the reader an idea of what I mean by immense.

A little higher up we come to the boundary of the State (or Province as it is called here) of Buenos Ayres, the Creek Medio separating it from the State of Santa Fe ; near by is the town of Constitucion, at one time proposed as the capital of the Confederation ; on this question of choosing a seat for the General Government much bad feeling was manifested, in fact it nearly caused a revolution. Santa Fe is the fourth in importance (at present) of the state forming the Argentine Republic, though in