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# THE DARK CONTINENT .... AT OUR DOORS:

Slavery, Heathenism, and Cruelty  
in South America.

By  
REV. EMILIO OLSSON,  
Missionary to South America.

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With an Introduction by  
HENRY MANN

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REV. EMILIO OLSSON



## INTRODUCTION.

By Henry Mann

No field could be riper for the harvest than South America is to-day for the Gospel of Christ. A vast continent, extensive regions of which are unexplored, and the semi-civilized parts of which are but little known to Christendom, cries out, with the cry of Macedonia to Paul, to the heart and conscience of the Protestant world. While nearly every steamer crossing either ocean to Africa or the Orient bears some message of light to the heathen groping in the darkness of idolatry and superstition, millions of South American heathen at our threshold remain neglected, and plunged in barbarism and ignorance even to a greater degree than when Columbus first landed in the western hemisphere.

The South American savage has become fiercer, his hatred of the stranger deeper, his jealousy of intrusion into his native wilds more passionate and intolerant, than hundreds of years ago; while the condition of the more peaceful Indian in the interior of South America is actually worse than it was under Spanish domination. Members of the peaceful tribes are bought and sold in slavery; they are decoyed and kidnapped from their homes, and sometimes those of the savage tribes are borne away, while young and defenceless, into hopeless bondage, the grown-up males, who might be disposed to resist, having first been shot

down by slave-hunters, after the fashion of the Arabs in Central Africa.

These Indian slaves are carried to the rubber forests, where there is no law to protect them, and are kept at work, with hardly food enough to sustain life,—so greedy are their masters,—until there is no more work in them. Many of them are sent down the rivers with rubber, to perish miserably in the Madeira Falls, which claim numerous victims every year, but none are ever suffered to return to the homes from which they were kidnapped, to tell the story of their wrongs and kindle a flame of vengeance that might sweep from the Gran Chaco to the Amazon.

On the afternoon of last election day, I was standing by the side of the Reverend Mr. Olsson, watching the gay throngs of bicycle riders sweep by on Riverside Drive. "It makes me sad," said Mr. Olsson, "to think that the rubber in each one of those bicycles probably represents a poor Indian's life." The sun was shining, the air was crisp and clear, before us was the fashion, the gaiety, the beauty of New York,—but beyond it all, Mr. Olsson looked at the poor Indian toiling in hopeless bondage in the South American rubber forest, or hurled to his death in the Falls of the Madeira, with no hope in this world, no knowledge of the Saviour, no tidings of the message of Bethlehem, to assuage his cruel toil, or console him in his wretched death. He thought of the millions in darkness in the trackless wilderness, while this great metropolis had pastors and churches for all who might care to hear the message of salvation,—and he was sad.

Will others share his sadness, or shall the answer be,

"Am I my brother's keeper?" North America cannot escape a deep moral responsibility for South America. The Chinese wall of bigotry and exclusion around our sister continent is crumbling. American prestige was never so great as now. Never before were the people of Spanish America so ready to welcome the principles which have made the United States and England the leaders of civilization, the pillars of pure Christianity. Mr. Olsson, who, although a Swede by birth, did important service to the American cause in connection with his missionary labors, during the recent war, has found this out in his thousands of miles of travel. He has seen that the Roman Catholic hierarchy is no longer the power that it was; that it no longer has the hold upon the minds of the people which it once possessed, and that even in places remote from intercourse with the outer world many can be found willing to hear the Gospel, and to welcome its messenger.

It is noteworthy in this regard that one feature of Mr. Olsson's missionary work, which excited surprise and attracted favorable attention in South America, was the fact that he performed his sacred duties without fee or reward from the natives. The common people could not understand what it meant when they met a minister of the Gospel who was solely anxious to tell them of Christ and His teachings, and whose object was not to absorb as large a share as possible of their worldly goods. Their astonishment, however, soon turned into esteem for the missionary and the cause which he so earnestly presented, and they were in all the better frame of mind for listening to the Word of God. Under any circumstances, the seed

thus sown by the Reverend Mr. Olsson cannot fail to bear fruit; but his path through the wilderness will soon be obliterated, should his work not be followed up in a thorough, earnest, and systematic way, with his invaluable experience, to point out the road, under the direction and guidance of Almighty God,—for He who takes note of the sparrow's fall cannot be indifferent to the fate of the millions of poor Indians, and hardly less ignorant Spanish-Americans.

