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SOUTH AMERICA.

LET us take a hasty glance at the neglected sister continent, South America, and what do we see? A vast land four thousand miles long and over two thousand in breadth, a stupendous continent indeed, with its seven million square miles of area. Over this vast land mighty rivers roll on to the parent ocean and lofty mountains raise their snow-capped peaks to the clear blue above. Of the mineral wealth, the tropical beauty, and numerous exports of this land we need not speak, nor of the variety in climate, but we would pass on to a consideration of the different peoples found here.

When about three centuries ago the Spaniards, sailing unknown seas in search of spoil and glory, landed on the western coast of South America, Europe for the first time touched the Pacific seaboard of the new world, and found, instead of savages, the Incas with all their wonderful palaces, social and industrial system, and their wealth, accumulated for centuries. These people ruled over the Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia of to-day. Away to the south we find the Fuegians, miserable, naked, shivering creatures, who creep along the sea shore seeking their food. Turning our eyes northward, we see Indian tribes roasting amid the endless forest of the Amazon, tropical children of the same great family, and between these extremes of north and south five million Indians wander across the deserts of Patagonia, prairies of Paraguay, and the Andes uplands, to which they have been driven from their ancestral possessions. The most northern countries are chiefly occupied by the Spaniards, and the English-speaking people are to be found on the vast plains of Brazil.

Returning to the Indians, we find they live a simple life; old and young, leaving their hammocks at sunrise, go to the brink of the nearest stream and take their morning bath, after which the day's work begins, which consists chiefly in the procuring of food and watching for poisonous ants and reptiles. The homes of these people are exceedingly simple, consisting of stakes driven into the ground close together and roofs of palm leaves; glancing within we see the only furniture is the hammocks strung from pole to pole.

These Indian tribes require that their youths should pass through an ordeal before claiming the rights of manhood. On the day selected, the young man, amid the crash of drums, steps boldly into a circle and thrusts his arm, beyond his elbow, into a gourd filled with hornets, wasps, and ants (one sting of the last mentioned

being enough to make a strong man faint). How eagerly his face is scanned by the assembly, but no cry of pain escapes between his clinched teeth; the blood may spurt from his pores, but this gallant youth will not show the white feather. At a sign from the medicine man his arm is withdrawn from the gourd and a large bowl of intoxicating liquor is handed him, part of which he drinks and part is poured upon the ground, after which he is welcomed to his tribe. Though cruel in some respects, these tribes have strong affection for one another; the mothers love their children, yet will bury alive a weak or sickly infant. Funerals are conducted with much decorum. The deceased is dressed in his best clothes and laid in his grave in a vertical, horizontal, or inclined position, according as he has directed, and with him are his moccasins, knife, money and silver ornaments, as well as a small quantity of food. Figures expressive of the pursuits and achievements of the deceased are carved upon a post which marks his resting-place.

As to the Christianity of South America, it is largely Roman Catholic. Here we see the fruit of three hundred years of the Pope's sway, with the result that the people are down-trodden and oppressed. The Sunday is a day given to gambling, holiday amusements, and all sorts of evil, a day that when spent leaves the people firmer in Satan's iron grip, instead of closer to our Saviour and stronger for Him. The sad, sad story of how the pilgrim fathers of South America fought their way through Romish mobs and across the broad Atlantic, only to find themselves in a worse condition than in the homeland, and how they suffered and died for Christ, giving their lives for South America, has touched many a heart. In 1640 the Dutch made an attempt to win Guiana for Christ. However, the brave Moravians, knowing no worse climate existed, gladly gave their lives for Dutch Guiana, and the missionary parties arrived; and one by one they gave their lives before winning one convert, and for the first fifty years every soul won for Christ cost a missionary's life, and to-day we find that two-thirds of the whole Guiana population is Christian! Thus we see the blood of the martyrs has proved to be the seed of the Church.

Leaving the north, we now turn our attention to dark Fuego, and read: "Amid ice, snow, and storm; in small boats, unseaworthy, heavily-laden, crowded; adrift among the awful rocks of Tierra del Fuego; beaten by savage Indians from the inhospitable shore in the long nights of rigorous black winter; forced by furious hurricanes to shelter in dank caverns; their scant supply of food lessening day by day; life itself quickly ebbing away; Allan Gardiner and his six brave companions, pioneers of the Patagonian Mission, bore in their bodies the death-