

out, Buenos Aires had 76,000 inhabitants; in 1864, 140,000; in 1887, 400,000; in October, 1902, 864,513; and at the time of my visit this city had over a million souls. It is now the largest city in the world south of Philadelphia. Comparing its present rate of growth per decade with some other cities we find that Greater London has 20 per cent., New York 37 per cent., and Buenos 40 per cent.

The city is on the bank of the River Plate, a sloping bank over 60 ft. above the level of the water, rising up to considerable elevations in the centre of the city. It is about 120 miles from the sea at Monte Video. Its area is one of the greatest in the world, 44,830 acres; Paris has only 19,280, Berlin, 15,525. It is a good day's journey to go all round the city, as its perimeter measures thirty-nine or forty miles.

The style of the city is cosmopolitan, generally speaking, in buildings, in stores, in residences, in dress, in habits and customs of the people. It is made up of many nationalities.

There are seventy-five parks and small gardens outside main streets, with a combined area of about 1,400 acres. These parks are most tastefully laid out and more neatly kept than in any other country in the world, Paris, perhaps, excepted. The style of the houses of the wealthy people can be seen on Avenida Alvear.

The pavements are wood (nearly all hard, suitable wood of the country), asphalt, granite blocks, macadam, and rubble. No city has better pavements in the central part. In the outskirts, however, much of the pavement is very bad and uneven, merely rubble, but immense sums are being expended in substituting for rubble granite blocks and asphalt.

The streets are laid out in the form of a chess-board, and are generally about 360 ft. apart from centre to centre. In the old or the central part of the city the streets are narrow; it is difficult for three carriages to pass. There are, however, a few 33 ft. wide, and one or two avenues about 100 ft. to 110 ft. The finest street, said to be the best lighted in the world, is the Avenida de Mayo, which is in the centre of the city. As to the numbering of the houses north and south, this is perfect. It has a fine asphalt pavement and double electric lights in the centre. It was cut through the blocks a few years ago from the Casa de Gobierno (Government House), near the port, to the Thirteenth Street, somewhat less than a mile away. At the other end there is being built a beautiful Capitol building that will cost about \$5,000,000 gold.

There is a project of national concession for a system of underground electric tram-lines, connecting the three main railway-stations with the Plaza Victoria, and in one direction extending by a surface-line far out in the country.

There is no city anywhere of its size, in my opinion, with more lines of street-cars; in fact, with the exception of two streets, there is a line in every one of the principal thoroughfares. And leading out to the pleasant suburban towns, Belgrano, Palermo, and Flores, there are electric lines similar to those in American cities using the overhead trolley. In fact, all the equipment from rails to trolley comes from the United States instead of from England. Very extensive changes are being made in all parts of the city, substituting electric for horse cars. There are now 275 miles of street-car lines, which carried in 1900 116,447,982 passengers. If there are any electric railways in any part of the world which should pay it should be those lines in the City of Buenos Aires, for the conditions are specially adapted to their easy construction, the material being suitable for tunnelling, and a great mass of people crowded into the "centre" with its narrow streets, where the present surface movement is often extremely congested. A United States citizen has the concession.

The climate in Buenos Aires, taking the whole year round, is said to be very agreeable. The parks are always green, vines and palms and a species of banana plant are seen everywhere, and flowers grow all the year in the open. They procure the plants from the semi-tropical regions in the north of the country and from Paraguay, where the *Victoria regia* and other beautiful plants grow wild.

The history of the lighting of streets in the city is very interesting, and shows that the city keeps pace with others in this respect. The first record of public lighting is said to be in 1778, when the city had lamps in the form of a tin of horse-oil, with a wick; then came tallow dips; then oil-lamps; then came gas in 1885, and in 1888 electricity began to replace it in part; and on the 31st December, 1900, the city was lighted with 889 arc lamps, 318 incandescent of 16 candle power, 14,084 gas-lamps, many with the Welsbach burner, and 8,590 kerosene-lamps. And there were thirty-six electric-light stations, with a capital of \$9,000,000 gold, and with a capacity of 23,300 electric horse-power.

The means of locomotion about the city are abundant—street-cars everywhere, and a very good and economical cab service. There are few coupés, no public hansoms, and only one or two private ones; but the street-carriages are two-horse victorias, which carry four people. The private turnouts are equal to any of those I have seen in the United States or Canada, especially the horses, which are of the best imported stock. The "Corso" and the approaches to it on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon are very attractive. It is when in the beautiful park of Palermo, one of the suburbs—broad avenues, beautiful shrubbery, lakes, and shady drives, and immediately in front the broad River Plate—that one is impressed.

The house-fronts, when kept in repair and painted, are neat and architecturally beautiful. The words "repair" and "painted" might be explained. There are no wooden houses, which these words might imply; they are nearly always made of rough brick, covered with what is called "revoque" in Spanish, a covering of plaster or staff mortar and sometimes artificial stone. The better class of houses generally have a base of granite, marble, or other natural stone 3 ft. or 4 ft. high, and then brick covered with "revoque." Sometimes the natural stone extends to the second story, and then invariably comes the artificial covering; after a while—two or three years—this begins to discolour and flake off, requiring painting and repairing; after ten years it begins to become an eyesore, and at the end of fifteen or eighteen years it must all come off at a very considerable expense.