It is worth keeping in mind, also, that the very survival of the civilization, such as it is, which exists in the interior of South America, may depend on the evangelization of the savage Indians. The independent, warrior tribes of the Gran Chaco and the Amazonian forests are not, according to the best evidence that can be obtained, declining in numbers. On the contrary, there is reason to believe that they are increasing, and becoming more and more of a menace to the Spanish-American element, which, as a matter of fact, is retrograding. Should a Tecumseh arise in South America, and gather the savages into a coalition against the dominant race, he would probably be joined by many of the tribes now called peaceful, and perhaps even by multitudes of the half-castes, who form the rank and file of the armies of the South American republics.

It is not going too far to assume that some of the weaker governments would disappear before the onslaught, and the task of redeeming South America be made immeasurably more difficult than it is now. This spectre of a great Indian uprising against the whites is ever-present to the minds of the intelligent

rulers of South American states, and so anxious are they to remove the danger, that they would welcome, Mr. Olsson believes, the evangelizing and civilizing of the Indians even by Protestant missionaries. They care not so much for the religious faith in which the Indians would be trained, as they care to see them tamed and disarmed, and no longer a menace to the peace of South America and the security of the dominant race.

On the other hand, it is not to be forgotten that South America is the very citadel of Romanism, and that while toleration has triumphed in Italy, and while even Spain has been compelled to recognize the right of Protestants to worship in public, free, at least, from legal molestation, in parts of South America this freedom is still denied, and open persecution and secret assassination menace the Gospel missionary. Mr. Olsson was more than once in danger of losing his life at the hands of men incited to violence, as he had reason to believe, by priests who wished to get rid of him, and he incurred fully as much peril from this source as from the savages of the forests. He has no desire whatever to convey the impression that the priests in general, or their superiors, would approve such methods of preventing the spread of the truth; but he feels it is his duty to state that this form of danger does exist, and that the motive is the same as that which prompted the silversmiths of Ephesus to arouse the populace against the apostle to the Gentiles.

A vast amount of the wealth of South America is in the hands of the Roman Church, and of individual

ecclesiastics, while Protestant missionary efforts must depend almost altogether on contributions from Protestant countries, which, compared with the resources of Romanism, are as a rivulet to the Amazon.

Mr. Olsson has a practical and well-defined plan for Gospel work in South America. To labor successfully among the Indians of the forests, it is necessary to be acquainted with their various dialects or languages, and he would establish in Buenos Ayres, or its vicinity, a school of interpreters, where the study of those languages could be conducted. He would also establish a training school for Indian children, where they might be educated both in Christianity and in forms of useful industry, to go later among their fellow-tribesmen, and spread the knowledge which they had acquired. While this is the fundamental part of the work, Mr. Olsson would not stop here. He aims ultimately, with the blessing of God and the assistance of those who are willing to aid from their substance in the spread of the Gospel and the betterment of humanity, to civilize the savage tribes and improve the material as well as the spiritual condition of the semi-civilized tribes, by providing employment for them suitable to the climate and the other conditions surrounding them, with fair remuneration for their labor, and humane and honorable treatment,—such as would convince them that they were not looked upon as “brute animals,”—the favorite Spanish expression for an Indian, but as human beings, whose rights are respected and whose welfare is safeguarded by their fellow men.

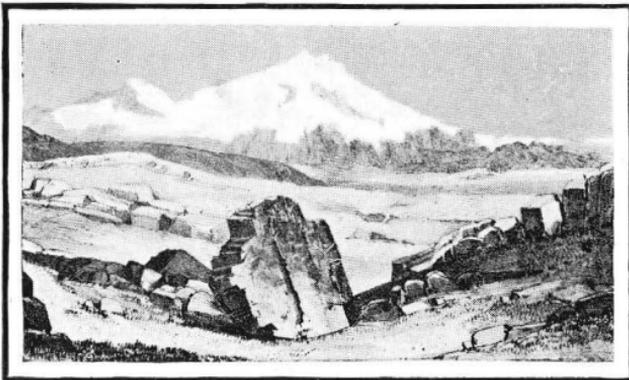
It is a grand idea, an aim worthy of another Livingstone,—the evangelization of a continent;—but no

one who has listened to Mr. Olsson in the pulpit or out of it can doubt his sincerity, his earnestness, his devotion to Christ and His Gospel, and the redemption of the races now dwelling in darkness in that vast region of the western hemisphere. He has been offered opportunities to go to Cuba and to the Philippines as an evangelist, but his heart is in South America, and there, if it be God's will, he will continue to the end to strive in the cause to which he has devoted his life. What dangers lie before him he knows not. Whether, like Livingstone, he will breathe his last prayer in some savage village, far from home and kindred, only the Creator can foresee; but that he will go forward with the work he has undertaken, in simple faith and dependence on the Divine protection which has heretofore shielded him amid savage beasts and men even more savage, is assured.

