

Jacarezinho, Outubro 19

1919

In the other room of this little hotel this very warm rainy evening, I hear the endless monologue of my Brazilian doctor, storming and threatening, playing Jeremiah for the whole of Brazil, crabbing the politicians and giving advice to the government,---'Eu digo com franqueza'--- till the dull circle of listening fazendheiros dwindles to a single man, who will without a doubt suddenly find that he is the only one left and taking that as a possible evidence of his own credulity or lack of judgement, suddenly leave-- with Dr. Remigio scarce warmed up to topic 3, which begins "Mas nossos caboclos nao sao stupidos"- etc.

We arrived here today after a two days ride in one of the dustiest trains I have ever been in, followed by four leagues of riding behind a native whose driving consisted of a continuous straffing of four underfed mules, utterly disregarding the position of the "trolley" (cart) in the road. Before the lash fell each time he roared the name of the mule who was to get it-- "BRIOSO" ! "PARAHYBA" ! or "ZONAS"!--- and I was surprised that they did not know their names. I got very fed up and was utterly pleased when he nearly tore the back wheel off on a wooden stump, and Miragaya, one of my boys, had sense enough to pretend he wanted to drive, and thus the mules were spared the additional bad temper. The passage was interesting for the sight of several lagartos basking on logs by the roadside-- a kind of very large lizard about three feet long which has a very evil look and lives on snakes. After being bitten by snakes it always immediately repairs to a certain herb in which it rolls and rubs itself, to return later to the banquet. The herb has been proved on numerous occasions not to have the same effect when so used by man. Then too I saw the almost pure white "ferreiros" a

bird about the size of a flicker and with a sound just like a blacksmith pounding the anvil-- there is the sharp abrupt thud and the persistent ring of the metal after.

This is a country of as great or greater variety than the Benighted States. The change from one sort of hills to another, from palms and bananas to pines and low bushes is often sudden and quite complete. Yesterday for about a half an hour at sunset we were running along among a lovely shiny sort of grass that was in the mass green-gold, but at one angle caught the sun in a light violet color, with the same glint that golden hair will sometimes do. And suddenly again we were out of that region and in among nothing but hill after hill of the deep green of coffee bushes, which are much more beautiful (and this is no cringing tribute to the Anti-Saloon League) as a covering for hills than vines ever were.

But I have a friend who writes me of nature-- and the wealth that I know exists throws the paucity of his and hence my accounts of it well into contrast; perhaps you have the same-- boredom, on reading accounts of it.

There is a book by a bird with the extraordinary name of Sigfried Sassoon, gotten out by Dutton, which comes fiarly close to the War-- and should you ever have occasion to take anybody aside and give 'em a tip about the Glory of War, a few verses of Sassoon would do.

Does it matter --losing your legs.....  
For people will always be kind,  
And you need not show that you mind  
When the others come in after hunting  
To gobble their muffins and eggs.

Does it matter-- losing your sight?....  
There's such splendid work for the blind;  
And people will always be kind,  
As you sit on the terrace remembering  
And turning your face to the light.

and there's another which is still one too much, I cant begin the reminiscence business vet--- and I sometimes

wonder if the Civil War was much of a war after all--- they all seemed to enjoy their reminiscences so. Good God!

It is an odd sort of thing to do-- to stick with strangers until you know them and then to know that you never will know them at all, and to stay away from acquaintances so long that you get to think of them as fixed impressions instead of wondering what they are going to do next. I doubt if reflection has the virtues currently given "in the pulpit and the press". I have reflected much and haven't even been fool enough to write people that I have learned a lot thus but I think that das so-genannte Reflection is more apt to precede things than to follow them-- and I doubt if I shall know anymore from heavy solitary "thinking" than from the half-conscious day-to-day hunches that go with a hectic American existence at home. Perhaps yes--- but not a shouting Methodist YES that drowns meaninglessly all dissent. It has a very bearish effect on the stock of friends one has; but they unfortunately become scarce as well as valuable, and I shall doubtless know again the rare and rather fine feeling that I had coming home from France, ( which is considered pathetic and melancholy by some ) that I cared a damn sight more for some people than they had reason to care for me, for I had had no substitutes the meantime, and they had had - to put the poorest interpretation on it all.

