



From Para to Manaus: A trip up the lower Amazon

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the same direction. Ruskin wrote¹ long since of vapour "falling into ripples like sand." The general likeness is indeed striking, but the differences of detail are also noticeable; which is not to be wondered at, seeing that the cloud ripples are not the counterpart of the rippled sand but of the whirling water between the sand ridges. How then shall we see the form of the aerial ripple mark where there is nought but the blue sky? Simply by reproducing our photograph as a negative (Fig. 9). With this compare Fig. 10, an ordinary (positive) of the wave-formed ripple mark of the strand, taken at Montrose, N.B., March 1900. Note the astonishing similarity of the sharp topped ridges of still air (which project upwards from the lower air layer, between the revolving cores where the clouds are) to the knife-edged ridges of the sand. But most remarkable of all is the precise correspondence of the confluence of ridges, wherever the wave length of the ripple mark is about to change *per saltum* (for the wave length of ripple mark increases in "multiple proportion," three ridges merging into two). And here our sky photographs are superior to, and throw light upon, our sand ripple mark photograph; for the latter had to be taken when the rippling action had ceased and the troughs were no longer filled with whirling water. Fig. 8, however, indicates what is going on where the ripple ridges are being merged, for the lights and shadows of the cloud indicate the activities of the working parts of the system. The rippled cloud here photographed, and consequently the true air ripples also, are symmetrical. This is not always the case, the clouds are often opaque (thick) at one edge and transparent (thin) at the other.² In this case the form of the aerial ripple mark must be more like that of current mark, of æolian sand ripples, and of tidal sand ripples.

FROM PARA TO MANAOS: A TRIP UP THE LOWER AMAZON.

By REGINALD KÖETTLITZ.

THERE has for a considerable time—for the last thirty or more years—been a steady and remunerative trade carried on between Liverpool and Northern Brazil.

Two British companies, owning the Booth and Red Cross lines of steamships, have during that time sent ocean-going vessels to trade with the towns upon the northern coast as well as up the Amazon river.

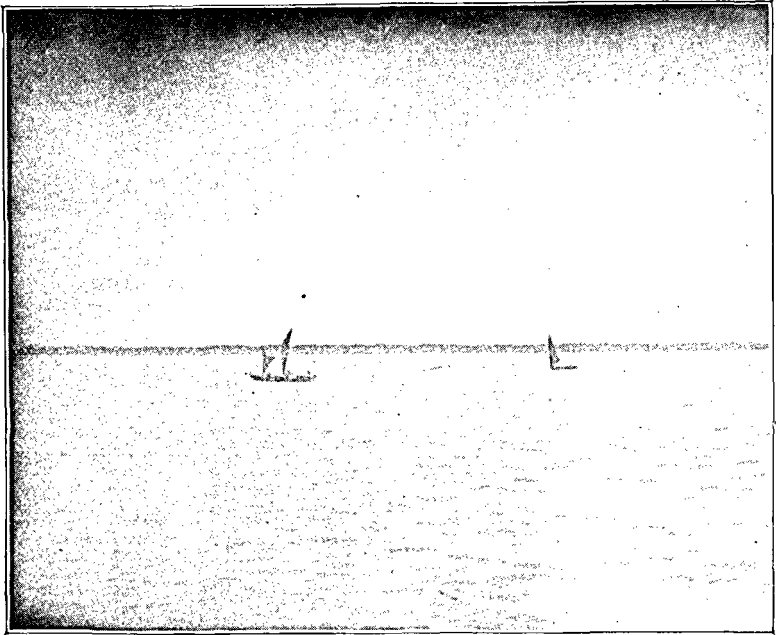
For long, Manaos, a town situated nearly a thousand miles up the river, was the limit to which their ships ascended; but now they have regularly monthly steamers which run from Liverpool and ascend it as far as Iquitos, in Peru, a distance from the mouth of the river of over two thousand one hundred miles.

¹ *Modern Painters*, Vol. v., Part vii. chap. i.

² The author, in *Knowledge*, October 1896, article "Rippling."

Having a wish to see this famous stream—the most magnificent, in the volume of water it brings to the sea, and second only, in point of length, of any river in the world—as well as some time at disposal, I took an opportunity offered me last April, of going, in one of the Red Cross line of steamships, for the trip to Manaus, which trip also included a voyage thence, through the West Indies to New York, and back again by the route by which we had gone out.

Though the opportunities for studying the people, especially the Indians, as well as the natural history of north-eastern Brazil and the lower Amazon were very few, I propose to give a short account of facts



Sailing and Fishing Boats. Para River.

observed, together with information gathered during the South American portion of this voyage, in the hope that some of the matter may be of interest to the members of the Scottish Geographical Society, and some possibly even new.

After a run of ten days almost directly south-west from Madeira, the low-lying land of the Brazilian coast is approached at Salinas, some distance east of the mouth of the Tocantins river, or eastern mouth of the Amazon, as it is sometimes called. Here a lightship is stationed, and here also the pilot is always taken on board from the pilot schooner which lies off this point for the purpose.

The navigation from here to Para, our first port, becomes somewhat intricate because of the banks, which are formed by the mass of material

brought down by the rivers, continually changing in position; indeed, the whole of this northern coast, being low-lying and very imperfectly surveyed, necessitates a wide berth being given it by a ship, and without a pilot causes the skipper to have a somewhat anxious time there. Wrecks are far from infrequent.

