



THE BOOK SHELF

"THROUGH FIVE REPUBLICS ON HORSEBACK."

Again and again we are reminded that "truth is stranger than fiction;" and to those who care to have this demonstrated to them by hard facts served up in a form which must be much more interesting than a novel to any person taking an intelligent concern in our world-home, we strongly recommend the perusal of "Through Five Republics on Horseback" by G. Whitfield Ray, F.R.G.S. (William Briggs, Toronto; \$1.00 and \$1.25).

The first thing that appeals to a scrutineer of the book is the wording of the dedication of it: "To my mother, who taught me simple faith, and to my father who taught me to show my faith by my works."

Mr. Ray, as all who have heard his lectures open-mindedly must have felt, has certainly shown his faith by his works; he gave up all the comforts of civilization, endured hardship and privation, and dared death itself among savages in South America to do missionary and exploring work. His story, or rather the short summary of it, was enough to call forth repeatedly the plaudits, and rouse the questioning wonder of the crowd of keen men from all departments of business life, and of all shades of political views, who make up the membership of the Vancouver Canadian Club, the members of which entertained him to lunch on 20th January.

We hope to be able to give a due review of this book another month. Meanwhile time and space only permit us to quote the following facts from "A Preliminary Word:"

"South America is pre-eminently the coming continent. It is more thinly settled than any other part of the world. At least six million miles of its territory are suitable for immigrants—double the available territory of the United States."

"The economic possibilities of South America cannot be over-estimated. It is a continent of vast and varied possibilities. There are still districts as large as the German Empire entirely unexplored, and tribes of Indians who do not yet know that America has been 'discovered.'"

"For centuries priestcraft has had everything its own way all over the continent, and is now at last yielding to outside pressure, but with desperate resistance."

"La Razon, an important newspaper of Trujillo, in a recent issue says: 'In homage to truth, we make known with pleasure that the ministers of Protestantism have benefited this town more in one year than all the priests and friars of the Papal sect have done in three centuries.'"