And along with the caring for people comes caring not at all for all the comforts of living-- which I wish I could care for. I had infinitely rather sleep out on the ground under this strangely dotted sky and sleepily outline the Centaur as it glows above a palm tree than to fulfill the current idea about where and how the Chefe of the Rockafell Foondaish should retire at night. Manello Patatisco ! (local for Fer th' love ov Mike) So I sleep out -- greatly to the loss of local Prestige of the Rockafell Foondaish. But this is so much nearer to a real job than I have ever had before

that ~~you must~~ I laugh aloud to think I might be answering  
telephone calls as to milk formulas or treating neurotics  
with bromides and 'tact' if I werent a free lance down here  
in Jacarezinho.

Good luck and Merry Christmas



Waiting for examination



18 yr old boy.

November 12 1919

Cresciuna

Dear Richard!

Imagine to yourself a rather ruinous Hasty Pudding theatre in a very poor state of repair with many banks of school desks scattered through it, my camp bed in one corner and a bunch of Italian women with crying babies wandering through and around it, a fat little officious Brazilian doctor making physical examinations and a gang of thunderstruck Italians watching me write and saying "Ora ! Ora!" at each move of this personal machine. A commission of railroad employees are gasping "Nossa Senhora !" at the sight of such huge worms as the microscope shows them, and the flies are acting as the only common denominator of the crowd. We are working in a deserted church and the motto that is painted on the rough boards is "Adeamus cum fiducia ad thronum Dei". With some little fiducia (if I must admit it) I went up to one of the few coal mines of Brazil this morning and examined about a hundred miners---but it did not have the appearance of the throne of God--rather the tower of Babel, Polish, German, Portuguese, Spanish and Italian being the languages necessary to success.

The coal is a fat lignite type--with much pyrites, but all in horizontal layers and also without any gas at all, so that the mining is very easy and with no hazard to compare to what we have. The companies have been slow to get started and we are on and in the front wave of surveyors and exploiters--yesterday I saw the foundations of one of the stations of the railroad being built and the only things in sight beside the workmen and the stones were a blue print plan and a Winchester rifle. The trains to this district are running irregularly, with engines such as the General Beadle built in Leeds in 1881 and other treasures of malcoordinated steel which render as usual the virtue of Patiencia a mere *vis* - confused

-than-ever trait of this people! When the trains dont run they always have the hand cars which are run by two men with long poles and they pole the car along at a really surprising rate of speed. They can keep up with a train much of the way, and needless to say the handcars are ~~and~~ much better than the train for

travelling in the clean and fresh air.

An interesting chap I met here last night is a Rumanian engineer who this time last year was a prisoner in Germany. He was shot through the belly in 1917 and got well cheerfully and apparently without much bother, to get it again five times in the legs. He thought that I was a German and I thought the same thing of him so naturally we were very peased to find that stature and blue eyes and a red mustache can mean other things in Brazil. He is in great doubt about the future of Europe and is one of the few minds I have yet encountered who sets a sufficiently large value on the Bolchevist movement. It is amazing to me that people who have been taught all their lives that the Right will triumph in the end never stop to think that things that last any time at all usually have some considerable value and are not wholly bad----but I find many who think that there is no advantage in Bolchevism at all. The Rumanian said that it was spreading just like Christianity--- a remark that has a striking flavor. Much of what we consider as important now will be forgotten in the interest which Bolchevism will draw to itself in times to come.

Youve no idea what an easy social existence there is here. There is no repression along our lines. One of my guardas referred to his amour propre as his character and I am inclined to agree with him as I think it over, for there is no such thing as self control, nor any idea of state service or the common good. Work begins and ends when it pleases among the natives, and they simply dont know what application to work as an affair of the will is or can be. My guardas are no end proud of the fact that they are not as the others and are I think really grateful for the discipline they have received.

Well, I must cease this drool and go back to mines. The fourteenth member of a family of 15 has just come into the room to be examined. All Italian peasants at present 8 years here but not yet speaking Brazilian. I can understand the immigrant problem better now that I have been one. YLB Alan.