Steaming west along, and at some distance from, the coast for some hours, the Tocantins river mouth is reached and entered; soon the land on the east or right side becomes increasingly distinct; fishing-craft, canoe-shaped, of small and characteristically Portuguese-Brazilian type, appear; details upon the land show up; huts, houses, and small settlements, seeming nearly buried in the luxuriant forest growth which already clothes the banks down to the water's edge, dot the shore; then on the left side the margin of the low-lying and marshy island of Marajo can be traced, and soon becomes more distinct; then smaller islands all covered with forest are passed. On the right bank the houses and settlements become more and more numerous; some of these now have wooden piers jutting into the river, alongside of which steam ferry-boats and small river steamboats are lying and landing their human and other freight; these, also supplied with pleasure buildings and bathing facilities, are the watering-places and pleasure resorts of the inhabitants of Para; they announce to us that we are rapidly approaching this important town. After anchoring off one of the islands some twenty miles north of Para, the quarantine station, and receiving the health authorities, we proceed for a time up the Para river, a waterway and branch of the Tocantins, some two to three miles broad, bounded on the right by a maze of islands and by the mainland on the other, all luxuriantly wooded. Para comes in sight; we pass the small primitive stone fort upon a small rock on the left, five miles below the town, where a shot would stop us had we not the health flag flying, and soon anchor two to three miles below it.

In former times, within the last thirty years, ships could lie close to the town, but now the Para river has become so silted up that there is not sufficient depth of water for a ship of three fathoms draught.

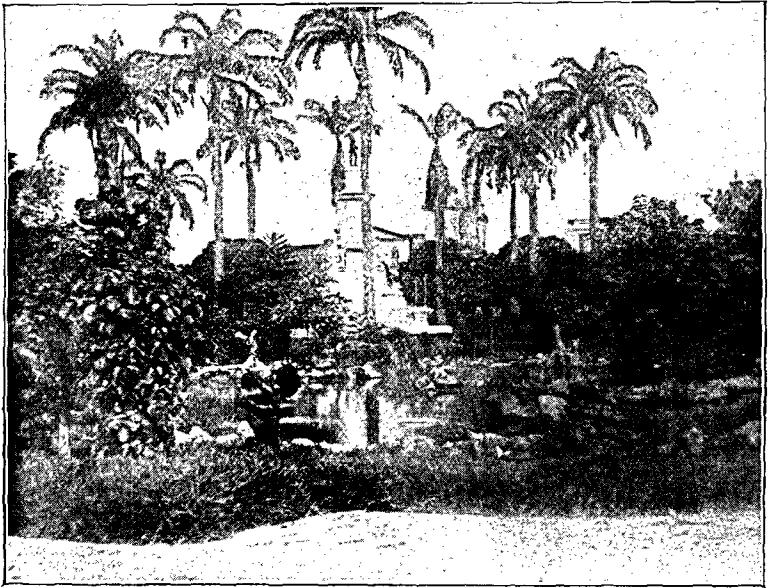
Again—often after great delay—we receive the visit of the sanitary authorities; the customs and other officials follow, after which passengers may land. This has to be done in small sailing or rowing boats, or else in a passenger barge, or lighter, which is towed up the river by a steam-launch or tug; but it is only after endless vexation, worry, and delay of sometimes days—which is considerably lessened if resort is had to bribery—that the long-suffering new-comer can get his baggage passed through the Custom-house, for these (and in fact all other) Government officials are such a self-important, lazy lot of people that private individuals are at their mercy, and consequently imposed upon by these people, whose morals are very elastic.

Belem or Para, the capital of the large state of Para, is an important town, situated upon the Para river about a degree and a half south of the equator, having an estimated fluctuating population of some eighty to one hundred thousand. The site, reclaimed from the forest, is a slightly undulating flat, apparently composed entirely of river alluvium.

The temperature is equable and far from excessive, when its proximity to the equator is considered, for it ranges between $78^{\circ}0'$ and $90^{\circ}0'$ Fahr., being rarely, I believe, much below the former, or much above the latter; this fortunate condition is brought about, for the most part, by the cool sea breezes which blow so frequently from the north-east and east.

The houses and buildings are considerable in number, substantial and well built; some, indeed, of the public erections being handsome and imposing edifices.

The common building material is in large part a peculiar porous, honey-combed brick, the bricks for which are made in the vicinity; the



Public Garden at Para.

stone and bricks for any buildings which are more substantial have to be imported, largely from Europe—so also are the paving-stones for the streets. These, at least many of them, are well paved; some, the older ones, are somewhat narrow, but many of the newer are fine and broad, and also, for the most part, planted with fine trees—mango and palm principally.

There are several small public gardens and fine plazas within the town, which are well cared for, while in the suburbs are parks and other pleasure resorts. A fine theatre decorates one, and public monuments others, of these plazas. The town is rapidly developing, and the suburbs are being laid out well and fine residential buildings erected in the principal streets. A good and frequent service of tramcars facilitates

rapid transit from one part of the town to another, but they are small, dirty-looking, and often crowded. Mules are, at present, entirely used for traction power there.

Paper is almost the only currency; a few large nickel and copper coins are occasionally met with. This paper money, made in the United States of North America, is so long in circulation that it is almost always, (especially the smaller values, such as 100, 500, 1000, 5000 and 10,000 *reis*), in a very filthy, dilapidated condition, so much so that the values are scarcely decipherable; these the people—tram-conductors, one especially notices—do not hesitate to hold in the teeth and lips, and must be a fertile source of contagious disease. Tram-tickets, which are for the most part made with tough paper, are used over and over again, and also pass as smaller value currency.

