

◆ Massey's Illustrated ◆

(PUBLISHED MONTHLY.)

A Journal of News and Literature for Royal Homes

NEW SERIES.]

TORONTO, CANADA, MARCH, 1894.

[VOL. 6, No. 3.

Chili and the Chillano.

YING like a broad band of ribbon between the Andes and the shores of the South Pacific is the Republic of Chili. Its extreme length is about 500 miles with an average breadth of about 100 miles. Its aggregate area is estimated at 257,000 square miles. Its population is in the neighborhood of 3,000,000. Agriculture and mining are the principal occupations. In the rainless, arid north are situated the famed mines of nitrate of soda. There are about 1500 miles of railway now open.

Valparaiso, the chief city, is the finest port on the west coast of South America. The harbor is spacious and beautiful, and perfectly safe for shipping the greater part of the year. In this harbor, drawn up in lines like men-of-war ready for review, are hundreds of vessels, bearing the flags of almost every nation on the earth, but the United States. Trade is practically controlled by the English, all commercial transactions are calculated in pounds sterling, and the English language is almost exclusively spoken upon the streets. In fact this city is nothing more than an English colony.

Valparaiso means "The Vale of Paradise," but somehow or other there was a misconception in this particular, for there is no vale and no symptoms of paradise. An almost perpendicular mountain ridge forms a crescent around the city, towards the shores of which descend steep, rocky escarpments. Here and there watercourses have narrowed ravines, or *barancas*, as they are called, which offer the only means of reaching the outer world. Along the narrow strip of sand which lies between the sea and the cliffs, the city stretches three or four miles. The rocky cliffs have been terraced as the town has grown, and the city now extends back upon the hills a long distance, no man's house being above another's, and reached by stairways, winding roads, and steam "lifts," which carry passengers up inclined planes like that at Niagara. What roads there are were laid out by the goats that formerly fed upon the mountain sides, and these twist about in the most confusing fashion. One has to stop and pant

for breath as he climbs them, and an alpenstock is needed in coming down.

The oddest thing to be seen in Valparaiso is the female street car conductors. The experiment was first tried during the war with Peru, when all the able-bodied men were sent to the army, and the experiment proved so successful that their employment became permanent, to the advantage of the companies, the women, and the public. The street cars are double deckers, with seats upon the roof as well as within. It seems novel to a stranger to see a woman with a bill punch taking up fares.

Street-car riding is a popular amusement with

the young men of the city. Those who make a business of flirting with the conductors are called "mosquitoes" in local parlance, because they swam so thickly around the cars.