The table has been cleared and to the music of a huge German music box, which will play the Wedding March from Lohengrin, or two Faust Waltzes or the march from Aida, twice without any encouragement, I find a pleasantly long Brazilian evening ahead of me and nothing exciting to do but dodge the millions of insects that arrive around the lamp every night.

The day was typical. Last night the local chefe politico a rather pleasant apoplectic Italian, who is distinctly first in the little Iberian village, promised us three horses and a carroca for four persons, to go an 8 hour journey to a place called Araxangua, of which I know really nothing except that it is low and hot and that we ought to be able to examine and more or less cure about 500 persons in about five days. The horses and the cart were to be ready to go in the coolness of 5 A M . Muito melior-----etc. In a miserable dark at about 4;30 Big Ben went intermittently mad, and mostly for the sake of example I got up quickly and made enough racket to make my men get up too. Dawn was very quick-- a lovely cloudy pink affair among very bright fresh green palms. We are quartered in a deserted church where we have finished examining 400 in 3 days-- nearly a 100% infection. So it was to the hotel we had to go once more to wash and to get our coffee. All bags and baggage were ready and we waited and waited and waited till suddenly at 7:30 a funny little cart turned up , of a size to carry 2 only , and no horses at all. So I had what Cannon describes as " ten minutes fury" ( speaking mostly my native tongue), and arranged for the stereoptican to go on ahead and three of us to wait here till we could get conduicao. Set Bonini at work on the Parana statistics and went off with Silveira to the mines.

There we met the Mestre de Mina, Sr Comacho, a little Spaniard who has managed a French phosphate mine in Tunis and mines in the Andes. He speaks French, Arabic, Italian, Spanish and Portuguese well enough to be articulately angry in each, and who is an interesting fellow; besides having a lovely madonna of an Italian wife. She was always at me with a basin

of water, a fresh towel and good Paris soap, while  
I was examining the miners: Indians Germans Slovaks  
Italians Portuguese Spanish Poles Russians and Bra-  
zilians. No other equal courtesy under such conditions.  
After we were through he showed me a picture of the  
Andes which looked so much like Pikes Peak from a  
place near Glen Eyrie! We went down to the mine  
and ducked along the stoop-shouldered galleries where  
wet coal was picked out by big pale tired men. Of all  
inhuman work I can recommend for inhumanity coal min-  
ing:- but after all these men have it easy compared  
with the miners in the U.S.-- for there is here no  
fire damp and the seams are all horizontal.

After almoco I slept an hour and was wakend in  
much the same way I imagine people go to Heaven if  
that custom actually obtains: right in the middle of  
perfectly satisfactory realities such as dreams you  
suddenly hear a huge and inescapable "DOUTOR GREGY!"  
and you open your eyes upon another world.

More miners examined and then a thunderstorm  
which caught us in the middle of the matto and some  
took off these useless clothes and had half an hour  
in the buff. Then back to eat and play the musicker  
and talk with Georg Jonescu, a great husky Rumanian  
engineer who is a kindred spirit from having been  
very much more than I in the war. Then too but eight  
months in Brazil, he is a person with whom I can  
freely discuss the country in French-- a great relief  
after three or four months among only those to  
praise ranges all the way from biscuits to ambrosia  
and blame or unfavorable comment is between stupidity  
and deliberate insblence.

About 28 kilometers from here there is a pack-  
age of mail for me: all the news up to October perhaps.  
How curiously some people slip over the horizon when



others don't ! Like old clothes nearly everyboddy fades to a rather better but less vivid shade. I think it is when you you return to them actually that the queer <sup>p</sup>sotty effect appears as if a part of them was covered over and thus protected. The great speed with which communications are cut id a great argument for living in your own home town isnt it? And yet somehow or other I like to snatch at kindred spirits and try to keep them instead of wearing myself down or up to a humdrum familiarity with a fellow townsman who in all but houselots and subways might as well be 500 miles away. The people I have known and liked and now dont see at all are the only permanent fixtures among my acquaintances. Queer effect!