The people are a mixed and heterogeneous lot: Whites (principally Portuguese and Brazilians of Portuguese origin, of the darker south European variety), through all shades of yellow and brown, to black. Most of these are half-breeds, crosses between Portuguese and Indian, Indian and Negro, White and Negro, together with mixtures in infinite variety and tenuity of all of these. The hair is also correspondingly variously textured; though universally dark in colour, one sees the lank and straight, the wavy, curly, and all degree of frizziness down to the Negro's woolly pate.

Presumably on account of the predominance among the population of persons with some degree of colour, no disability is caused by colour, all men being esteemed alike there, irrespective of shade of skin.

With this variety in shade, so also a corresponding mixture and variety in feature is in evidence: the long prognathous face and flat, spread nose of negroid type, and the broad, high cheek-boned and somewhat Mongolian cast of countenance of the Indian are very frequently seen, so that it is quite interesting to stand in the streets and examine the passers-by.

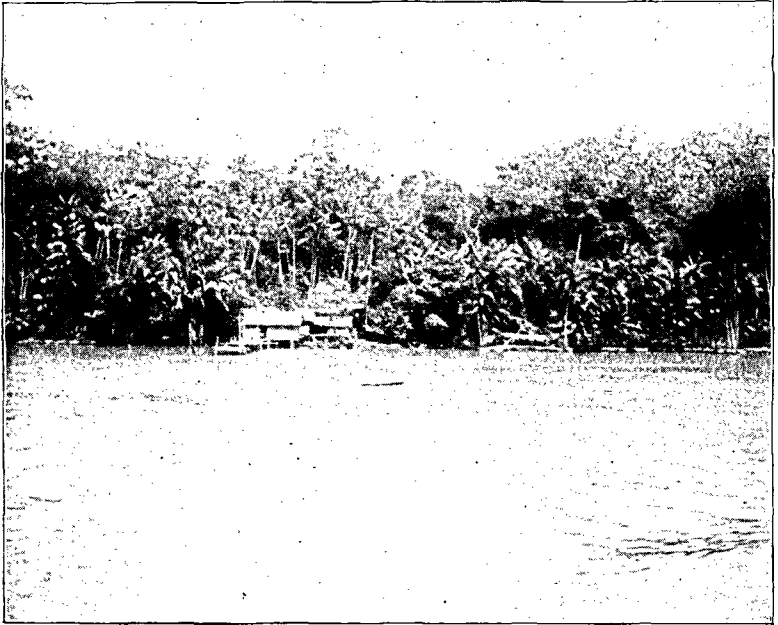
The population of Para is, as already mentioned, estimated at some eighty to one hundred thousand; no census has, with any degree of correctness, ever been taken, all Governmental and official work being of the loosest character. In number, however, it is continually fluctuating, because of the large influx of immigrants from Europe, as well as arrivals from other parts of Brazil, especially from Ceara, a place on the north coast; these also are continually leaving again to pass on to the stations up the main river and its tributaries. A short line of railway, which runs some eighty to ninety miles to Bragança upon the coast, is the only means of travelling any distance otherwise than by boat.

There is a fairly regular and frequent service of steam-boats, which run along the coast to the south, as well as up the rivers; these, however, have, by legal enactments, been obliged to be under Brazilian management, or at least under the Brazilian flag; the result is that they, for the most part, do not pay; the accommodation is deplorable, the boats being frequently very much overcrowded, and dirt—largely because of the filthy habits of the people, even those of the better classes—reigns supreme, with the frequent and natural result, especially

upon the river boats, that the deaths on board during a single run can be counted by scores, and sometimes even by hundreds.

Fevers, both yellow and malarial, are very common, and the former especially causes much mortality among Europeans and Americans, particularly the new arrivals. The trade of Para, especially its export, is mostly in the hands of foreigners—German, British, and American; these have commodious offices and warehouses there. Its principal, almost sole, export is rubber, and one may say its very existence depends upon this valuable commodity; but nuts, cocoa, and other vegetable products are also exported to some extent.

Its imports are general goods, in great part manufactured articles



Baraca or Seringueiro's hut. "The Narrows."

and food, with the consequent result that all necessaries are dear there, and living very expensive. Practically no agriculture whatever is practised in this part of Brazil, though a little stock-farming and cocoa-growing is carried on up the river.

Though possessed of a fair port, the shipping facilities are poor, almost all having to be done by the help of lighters; these are frequently, however, not available, although a fleet of them is kept by the companies who trade there; this again is due to the dilatoriness of the Customs authorities. I saw some eighty 100-ton, or more, lighters lying there for the three weeks I was there at one time, waiting to be overhauled by them; months often elapse before they are attended to. This want of lighters causes ocean-going steamships to have to lie there as

long as three weeks sometimes, instead of the five days they would take to discharge, and is injuring the trade of the place, for perishable goods are frequently worthless when at last they are passed by the Customs.

Hotels, more or less primitive, are fairly numerous, but the accommodation is far from luxurious, nor are the sanitary arrangements perfect. The sanitary conditions of the place are very imperfect, and the water-supply, though said to be good, is frequently insufficient when rain is scarce; this naturally tends very greatly to increase the percentage of mortality, which is however unknown, and the people there delude themselves with the idea that it is low! The town is well lit by means of electric light.

Somewhat like the Portuguese, but more pronounced, is the fondness of the people of Para for fireworks; every evening, and frequently during the day even, rockets are fired off in large numbers, for fireworks of the noisier kinds are the greater favourites. Local *festas* with drinking and dancing are very commonly celebrated, and anything gives an excuse for a cheap firework display.

