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The Araucanians of Southern Chili.

(Illustrated Christian World.)

The most vigorous and powerful of the tribes found in Chili at the time of the conquest was the Araucanian, and as the war continued through the centuries the confederation became more permanent, and many of the tribes were absorbed by the others, so that at the present time the name Araucanian is generally applied to all the Indians living on the west of the Andes, and many of those on the pampas of the Argentine Republic.

The Spaniards were never able to dispossess these people of more than the northern part of their lands, and the Bio-bio River became the boundary line. After the formation of the Republic not a few battles were fought along the banks of that beautiful river, and an army of considerable size was always kept at the forts there. Even yet there are several of these military posts on the frontier, for the Indians are sure to take advantage of any disturbed condition of the country to make raids upon the farms of the frontier settlers and drive off their cattle, horses and sheep. At the time of the Peruvian war serious outbreaks occurred, and during the recent revolution predatory incursions were of frequent occurrence.

Within the last twenty-five years the frontier line has been pushed southward from the Bio-bio River nearly two hundred miles;

he received any encouragement from the officials is not probable, but it is very certain that those same and other distilleries have played a very important part in the rapid march southward of the frontier line.

A few months ago I passed through the country lying between Tewnico and Nueva Imperial, which once was the seat of a very populous and powerful tribe, and where there are still living in their wigwams, thousands of the descendants of the heroic aborigines. The habits and customs of these people are little changed from those of their forefathers of prehistoric times.

Their religious beliefs are very simple. They may be classed as dualists, believing in a good spirit, who is the creator and giver of all good, and an evil spirit, the author of all evil. The good spirit they call Pillan, the thunderer, and the evil spirit, Alhue, the ruler of darkness. They hold firmly to a belief in the existence of the soul, and imagine, as is very natural they should, that the joys of the other world are similar to the highest pleasures of this life. This belief leads them to make provision for the temporary needs of their dead until they can become accustomed to the new life. They bury with the body the things that may be useful to the departed. With the cacique must be buried his horse, saddle, knife, and a suitable supply of wheat, dried meat, and the like. With the housewife must be buried the utensils which she has used in her domestic labor. Over several of the graves in the burying-grounds we visited

high, with forks at the top, had been planted in the ground, and on sticks laid across the tops of these the body was placed and neatly covered over. When a death occurs preparations are at once begun for the funeral, and provisions of all kinds are gathered for the



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entertainment of the friends. If the deceased should be the head of the family or the cacique of the tribe, the body will be kept for months, if need be until the time of fruits that an abundance of chicha (strong-cider) may be provided. On this the friends will keep drunk many days before the debauch is over. When the body is carried out a troop of horsemen ride on before, dashing furiously about, and the body is carried on a kind of litter, the women and children following on, wailing and screaming. Ashes are strewn along the way, that the spirit may not return to trouble the home.

'No Stock in Missions.'

(By S. V. D. Merritt.)

'Is your church far from here, Anna?' I asked, while standing in the doorway, and looking over a broad expanse of monotonous table-land. Nothing in sight to relieve the wearisome sameness, save here and there a gnarled oak-tree. 'No; our church is only four miles from here,' answered Anna. 'But sister Helen's was six miles from her house when she first came to this part of the country. It was a sore trial for Helen not to attend regularly the services of the church, nor to assist in church work; for her husband was at that time in delicate health, and Helen did not like to leave him at home alone. Still, the minister and his wife called upon them very often, and that kept Helen somewhat in touch with church life. This



ARAUCANIAN INDIAN FAMILY AND HUT, SOUTHERN CHILI.

sometimes by the sword, but more frequently by peaceful treaty, and, in reality, very largely by means of the deadly aguariente (whiskey). It is said that there is on file in the offices of the government at Santiago, a document presented by one who was afterwards a Senator, proposing to the Minister of the Interior, in return for certain concessions, to undertake the speedy extermination of the fifty thousand Araucanians by means of his distilleries. That

were large logs about ten feet long, hollowed out on the under side like a boat. High posts curiously carved at the top, with rude figures of human faces or birds, stood at the east, or head, of the graves, as the dead are buried with their faces looking toward the western sky.

At one of the huts we visited, a young girl, twelve or fourteen years old, had recently died, and the friends were gathering for the funeral. Four poles about eight feet