By the 27th we shall have examined and treated about 2000 men women and yowling children, and will be on our way to the German section Blumenau and Flakianspalks Bruske. Then a month in the mountains and then a month in the island of Sta Catherina.

Well I burble on -- " Easy writing Sir makes damned hard reading".



Showing a cured patient  
his wounds





Greetings to Commission...

Ararangua Sta Catherina

Brazil

I cannot remember for the life of me whether I wrote you once before or not: my good intentions are of such a vivid character that they pass at times for reality. But at any rate I wanted to and now, having the chance while people are not coming in very fast to be examined and treated I'll take a chance on being a repeater. Tis at least better than a continuous--- I have been buying alarm clocks of late and the lingo clings.

At present we are on a survey of this state to see what fraction of the population has hookworm and how it is distributed among the people. I have five trained Brazilians as helpers and a Bz doctor as my team. We have portable and at times insupportable beds, railroad passes for anywhere that the R.R. goes, and the occasional honor of a special engine of our own, and the wilds are ours for the asking. We go anywhere that from a distance has the reputation of being a good place to find heavy infection and usually we find it. Good-- we examine about a hundred people a day, treat the sickest, give a magic lantern show with lots of lurid and forceful pictures and show 'em how to avoid the disease in the future, and later on if the place is valuable from a strategic point of view there comes a gang of ten or fifteen trained men nurses and a doctor under American direction and the region is really cleaned up at the rate of about 1000 a month. Medical prospecting is what it amounts to, and it is pretty darn good fun.

Day before yesterday a trip from Cressiume to this place up over some low hills and down onto this extraordinary smooth plain, a trip on horseback beginning at 7 and ending at 5 in the P M in sunlight poisonously hot-- but with lots of exercise and diversion for all that. This is low coastland and is well away from civilization-- all along

the road I saw in the adobe houses women with spinning wheels and looms going about our great-grandmother's business. We stopped in a ruinous little roadside store for almoco which is an eleven o'clock breakfast and after the meal the owner said that his wife begged a consultation. After I had talked to her and arranged for treatment, I asked him how much was almoco. With all the bucolic subtlety of wit that you can imagine he said "AH Senhor Doutor how much is your consultation?" I told him it wasn't anything-- and greatly pleased with his ruse the poor man said "Entao precisa pagar so a cerveja" (Then pay only for your beer).

Life is delightfully simple here. The hotel keepers daughter last night returned from a dance she had been to and came into the dining room, a very pretty little North Italian and shook hands with all the guests in a grave polite way-- but immediately brightened up when somebody asked if the dance was good. It was eight hours hard riding away from here-- at Nova Venizia, and was a big party on the anniversary of Nossa Senhora de Boa Vista; everybody from far and near, eight hours in the saddle as a preparation for all night dancing! Her mother every morning comes running from the kitchen almost wringing her hands with anxiety about my coffee, and I have been no Turk about it -- it's much better than what an X would get me at the Ritz! And such guava jelly! And cheese. Yo HO.

On this job all round the State till March and then I suspect to the North-- the Bahia region, the Brazil of the geography books, boas and parrots and monkeys and politics.

Gosh! This time anno passado I was in Paris having an extraordinarily agreeable leave---"and now just look at the poor dam thing".

Well it is a long cry since Sao Paulo where I think I wrote you last or first or at least once. Now I have a wild ambition to write to a few of me old and honorable friends and tell 'em what goes on.

This is in a town called Ararangua in the State of Santa Catherina, sufficiently removed from the ordinary cascades and whirlpools of progress for it to be merely the rule to see old women seated on the floor of the houses carding spinning and weaving their husbands and their own clothes and dyeing them with crude but beautiful vegetable dyes. We are here on the usual job of finding out the percentage of infection with hookworm and here up to the present have examined in the three days previous 500 persons and are well on the way to a hundred a day till our 800 are completed and our treatments finished. Thus wandering on one week medical stands throughout southern Brazil I have already spent 5 3 months and have the same amount of time to go. After March I may go to the North, i. E. the real tropics and see the Brazil of song and story, with alligators boa constrictors and monkeys and politics --- 'n evrything.