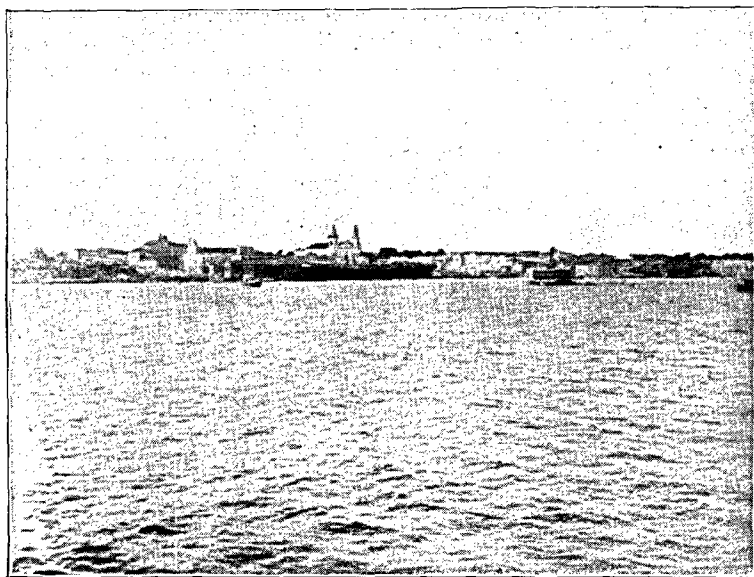
A habit which strikes the visitor to Brazil as very peculiar is the manner which the military have of changing guard at the numerous Government buildings where sentries are posted, for it is accompanied by a savage, ear-piercing yell, which without doubt is a copy of the Indian war-whoop.

After leaving Para one passes through the maze of low, densely wooded islands which lie at the confluence of the Para and the main Tocantin river. Turning into it, one ascends for a short while, some four or five hours, and then diverges to the right or west, and passing through ever-narrowing channels, at last, about twelve hours from Para, enters "the Narrows." Here the country, like that passed through already, is still apparently dead flat, and densely covered with tropical forest. Many islands of all sizes have been passed, but now the way lies through an archipelago of alluvial islands, separated from one another by only such narrow channels that it not infrequently appears inexplicable that there should be depth enough of water in them for ocean-going steamers of more than two thousand tons and eighteen feet and more draught to be able to navigate and pass through them. These channels are so intricate that only a pilot of long training can find his way through them, for there are apparently no vestiges of the slightest landmark. Soon after entering the Narrows we pass Breves, the principal settlement upon the Island of Marajo, where all the rubber upon the island and surrounding district is brought to be sent to Para and exported.

When passing through these narrow channels upon the high deck of a large steamer, the glorious prospect of the tropical forest in all its grandeur can best be seen, and one can begin to realise somewhat how vigorously tropical vegetation grows, and how keen the battle of life is. Emerging from a dense, tangled, almost impenetrable undergrowth, which covers and conceals the ground down to the water, which it also far overhangs, are the trees, many of them in full and gorgeous bloom. First in point of beauty, prominence, and, to the

visitor, in point of interest, are the elegant and graceful palms, which so frequently overtop and tower above the rest: the delicate-looking, feathery Assyee palm, with its abundance of small, hard fruit, the heavier cocoa-nut, besides numerous other kinds, many of which can be readily distinguished from one another, together with numbers very much alike, yet of different species and varying in commercial value, all charm the eye.

Then the cedars, the acacias, the rubber- and Brazilian nut-trees, as well as numerous others which appear more like those familiar to the European, produce infinite variety. These again are frequently covered from base to summit with tangled, hanging creepers which, though to the eye they remarkably improve and beautify the whole,



Manaos—Rio Negro. Part of Town from the River.

are the enemies of, and often destroy, the trees. Many of these creepers also have fine blooms, and so too have the numerous parasites and epiphytes which are settled in the angles and cling to the branches of many of them; then the lichen-covered trunks and fantastically festooned limbs, the lichen- and fungus-grown dead trees and fallen branches—all present a picture of chaotic disorder, wild confusion, fierce strife, as well as of remarkable beauty, which must be seen to be appreciated. Even the water itself is invaded, and the surface along the shore is fringed for yards into the stream with long-stalked luxuriantly green grass and water-weeds, with the tops only out of the water and looking like meadow, but which rise and fall with the waves caused by the powerful wash of the ship as it passes along.

This is the home of the locally so-called "sea-cow" or manatee. Here this silent, harmless, shy, but uncouth-looking beast leads its monotonous and uneventful life, never showing itself, but hidden under water or under the vegetation about the banks. Floating about loose are also patches of this grass-like water-weed, both here and on the main river.

This portion of the country is one of the parts where rubber-trees are plentiful. This is by no means the case everywhere in this country, for though the land is apparently alike in every way, the trees are limited to certain areas. No doubt there are good reasons for this, but these have not yet, as far as I have heard, been elucidated. Rubber hunters' or *Seringueiros'* huts, or *baracas*, therefore dot the banks at fairly frequent intervals; they are situated in small clearings made for the purpose, and just above the water's edge—at least they were in that position at the time of my visit, for this time was during the so-called rainy season, when the river was high. They are raised some feet above the swampy soil by means of short posts, upon which a rude platform is laid, and upon this the hut is built. The inundations which the annual rising of the river causes renders this a necessary precaution. Not infrequently, indeed, the water rises to such a height as to cover these platforms, and compels the family to take refuge in their canoes, of which they have always a sufficient supply; for all extended locomotion has to be performed upon the water by means of these canoes, as the forest being more or less impenetrable and marshy, no paths or roads have been made, except about the immediate neighbourhood of each rubber hunter's labours.