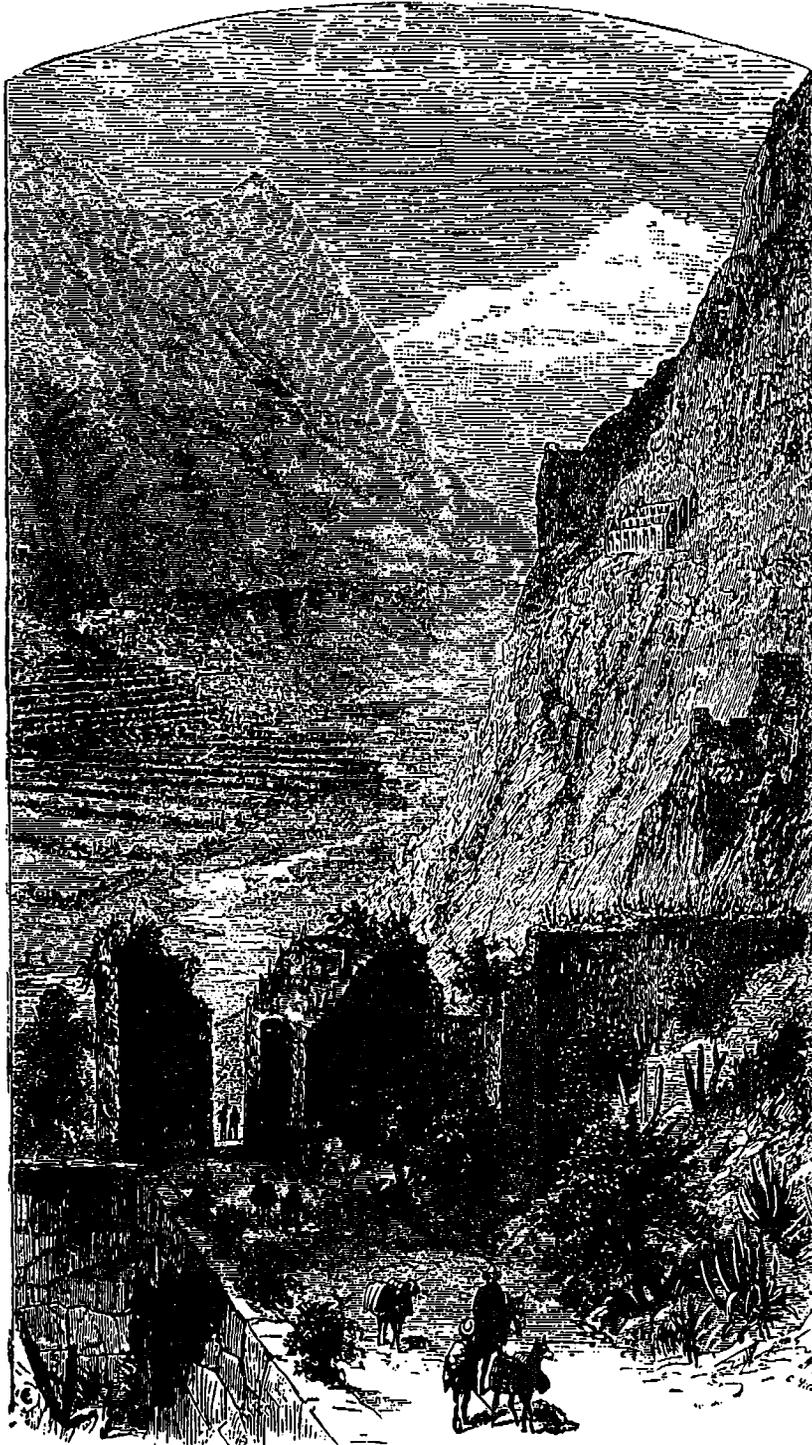
The conductors, or conductresses, are usually young and sometimes quite pretty, being commonly of the mixed race—of Spanish and Indian blood. They wear a neat uniform of blue flannel, with a jaunty panama hat and a many pocketed white pinafore.

The women of Chili are not so pretty as their sisters in Peru. They are generally larger in feature and figure, and have not the dainty feet and supple grace of the Lima belles. Here modern costumes are worn more generally than in other South American countries, and the shops are full of Paris bonnets and dress ware.

But the black manta, with its fringe of lace, is still common enough to be considered the costume of the country, and is always worn to mass in the morning. The manta is becoming to almost everybody. It hides the defects of homely forms and figures, and heightens grace and beauty. It makes an old woman look young, a stout woman appears more slender under its graceful folds, and even a skeleton would look coquettish when wrapped in the richly embroidered manta.

The manta is of black China crape, is square in shape, and about two yards in size. It is folded so as to be triangular, and the centre of the fold is placed upon the forehead, where there is usually a bit of lace that hangs down to the eyes. One end of the manta falls down the front of the dress as far as the knees, while the other is thrown around the shoulders and fastened at the breast with an ornamental pin. Thus usually only the face is shown, and when a maiden wishes to disguise herself, she draws the manta up so as to cover her mouth and nose, and permit only her eyes to be seen.

There is a romantic story about the manta which explains the reason that it is always black. It is said that the custom of wearing the manta originated among the Incas, but that they wore colors until the assassination of Atahualpa, their king, by the Spaniards. Then every women in the great empire, which stretched from the



GATEWAY TO THE ANDES.