

## Truth's Contributors.

## A SOUTH AMERICAN CITY.

BY C. H. FOWLER.

Montevideo greets one like a North American city. It is clean, well-built, with wide streets and tall buildings, compared with the buildings which characterize nearly all the cities in this country. In the business part of the city there are many three-story buildings. Most of the business houses, however, are only two stories, while a little out of the business sections the houses drop down to the South American standard—one story. The city stands on an arm of land reaching out between the bay and the sea, and inhales freshness at every breath. The site of the city is rolling down toward the water on three sides. It thus lies up the eye of the coming stranger as if it had nothing to conceal. Its topography furnishes the best possible conditions for drainage, conditions which have been well utilized. The old city near the sea was closely besieged from 1842 to 1851.

In those hard years a new city sprang up around the beleaguered encampments, with shops and stores and churches and factories. After the coming of peace the intermediate space was laid out by the best French engineers, and the two cities rapidly grew into one, on the best ground and after the most improved models of modern times. This space between the combatants is now the most beautiful and desirable part of the consolidated city. It is suggestive that cities, homes, and farms thrive so well on fields where human hearts have been broken and emptied. When wheat thrives on the field of Waterloo, it ought not to surprise us that Montevideo should grow well over the Cordón. The 724 blocks of the old city are now augmented by the 1,293 blocks of the new city. As in many another case, submission secures transformation and translation. Blessed with a climate the best in South America, sitting by the side of the sea and on the bank of the La Plata, looking over her right shoulder across the river to the Argentine bank, sixty-five miles away, and over the left shoulder across the sea to Europe, 6,000 miles away, intrusted with the key to South Temperate America, thus favored by nature, Montevideo must become a great city or make answer at the bar of public opinion.

## A HISTORICAL SKETCH.

Founded by Zavala, governor of Buenos Ayres, on the feast day of the Saints Philip and James (now the patron saints of the city), May 1, 1717, as a menace to the Portuguese, it has had the life of a pugilist and a brigand. At first only a military post, and then a colony whose emigrants were brought in from the Canary Islands, and subsidized in the interest of Buenos Ayres as against Brazil, it has had too much of this blood and spirit to secure the thrift of peaceful industry. Its early growth in commerce was nevertheless marvelous. It sprang up to the first importance almost as soon as it was made a free port in 1774.

Independence from Spain brought troubles as well as blessings. In 1818 Buenos Ayres claimed her independence and competed for the commerce of the La Plata. Situated about 120 miles up the river, she had certain advantages in controlling the trade with her own territory. This checked the rapid development of Montevideo. Her commerce which was \$7,144,000 in 1792, was only \$10,620,000 in 1836. But the heaviest millstone bound around her neck has been her periodical, semi-periodical, habitual revolutions.

Government out here is a game of wolf and sheep, named from the sheep side but practiced from the wolf side. The wolves show this forecast. They do not suck all the blood. They allow the sheep to produce successive supplies of nourishment. Each ruler is expected to place to his credit large sums of money in foreign banks or safety vaults. Then when events forsake him he can forsake his country, fly to his treasures, and leave the flock to the next wolf in order.

The last president, Gen. Santos, whose successor is his own brother-in-law, is said to have passed \$700,000 to his personal credit a week before the inauguration of his relative. As he retains command of all the armies, it is not necessary for him to seek other shores till the army shall have chosen other leaders. Such changes are publicly made and quite generally believed. One finds an excuse for these things in the fact that a people who will submit to such government are incapable of being governed by any better system.

## PERILS, IMMUNITIES, AND NEEDS.

It does not inspire public confidence to have a prominent candidate for popular support stabbed to death in the hall of the president's dwelling house and then see the assassin imprisoned for a few weeks in elegant apartments of the same house, and immediately after that promoted to high authority in the army. As one looks at the door against which the poor victim was held while being repeatedly stabbed, and at the window where the assassin barked in the sunlight, it is hard not to shrug the shoulders and wonder why the sheep wait so patiently for their turn. It is not strange that nearly all the business of Montevideo is done by foreigners. There is another power which the rulers have learned to respect, that is the power back of the foreign ministers. A certain English ship chandler of the city had a steamer and her cargo of coal seized by the government in some freak of fear or greed. But the English minister called the attention of the government to the "mistake," and it was rectified in part. The steamer was returned, though the coal stands charged up to profit and loss.

Next to a steady government and security for property, Montevideo needs a harbor. The immense width of the river makes this a necessity. Schemes are now on foot and contracts are let for the completion by 1890 of an adequate breakwater. If this proves a success it will add greatly to the importance of the city. The public buildings, or buildings in which the public is interested, are of a good order. Clambering up the spiked pole from the storm-tossed tug, we made our way through a company of smiling friends, with Dr. T. B. Wood at their head, who had waited for some hours at the mole to meet us. It was refreshing to receive the hearty greetings of these people whose names as Christian workers had long been familiar in the mission offices at home. We were never more grateful for small favors than for our knowledge, less limited than we feared, of the Spanish language, which enabled us to catch the kindly heart-thrills of these strangers.

A careful and most gentlemanly custom-house officer soon sent us, wet and weary, on our way to the Hotel Oriental. I wish to say that I paid my bill at this hotel with a relish. It is large, with airy rooms, good cooking, gentlemanly management, respectful service, and very moderate charges. Especially moderate as compared with other hotels we encountered in South America.