The huts or *baracas* are oblong, commonly simply made with poles and sticks among which the broad leaves of a particular palm are attached and interlaced to form walls, while these support the gable-ended sloping roof, also thatched with the same broad palm leaf. Half, or more than half, of the space covered by the roof is generally left without walls and open all round; the other half has no chimney, though closed by a middle wall from the open half, and what windows there are, as well as the door, open towards the unwallled portion. In this latter portion the family seems to spend the larger portion of its life when at home. Here the cooking and other household work is done. Suspended from the poles which support the roof one can always see the *raidies* or native cotton hammocks, in which the inmates sleep, sit, and lounge, for they are in almost continuous use during the day also. Very little other furniture or utensils are perceptible.

The Brazilian rarely sleeps in a bed, and always prefers to rest where the wind and the breezes can have free play. The life which these people lead is a rather isolated one; it is also far from healthy, and malaria plays great havoc among them.

They are, on this lower portion of the river especially, for the most part of Portuguese ancestry or Portuguese and Indian half-breeds; for Indians of purer blood have more or less disappeared here, and are only to be found farther up the river and in less accessible parts of the country. These rubber hunters are very addicted to drinking *cashasse*, the spirit—a raw rum—made in large quantities in the country.

The method by which the *seringueiro* extracts the juice or latex from the tree, and coagulates it into rubber, may be of interest, so I will briefly relate it.



Seringueiro, machette in hand. Prepared Rubber-tree showing arrangement of cups upon it collecting the latex.

Having found his trees and connected them by means of a path cut through the undergrowth, so that upon each path or *estrada* (for he has several) one hundred or more rubber-yielding trees can be approached,—in the early morning during the season, which is the drier half of the

year—August till January—when the forest is not flooded, he sallies out to make his round, and, *machete* or small-bladed light axe in hand, he visits each tree in turn, and by light blows of his *machete* he proceeds to tap the tree by oblique incision, not too deep, into the bark. This he does in many places upon the trunk, each place having a pair of wounds arranged in a small V shape. Having done this, he takes a small tin cup from a number he has already deposited near each tree and hangs it under each pair of wounds, so as to catch the white cream-like latex or juice which exudes, and which runs for about four hours before it stops; the arrangement is well seen in the illustration. Having completed his round, he returns to his hut. Towards noon he sallies out once more, this time taking with him a vessel into which, after visiting each tree again, he empties the contents of the cups. Thus laden he again betakes himself to the hut, where over a fire he proceeds to evaporate and smoke the juice. This is done by means of a paddle-shaped stick which he holds in one hand, and over which with the other, by means of a cocoa-nut shell, he dips out and pours some of the juice; then revolves this stick with adhering latex over the fire, till the watery portion becomes evaporated; more juice is poured upon it, again evaporated; and thus the process continues until the whole of the liquid is exhausted, with the result that a ball of solid india-rubber is adhering to the stick. When the ball of rubber is large enough, the stick is removed and the rubber is sold to the trader when he visits him for the purpose. The best rubber is obtained from the *Hevea Braziliensis* tree, but there are other trees which also yield rubber, but of poorer quality.¹

Of animal life here, nothing but the very occasional howls of a pack of monkeys and the screechings of a flock of parrots, as well as the odd note of other birds, with an occasional glimpse of a vulture or a few partridges, gave any evidence that these forests are inhabited by anything living except insects. These sounds and glimpses are, however, comparatively rare, and most of the time a monotonous and brooding silence reigns supreme both night and day.

Insects are, however, everywhere well to the fore at all times. The night is enlivened by the song of the mosquito as well as its irritating accompaniment, and by the buzzing of beetles; while moths and night-loving flies play about the electric lights on board, and render themselves an easy prey to the collector.

During the day numbers of butterflies can be continually seen hovering over the water close to the banks, and a good many cross the water to the other side. They are here, as I have so often observed in other tropical places, much swifter and more erratic in their flight than their cousins at home, so that it was, I found, much more difficult to capture those, of which there were a goodly number, which passed over the ship on their way to the other side, than it would have been had their movements been such as we are familiar with at home.

¹ An excellent account of this rubber industry, as well as other sources of natural produce, is published in *Diplomatic and Consular Reports*, No. 530, Mr. Vice-Consul Temple's report upon the State of Amazonas.

Other flying insects also visited us as we passed along, perhaps the commonest of which were wasps and hornets of several kinds, the most frequent being a yellow-brown, thin-waisted one, common in all the parts of northern Brazil which I visited, but which seemed to swarm or rather congregate in large numbers, more especially at certain portions of the river. Similar conditions of concentration seemed also to hold good with other insects.

In about six hours the channels began to widen again, and we entered the Huguara *parana*,¹ which is three miles wide, yet not the main stream. Some hours steaming through this, with the same island and forest scenery on either side, brought us quickly into the main river.

Here a glorious stretch of water was spread out on each side, as well



Baraca on Rio Negro.

as behind and before us. Eight to ten miles at least in width could be seen, and yet the distant line of land was not the real bank, but only the islands with which the river is everywhere sprinkled.

It is a curious and solemn reflection, when one gazes at so mighty a river—with a mass of water, in such volume, flowing ever away down to the sea, not in sluggish, slow, and meandering movement, but steadily, silently, with resistless current, which averages some four miles an hour, and continually pouring millions upon millions of gallons, with hundreds of tons of sediment, into the sea,—to endeavour to realise that all this water has descended from the atmosphere, and

¹ Parana is the name given to a branch out of the main stream of the river.

has been collected, for the most part, by the mountains of the Andes, and high lands at its foot, three thousand miles away. A kind of awe invades the mind; the religious instinct is aroused; and the contemplation of so great and magnificent an evidence of the mighty power which governs such glorious works as these compels one to reverence the Author of it all.

