

**LAWS OF THE AMERICAN
REPUBLICS RELATING TO
IMMIGRATION AND THE SALE OF
PUBLIC LANDS, BULLETIN NO. 53**

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BUREAU OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLICS,
WASHINGTON, U. S. A.

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The Argentine Republic.

Of all the countries of America which at one time belonged to the Spanish Empire, the Argentine Republic has in the most satisfactory manner solved the vital problem of foreign immigration and colonization. In the famous speech which, at the meeting of the International American Conference, April 2, 1890, was delivered by the eminent statesman and accomplished scholar, Dr. Don Roque ~~Saenz~~ Peña, the fact was forcibly stated that the Argentine Republic, by her wise laws and clever management in regard to this subject, had succeeded in attracting to her territory a regular and steady current of immigration, which amounted to about 300,000 souls annually, and which in no manner endangered or obstructed either the institutions of the country or the peace and safety of its inhabitants.]

Article 20 of the Constitution of the Argentine nation reads as follows:

[Aliens shall enjoy in the territory of the nation the same civil rights as its citizens. They have full liberty to engage in all kinds of business, industrial, commercial, or professional, and are authorized to own, hold, and possess real estate, acquire it by purchase, inheritance, or any other legal means, and to sell or convey it to others. They are also allowed to navigate the rivers of the Republic, and along the coasts of the same, and to practice freely their own religion. They can dispose by will of the property of which they are possessed, provided that the disposition which they make is not in contravention of the law of the country, and contract valid marriages, subject to the same proviso. They are entitled to obtain naturalization in the Republic if they so

desire, upon application for that purpose and sufficient proof that they have resided continuously within the limits of the country for the period of two years; but this period may be shortened at the discretion of the proper authorities, at the request of the applicant, and upon proof that he rendered some service to the Republic.

By other sections of the constitution the following rights are guaranteed to all residents of the Argentine nation:

Absolute liberty to engage themselves in all kinds of lawful work, industry, navigation, or commerce. Absolute and unrestricted right of petition to the authorities. Absolute and unrestricted freedom to enter the Argentine territory, travel through it, remain in it, or leave it. Absolute liberty to give the public, through the press, their own ideas in all matters, without previous censorship of any kind. Absolute right to hold and possess property of all kinds and freely dispose of it. Absolute freedom of association for all kinds of useful purposes. Unrestricted freedom of worship. Absolute liberty to teach and to learn.

Equality before the law. There are no slaves in the Republic, and the few who existed in 1860 were at once set free by the constitution. The purchase or sale of a human being is a criminal offense severely punished by the Penal Code. Slaves coming from abroad become free as soon as they set their feet on the Argentine soil. No privileged classes, titles of nobility, or personal distinctions on account of birth, profession, etc., are recognized by law. Equality also prevails in matters of taxation and in the distribution of public duties and burdens.

Private property can not be taken for public use, unless by operation of law and upon the previous payment of the proper indemnity. The penalty of confiscation of property is absolutely abolished.

No punishment can be inflicted upon any inhabitant of the Republic except upon regular trial and for offenses which are declared to be such by laws previously enacted, nor can those trials be conducted by special commissions, or by courts different from

those which were of competent jurisdiction under the general laws in force prior to the offense. Absolute inviolability is guaranteed by law, both to the defense of all the inhabitants of the Republic in all their cases, whether civil or criminal, before the courts, and to the domicile of all of them and their private papers and correspondence. The penalty of death can not be inflicted for political offenses.

Naturalized citizens are exempted from military service during the ten years subsequent to their admission to citizenship. But this privilege may be waived by them if they wish, and in that case they may be allowed to render this service.

Article 25 provides as follows:

The Federal Government shall promote and encourage European immigration. It shall have no power to restrict, to limit, or to burden with taxes or charges of any kind, the afflux to the territory of the Republic of any foreigners coming to it to cultivate its soil, to improve its industries, or to introduce and teach the sciences and arts.]

The Law of Immigration and Colonization for the Argentine Republic, enacted October 6, 1876, established a general bureau of immigration, under the supervision of the Secretary of the Interior. To the able management of this office and the liberality shown by the Government in the distribution of the public lands, as well as to the natural fertility of the country, the great success secured in this matter has undoubtedly been due.

This important law consists of two parts: I. "Immigration;" II. "Colonization."

The first part, subdivided into ten chapters, substantially provides as follows:

Chapter I (sections 1 to 3), for the organization of the bureau of immigration and the determination of its duties and powers.

Chapter II (sections 4 and 5), for the appointment of immigration agents in several localities of Europe and America.

Chapter III (sections 6 to 8), for the establishment of several commissions of immigration, subject to the general bureau, to sit