At present writing in the Camara Municipal of the town where we are doing our work and evry minute or so arrives a new sick one--- the infection is close to 92% --- to have me jab him in the ear and punch his side a bit and ask him a few improper questions and then send him forth wondering at the sight of the first Englishman he has ever seen---we make no distinctions between the English and the Americanos here. They all have very red noses and red mustaches and talk a very loathesome gutteral talk. There was a very amusing but very pale little rascal in here yesterday with his father and he didnt like me a little bit. He kept turning to his father and saying " Papai, chega ! Vamos embora !"

*x which can be loathesomer when they are angry.*

for which the translation is "Father~~x~~ this is enough lets get out of here" But it has a funny flavor because 'chega' is what you say to a person who helps you to tooo much meat or beans---which is frequently the case here.

Last night very nearly all night long I heard the wild weeping of the father of the dona of the hotel who was over in a neighborly jail with senile dementia, weeping and orating and yelling bits of the past history of Italy at the top of a very a very hoarse voice. He was not a prisoner-- they have not the instincts for restraining eachother in Brazil that we have-- he was just there because having him in the house is a bit thick for the guests. But Gosh what a hellish noise. SACRRRRAMENTO!

This is a high alluvial plain, the town consisting of pretty pink or yellow or robin's egg blue plaster houses scattered round on one vest big absolutely smooth lawn of bright green grass. No roads at all. Of course it is beautiful and the distant sharp irregular mountains in a big semicircle and the sea at our backs-- well I have only to remember Commonwealth Ave in November to know that is mean to go any further . But dont forget that until you cut your thumb you never knew what it was for--- and until you go without speaking English a month or two and without letters for a month ---you dont know the advantages of Boston even in the winter time. I look forward to hearing a word from you for this same reason and in the meantime a very Happy New Year to you.



It is nine o'clock-- the local equivalent of our midnight -- and I am finishing a long and rather busy day. Next to my cubicle a young Italian is having occasional epileptic convulsions as a result of a brain tumor, outside an old man in the municipal jail is raving at the top of a very hoarse voice--the second year of a senile dementia, I have just been through a bog or two on a visit to a man with a broken ankle, a woman with endocarditis, a man in the last hopeful stages of TB, and another with spastic paralysis, ---leaving four others till tomorrow. Today we had a hectic time with 350 patients all treated to the cure and twas the darnedest job I have done since the walking wounded at the 10 C.C.S.

I am doing what the old ladies think is a tremendous lot of good ! Well- I know it is not that , but it is a comfort to know that I might be waiting like a hungry spider in the U.S. to do the same and then very doubtfully to charge for it! I have given up the idea I once had that medicine is an honorable affair. Why is it creditable to get up at night, to have all the fleas that once starved on a Brazilian, or to make long explanations to a neurotic ? A golfer cannot legitimately pity himself for the difficulties that make the afternoon worth while. In other words this job is too good fun to be creditable. The big difficulty is that the brain tumors stay brain tumors and the old man raves on --- I sometimes think that Jesus Christ had it pretty easy with his miracles--- it is no fun to have people brought twenty miles to see you and then to be helpless. But the other work which I know is worth while makes a fly wheel to carry on by --- and so it goes on, at times with great pleasure.

Of course the pleasant part of today was getting some letters from home. One from you which was on the edge of starting out for an A.M. and even in spite of the indecision ever so much cheerfuller than the ones when you first got home . I dont want to inhibit them at all but the two before made me feel very low--

it seemed so easy for me to flee the country which was not in the least real to me at the time-- whereas you had to stick it.