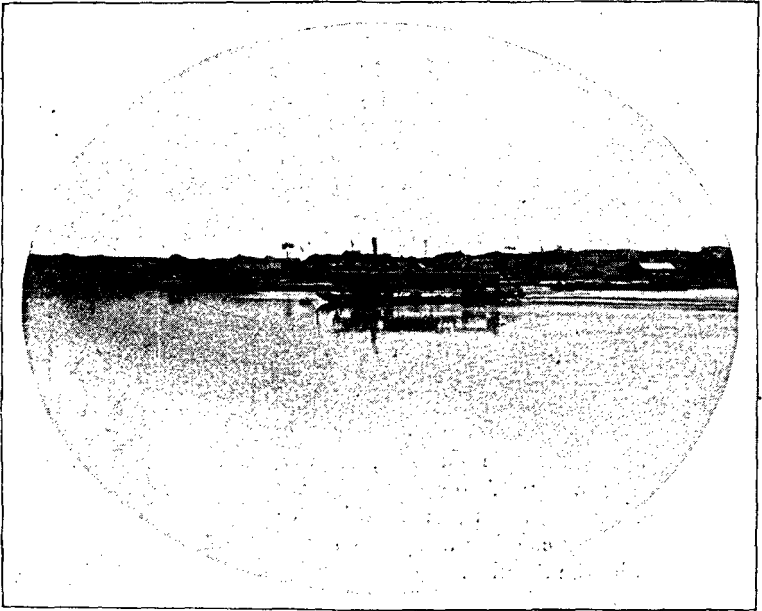
Passing the confluence of the Xingu river we proceeded up the main river, the pilot taking us first to one side and again after a time to the other side, in order to choose those portions of it where the current was not so powerful, and therefore did not impede our progress so much, as well as to avoid the sandbanks and shallower parts. We thus had opportunities for inspecting both sides at fairly close quarters. It is noticeable now, that although the surrounding country remains apparently as flat as ever—though some distance away on the north bank some low hills can be seen—the nature of the forest growth is changing somewhat: here there are fewer palms and the rubber-trees more scarce, with, as a consequence, few huts or *baracas* to be seen upon the banks. After passing Prainha (pronounced *Præenia*), a small settlement upon the north bank, the change became more noticeable; the forest showed natural breaks at rare intervals, and a few cattle could occasionally be seen grazing upon the grass at these open spaces, called *campos* (these are, in my opinion, a marked peculiarity; why should the forest, so potent everywhere else, spare them?), while huts began again to become more frequent; and surrounding them, or in their close vicinity, were small roughly cleared spaces where plantations of cocoa had been planted. These, however, appeared always to be in a deplorably uncared-for and neglected condition, the owners or caretakers seeming to take no thought for the future, for no ground was ever cleared for new bushes to be planted; all we saw appeared to be old trees, nor was there any sign of pruning or the cutting away of old dead branches and twigs from those that were producing, but the man solely contented himself with more or less imperfectly clearing away the undergrowth, probably doing this only because he then could more conveniently get at the fruit and reap the harvest upon the bushes already planted!

The ordinary Brazilian loves laziness, and is so indolent that he will rarely do a stroke more work than he is compelled.

Passing more huts—always of the same class as those of the rubber hunters, though now not raised on platforms, small cocoa plantations, and open spaces, *Cocoa Grandé* is reached. This is a more important, yet small, settlement, again upon the north bank, comparatively well looked after, and has a thriving appearance. Cocoa plantations of more pretension are growing here; the *campo* behind supports a fair stock of cattle, sheep, and ponies; the houses, some of stone, are also more substantial-looking. Continuing our serpentine progress up the river for some distance, and passing *Montalegre*, after which the low hills upon the north side disappear and the country continues apparently dead flat, we arrive off a small town upon the south bank at the confluence of the fine *Río Tapajos*, called *Santarém*. This town stands upon somewhat higher ground, some forty feet above high-water, and has about 2000 inhabitants,

which trade upon Brazil nuts, sarsaparilla, copaiba, and other produce, much the same as in Wallace's time. Many of the houses are of brick and stone, and it has a church, but impresses one as having a neglected and decaying appearance.

Still ascending the river, which apparently does not lessen in width, and passing Paritacuba, a small place also on the south bank, in the country behind which are large shallow lakes as well as extensive *campos*, we reach Obidos, another small town of similar importance to Santarém. This spot, where, however, we did not stop, is interesting in the fact that here is said to be the only part of the lower one thousand miles of the river where both true banks can be seen at one time. It



Old Nile River Stern-wheeler, now on Amazon. Manaus in background.

narrows here somewhat, and I was informed that near by the depth is a hundred fathoms; this may be an exaggeration, but the comparative narrowness possibly causes it to become deeper than usual at this portion of its course.

Probably on account of the condition of high river at the period of my visit, at which time no sandbanks or bare shore were visible above the surface of the water, I saw very little evidence of animal life, other than insect, as we passed along.