## ARMY, PRESS, AND PRISONS.

The Cabildo, on the Plaza Constitución, is a good building, used for a senate cham-

ber, court, and prison. The machinery of a condensed government is also compact. As we first passed this plaza we saw a regiment of armed soldiers marching over toward the senate house. The representatives, chosen by the president and presented to the different electoral districts and backed by his governors and political chiefs (a sort of sheriff and chairman of election committees combined), were assembling that day to vote for the president's brother-in-law, whom the president had placed in nomination to be his successor. This regiment was made up of every color and apparently of every race, but the men were well armed and officered. The colored men filled a full share of the line. There is no prejudice shown here against color in the line. We have not found here any other color line.

The Uruguayan army has some popular features. One is found in the fact that not long ago it had 1,000 officers and 1,000 privates. Now, when it is recruited for active operations, it has 6,000 men and eighteen generals. It is no wonder that the army costs the country more than \$500 per man. Prisons are needed for political offenders. It is not always convenient to have them killed on the way to headquarters because they are said to be thinking about escape. Then more than one prison is convenient. If the obnoxious party does not think of escape, or is not supposed to think of it, on his way to the headquarters, and so survives that trip, it sometimes becomes necessary to remove him from one prison to another. This is nearly always fatal. He is sure to be reported as killed in attempting to escape.

A man connected with one of the newspapers not long ago offended a political chief. He was arrested and sent to a certain prison quite out of the ordinary center for imprisoning. It was back of the house of the offended political chief. There was a gateway between his yard and the prison yard. This chief came into the prison yard and with his own hands whipped the man till he was tired out and then told him that Montevideo air would not be healthy for him. The man fled to Buenos Ayres. This is a little rugged. One wonders how such a chief could survive a month. It is proper to remark here that the press of these South American cities is as free as the air. The government is criticized with the greatest freedom and fierceness. It is a part of the status quo. Thus the sword and the pen carry on the old-time strife. The ages are rolled together. The tenth and the nineteenth centuries stand face to face.

## MONTAVIDEO.

## A QUAIN OLD CITY.

BY J. A. L.

Within the limits of this strange old commercial city one has fine opportunities for observing the progress which has been made during the past few centuries. In some of the narrow, crooked streets in the old portion of the town still stand quaint old buildings which were completed before the Spanish conquest. Many of the inhabitants of these ancient neighborhoods have a venerable appearance as well as the houses. They seem to enjoy few more advantages than did their predecessors in the dark ages. But in the new portions of Antwerp and on the site of the old fortifications which once defended the city there are now wide, handsome, boulevards which greatly resemble those of Paris and Brussels. On either side of these new boulevards are palatial residences, the fortunate possessors of which enjoy all of the modern luxuries and conveniences. And

yet it is only a few minutes' ride between the old-fashioned homes where people live as they did in the dark ages, and the palaces where abound the conveniences and other advantages of the nineteenth century. The cross-town horse cars will convey you for 3 cents from one to the other of these sections of the city which so widely contrast with each other. These cars somewhat resemble the average American or Canadian street car. The windows, however, are so completely pasted over with advertisements that it is difficult to look out of or into them. The conductor wears a uniform and has a little satchel slung over his shoulder something after the manner of the British dude. This satchel is his purse. He is obliged to give each passenger who pays his fare a printed receipt, which he tears out of a little coupon book. This arrangement prevents many of those embarrassing differences of opinion as to whether or not the fare has been paid, which in Toronto results in the "firing off" from the car either of one of the passengers or of the conductor himself. The Antwerp street cars sometimes amble along at a fair rate of speed, but at other times they stop short in the street, evidently for no other purpose than to allow every one, including the horses, a chance to rest. When the conductor tugs violently at the bell the tourist imagines that the driver is being signaled to start up. But this is an error. The bell is sounded simply in order to warn the people in the next street that the car will start up before long and will leave them behind if they neglect to hurry. Cabs in Antwerp are very cheap. The fare fixed by law is 1½, or 30 cents for any course in the town or for an hour. Although this is the legal fare the cabman here as in all other Continental cities will murmur loudly if he does not receive some additional gratuity. The cabs contain seats for four persons, but they are not as a rule elegant affairs. A few more springs would add to the passenger's comfort. The cab horses do not rush madly over the pavements. There seems to be a tacit understanding between the cab horse and its driver that life is to be taken easily.

There are a great many dogs in Antwerp, and as a rule these animals are forced to earn an honest living for themselves. They are made to drag along little market carts, garbage conveyances, and other vehicles of limited size. Sometimes the dogs are hitched three abreast to a cart. Frequently the dog has the cart all to himself. The dog is often hitched immediately under the cart, where the danger from collision is the least. The dog who works alone usually expects the pilot or two legged attaché of the cart to aid with an occasional push. Sometimes the dog is attached to a rope fastened to one side of the cart, which he tugs along in the same fashion that the mule tugs the canal boat. The dogs who work in teams seem more socially inclined than those who tug alone. The work, as a rule, removes the dog that love of sport which characterizes the idlers of this species. When on dog carts are finishing the market place the dogs are gathered under their respective masters' feet. They will get up a free fight to the diversion. Sometimes two dogs of great size and position find their way together in the market place, and an interchanging of hostilities which mixing up not only of so of the carts and contain. Inst