What do I think of the way the country received and supported Wilson? " And he went unto his own and his own received him not"---it reminds me of that a little. It gives me the same sensation, as I had occasion to remark to English 12 (I don't know how Cope got me into it), the same sensation you have at the the Mass. Gen. Hosp. when after staying up all night trying to save the life of a case of bichloride poisoning say, the ignorant family uneasy at the novelty and the strenuousness of your efforts decides that you are experimenting and that it is somehow wrong and proceeds to take the perilously sick one home--- you know to die. But they prefer the known to the unknown---,it takes a man to keep confidence in a pal plan instead of a custom when there is a crisis at hand. All good will and ignorance--- on the part of the people in the U.S. and sophisticated ignorance in Washington among our Senators. My God was there ever such a dearth of brains mixed with charity! I am bored at the whole business, and a good deal more than bored when I think of what used to be taking place in the C. C. S. But how little did I imagine what Ypres must have been in '15 from reading about it in Brookline---it was Ypres that made me understand. I suppose it is the same with Lodge and CO. I think that it is preposterous to treat a President with sullen resentment and distrust in March when American solidity of sentiment could have enabled him to dictate decent terms, and now to accuse him of being weakly overwhelmed at Paris. We have had our fling at being Saviours. I never knew a successful Saviour who was afraid of losing himself: incredulous ignorant timid Senators and 100% Americans .... pish !



No one ever tries to run anybody else here in Brazil. There is complete personal liberty if you have the money. If you haven't there is always a government job or a relative to live on--- and the interesting thing is that when no one makes an effort to progress there is absolute apathy towards any triat that is unprogressive. If a child of eight does not care to take the remedy -- then the Father says that the menino nao quer--- and there is not even the implied apology of a shrug of the shoulders. They put people in jail only when it is not profitable in the real sense of the word to have them out. And you can do what you like. They just look on and talk--- but more than this nothing. And talk! An educated man who cannot harangue is NOWHERE. I have heard my doc Remigio hold forth on the cause of the failure of Brazil to take a leading place in the world for 45 minutes at a stretch-- fairly screeching at the politicians and their favoritism--- and the next day he hints that we must certainly do a survey of Tuberao, for it is the home town of the head of the local Health Dept. and Dr Ferreira must keep his local prestige.

Last night after it was good and dark I went with the Padre down through a bog and through countless fence rail gates to a casual little mud house where flared a dirty oil lamp in the usual sooty chimney-less kitchen of the caboclo. "O Senhor Tiburcio!" shouted the Padre. "Sim Senhor!" from a timid woman who appeared in the doorway, " Ah O Padre-- pode entrar" in a tired lifeless voice. We went in stooping and there on a bed in the inner room lay an elderly man with his right foot wrapped up in a woman's red and black waist, very dirty and soaked in whiskey of the local evil smelling sort. There were butts of pailli cigarettes everywhere and with an agile snap of the wrist the old man caught crickets as they sallied from the mud chinks in the wall and dash them to the far corner of the room, where with this reprimand they escaped into the mud

chinks again. We unwrapped the foot and there it was, broken in two places-- the meta-tarsals- and very much swollen. He had taken the weight of a falling horse in a queer position. I had "commanded to be constructed" a right angle splint which the padre had with him, but there was no padding.

"Mariazinha ! Venca!" said the man in a low voice. The woman appeared and opened with here teeth a seam in a new quilt and there was plenty of crude cotton. After it was fixed up and we had had a desperate search for three pins all over the house, Mariazinha was told by her husband to bring a chicaras of cafe-- which promptly appeared and we all took some. It is always strong, and frequently very well made, but this was queer for the taste of the crude native sugar they use here. Then while the hoarse shouts of a friend trying to catch one of the ~~MAKAK~~ cavallos for the morrow became progressively nearer we talked about some of the neighbors until it was obviously useless to hope for a horse from Sr Tiburcio and so the Padre and I got up and left. And all quite without rancor--- because quite without ambition--- a funny country. A long walk through the bog in the blackest sort of night you could ask for-- to the house of an old German with a ruinous heart and a very large and mean family. Thence on to another family etc etc at the hour of eleven I was good and weary but possessed of the prospect at least of horses to get out the next day.

The next day it rained cats and dogs and we set out at eleven instead of four and went all along a big river bank with crude fishermans huts with distaffs and spinning wheels in use by countless old crones, and an old Xaron of a native to take us across the ferry. Thence on riding till six on rather a smooth little single footer. Thank the lord I am getting more used to horses: anatomically and psychically.

Pardon my weariness of the flesh. I must to bed depart for it is 5 am we rise on these days of treatment