Compared with what I saw in Africa last year upon the Blue Nile, where the banks and shores as well as the water teemed with life, the Amazon is sadly disappointing. The Blue Nile was, however, low at the time, and this may, to some extent, account for the remarkable differ-

ence ; yet not, I think, altogether. North-east Africa everywhere seemed to me to be peopled with life, especially of the higher forms, far more abundantly than north-eastern South America. The only animals, besides monkeys, birds, and insects, which I saw there were porpoises, of which a solitary one or several were frequently seen appearing and disappearing in the water, and fish ; these, of which some are said to be sharks, are of all sizes, many being of goodly proportions, and it was not at all an uncommon thing to see boys and men standing motionless in their canoes, bow and arrow in hand, and ready to shoot at any fish which they wished to obtain. Much of this sort of fishing, as well as by means of nets and weirs, is done, and many of the fish are excellent eating. A considerable number have scaleless skins, while their fins and bodies sometimes are armoured with sharp spines. On account of the large and small voracious fish, bathing is said to be extremely dangerous.

Though we know that the Amazon is the haunt of alligators, tapirs, and manatees, not one of any of these did I catch sight of, in or out of the water ; no roar or voice of the ounce or jaguar, puma, or other predaceous animal, rarely only that of the monkey, was to be heard upon the banks night or day. Not a glimpse of deer, pig, or other wild land animal was to be obtained, and altogether, except for insects and few birds, vegetable life was all there was to be seen ; this, however, continued always in the same prodigality everywhere, for, except upon the very steepest and newly fallen banks, nowhere was any spot to be seen unclothed with vegetation. Even the water, for scores of yards into the stream, is invaded by the water-grass and weeds, while masses, some of large area, like meadow-covered islands, had been washed from their moorings and were floating away down to the sea.

Entangled in many of these were frequently large numbers of fallen trees, which often anchored the whole upon a shallow.

In going up and down the river a sharp look-out has to be kept for snags or sunken trees, of which there are large numbers ; the tendency for trees to sink in this river is increased because many of them about the Amazon are of dense, heavy wood which does not float.

Of the birds seen I may mention ibis, herons, ducks, "partridges" or tinamus, black terns, darters, parrots, macaws, toucans, hawks, and vultures, but most of these were only odd examples, and they were not seen near enough to shoot, or to distinguish the details of their plumage. They seemed shy, and not easily approached.

Soon after leaving Obidos, the Parintins hills appear on the south bank ; these are about three hundred feet high, and mark the boundary between the two large provinces of Para and Amazonas, of which last Manaos is the capital, and the limit of our ascent of the river. These hills closely approach the river, are completely enveloped in forest, and form a most prominent landmark.

After a while the small town of Parintins, or Villa Bella da Imperatrix, on the same side, is passed ; this latter name is falling into disuse.

Continuing our way, smaller settlements and huts, the occupants mostly employed in cocoa growing, etc., are passed, and after a while

Tabacal, still on the south bank, being left behind, we arrive off Itacoatiara—the Indian name for the Serpa of the maps—situated upon the north bank, above which, not far away, is the junction of the fine Rio Madeira with the Amazon. Up this river much rubber is gathered. Itacoatiara boasts a church or two, has many substantially built houses, and altogether a prosperous appearance. The population is some two thousand. Serpa is the Portuguese name for this place, but this is falling into disuse also; in fact, the Government is encouraging this, and restoring the old Indian names to the places whose names had been changed.



Going to Market with Goods. Near Manaos.

Passing Itacoatiara, we diverge soon from the main stream, and, in order to avoid the current, steam up some fine, wide *paranas* or side channels between the islands. Here, being somewhat closer to the banks and the channel less wide, insects again visit the ship in greater numbers and greater variety, but the commoner are especially the dragon-flies, which are very numerous, and in the evening, besides the mosquitos, many small grasshoppers and beetles. All this while we had the easterly breeze, which blows almost continually, going with us; thus one rather suffers from the heat, but this is reversed when making the descent of the river; then quite a fresh, cool breeze or wind is caused because of the ship's steaming against it.

Making rapid progress, towards the end of the fourth day after leaving Para, we approach the confluence of the Rio Negro and the Amazon, above which the latter is locally called the Solimões.

At this point there is a magnificent stretch of water; the Amazon bends from the south, and the Rio Negro joins it at the north-west corner of this bend. The most remarkable thing about it is, however, the great difference between the colour of the two waters, and the line of demarcation where the two touch. The Amazon has, as already remarked, a strong current, while that of the Rio Negro is much less; therefore the influence of the stronger current is soon apparent in the fact that the Rio Negro water is quickly lost in that of the Amazon. This is of a muddy brown, ochreous colour, and that of the Rio Negro, as its name would suggest, is of inky blackness, so black is it that in looking down into it the appearance is most extraordinary, while reflections from it when calm have almost the appearance as from a mirror or looking-glass. Upon a still, starlit night this reflection is especially splendid and marked. Yet, taken up in small quantity as in a tumbler, the water is perfectly clear. At the point of meeting of the two waters a fairly straight line separating the two is apparent, which line has many swirls and small whirlpools in it; upon each side, frequently at considerable distances from the line, big patches of brown water will bubble up in the black, and *vice versa*. On the whole it is a sight well worth seeing. At this spot the banks on the north side are higher, and a soft stratified rock appears—a sandstone.

Leaving the Amazon on our left, we then proceed some five miles up the Rio Negro, and soon arrive at the thriving town of Manaos, the capital of Amazonas, the largest state in area of all the United States of Brazil. The town is the centre of the commercial activity as well as of the intellectual and political life of the State, is the seat of the governor, and has a population of about forty thousand. Practically all the professional men, as well as the wealthier merchants, live there, and some time during each year it is visited by almost all the population of the State.

It is well built, has good streets, which are well paved, is lit by electric light, and has a good tram service, the cars of which are driven by electricity.

