

Sertãozinho

1922

St. Louis

A New Idea. Arriving in Sertão, hot tired and dusty, and inquiring for the latrine, I was proudly escorted by the hoteleiro, not to the kitchen as you might have expected, but la' fôra no campo, to a solid structure built to withstand the wear and tear of generations. It is true that it lacked a pit and was muito defeituosa being open to flies, chickens and pigs. However it is provided with two departments and is a beginning. I believe it is the only latrine in the villa. Being since early youth intensely interested in that branch of American literature, which may be safely designated here as 'Latrine Poetry,' I have let no opportunity escape me to become familiar with the faint beginnings of a similar literature in Brasil. Noting that some thing had been written on the wall, I commenced to read and encountered not the efforts of a budding poet, but a new idea. This is what I read.

NO PRIMEIRO DIA DO MÊS DE

Setembro de 1922, foi solemnemente inaugurada esse indispensavel melhoramento da villa do Sertão, com a presença das pessoas assignantes: "

and below were the names of twenty one ~~men~~ among them one engineer and others of note. Names of senhoras were not found in the list. Investigating the matter further it was found that the latrine had been constructed as a result of propaganda of the C. B. and that the inauguration had been scheduled by a viajante who had visited the post in Torres. We were assured that the inauguration was a really festive occasion with cerveja, muito uso da palavra and other requisites for a successful festa. We assured the intendente with all gravity that we were heartily for the system of official and public inaugurations but that we thought that they should be made more liberal and that the ladies should be invited as we considered the installation of latrines in this district as of more public importance than the installation of churches schools bridges roads and other melhoramentos. In fact I waxed so eloquent that in a moment of forgetfulness I offered to come from Porto Alegre (a small matter of four day's trip) com a senhora to assistie the next inaururation provided there were ten or more new latrines to be installed.