Several imposing churches, a domed theatre standing upon an eminence, barracks, and well-laid-out public gardens, with monuments here and there, add interest and beauty, while the trees which are planted along the streets afford a grateful shade.

The people are not quite so heterogeneous as those of Para, for the Negro element is not nearly so much in evidence, while Indians of purer blood are far more frequent.

Many of the better-class merchants are Europeans and Americans, the British being represented by several thriving and well-established firms, while British capital controls much of its industry. The principal export is rubber, as in Para, almost its very existence depending upon it. Brazil nuts, cocoa, copaiva balsam, sarsaparilla, and other valuable vegetable products are exported, as well as some deer skins, heron plumes, and dried fish.

One of the principal drawbacks to the prosperity of the place is the lack of regular telegraphic communication with the rest of the world. For some years a cable has been laid up the bed of the river, but this is continually meeting with accidents, being frequently broken by the snags which are so common in the river. Of late the State has, by great labour, cut a road through the forest and laid a line of telegraph in the usual manner as far as Itacoatiara, and this they hope to carry farther, and possibly in time get a line through to Para, and thus obviate these continual breakages.

All transport and extended travel is performed upon the water—for there are no roads in the country, except in the near vicinity to the town



Baraca, with Landing-platform in front. Amazon River.

—and there is a fair service of river steamboats up and down the river, as well as up the various tributary rivers, where rubber is manufactured and settlements formed.

There are several hotels, similar to those at Para, and the sanitary conditions are in a similar imperfect condition.

Indians of fairly pure blood are in the vicinity, but even here one has to go a considerable distance to see them in their more primitive conditions and uncontaminated by the vice of *cashasse* drinking. Those I saw upon an excursion I made at some little distance up a branch of the Rio Negro to a beautiful waterfall, though entirely alone, wore the dress of the Brazilians, and were certainly no more unsophisticated than the lower class Brazilian of town life and European extraction. They were, however, celebrating a *festa*, it being the feast of St. John. Of

course this act also proclaimed them to be Catholic converts. Religion, however, except in this keeping of feasts, is, as far as I saw, little in evidence.

Upon this excursion, by small steam-launch and rowing-boat, I was extremely interested in having an opportunity of travelling, as has already been described by Wallace, among the tops as well as over the tops of the trees and bushes. The water had risen, as it annually does, about fifty feet, and made this branch stream, not much larger than a brook usually, a wide and deep river. When the trees became too thick and numerous as we got higher up the river we had to take to a boat, and by means of the higher trees and branches propel ourselves onwards



Baraca ; Canoe brought out by boy to save it from damage caused by the wash of our steamer.

through them. Under these conditions one can see the great advantages of the light narrow canoe used by the Indians and the way they propel them there. This is done by means of short-handled, wide, round-bladed paddles. One of the Indians sits at one end, while a second is at the other, and the paddle is used close against the side by one on one side and the other on the opposite. But should the canoe contain only one occupant, he has acquired by practice the art of propelling his canoe and keeping it straight and in the right direction, at the same time using his paddle all the while upon one side alone; this is said to be most difficult for a novice. The language spoken here, as everywhere in Brazil, is of course Portuguese.

Space will not allow me to go into further details of what I saw and

heard there. I will therefore content myself in saying that the return journey down the river, because of the help of the current, is performed in little more than half the time it takes to go up, notwithstanding the strong breeze against us; that is, a ship steaming with the same propelling force can go down from Manaos to Para in two or three hours over two days, a distance of over nine hundred miles.

I will just note that in passing north *en route* from Para to New York, when some two hundred and fifty miles from the coast, lat. $7^{\circ} 33' N.$, long. $48^{\circ} 57' W.$, we passed through (for some twelve hours, steaming eleven knots) a patch of almost black water. This was considerably to the northward of the line opposite the mouths of the Amazon. The skipper called this water "Humboldt's Black Water," and said Humboldt could not account for its being there. As there is a current running along this coast towards the north-west, this colouration of the water must be due to the influence of the Amazon, which is deflected somewhat north by the current, and because of its volume extends so great a distance out into the Atlantic Ocean.

REVIEW OF THE ALASKA BOUNDARY QUESTION.

By ALEXANDER BEGG, Author of the *History of British Columbia*.

ALTHOUGH the location of the Alaskan international line of demarcation remains unsettled between the Dominion of Canada and the United States of America, the treaty which defines that line of demarcation or boundary was negotiated and concluded by and between Great Britain and Russia, in a convention held at St. Petersburg in 1825—*seventy-five years ago*.

To arrive at an intelligent view of the subject, it is necessary to go back and review the circumstances connected with the convention referred to, as far as September 1821, when the Emperor of Russia issued an edict, or ukase, which contained regulations relative to trade on the north-west coast of America, on the eastern coast of Siberia, and the Aleutian, Kurile, and other islands of the Pacific.

The Russian ukase, as presented to the President of the United States, occupied nearly ten pages of a closely printed pamphlet, and contained sixty-three sections. The first section set out by stating that "the pursuits of commerce, whaling, fishing, and all other industry, on all islands, ports, and gulfs, including the whole north-west coast of America to $45^{\circ} 50'$ north latitude, are included in the edict for the purpose of granting the same exclusively to Russian subjects." The second section "prohibits all foreign vessels not only from landing on the coasts and islands belonging to Russia, but, also, does not permit them to approach those coasts and islands within less than one hundred Italian miles without the vessels being subject to confiscation, along with the whole cargo." (An Italian mile measures 2025 yards.)