## CARRYING THE BIBLE INTO THE FORESTS

*From "The Christian Herald"*

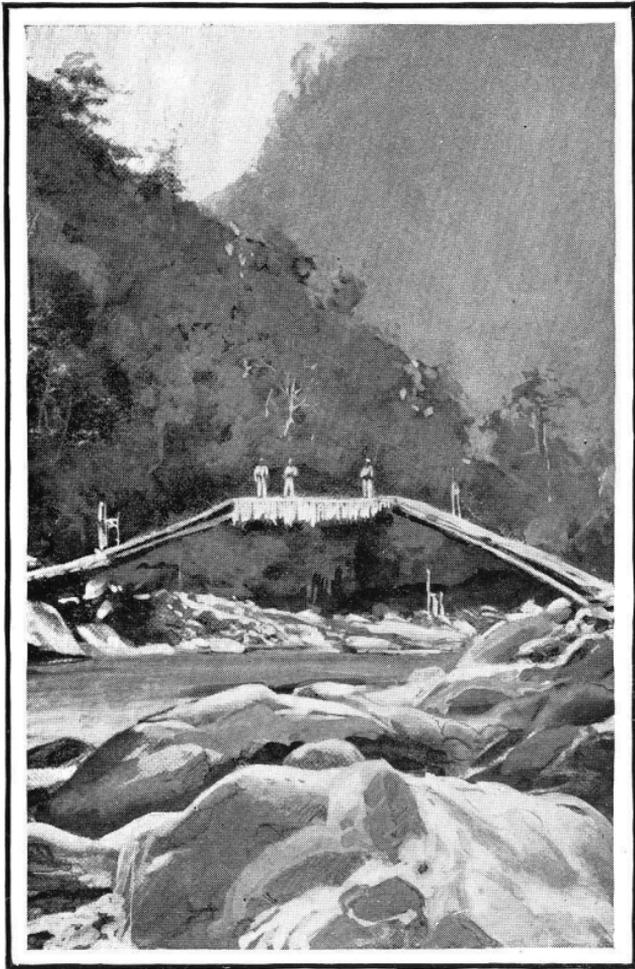
In connection with my work, a few words concerning myself and the way God led me into my wide and perilous field of labor may not be amiss. I was born, 1859, in Gottenberg, Sweden, and at an early age broke away from my dear mother's arms, and, shipping aboard a merchant vessel, with one of whose owners I was acquainted, began, as an apprentice, learning the art of navigation (with ambition set upon becoming a sea-captain,) the wanderings through which the Lord mercifully brought me, and which have by His grace been turned to good service. Twice I suffered shipwreck; once I had to swim for my life; often my lot was cast among evil men, but, in terrific



SNOW-LAND OF THE ANDES

storms, through hardships almost unendurable and dangers imperiling soul and body, I felt the need of my mother's God, and the knowledge that her faithful prayers followed me was inspiration and protection. I visited many countries of Europe; also India, Java, Australia, North and South America, and at last God's providence brought me to the Falkland Islands, where I was converted. On the mainland, where I began to preach, one of my first converts was my own wife, and together we started a sailors' mission, which became a mighty power, also a Spanish mission which has sent forth many branches of Christian work. Spanish is the principal language of civilized South America; but there is a great aboriginal population speaking various languages and dialects of its own.

At this time a desire to carry God's Word to the tribes of the vast and neglected interior of South America took possession of me, and since then over 20,000 copies of the Holy Scriptures, in many languages, have passed through my hands. My travels have covered over 50,000 miles, 3,000 of which I made mule-back and horse-back, and much of it on foot,—always carrying my Bibles. To forty-two different nationalities and tribes I have presented the Word of God, and I have reached with the Gospel over one million souls. Six times have I crossed the great Andes; have visited many places where hardly a white man had ever been before, and encountered numerous tribes unknown to the civilized world; and, altogether, my journeyings from Patagonia to the Amazon, and along its tributaries, might be compared



A NATIVE BRIDGE IN SOUTH AMERICA

to those of Stanley and Livingstone in Darkest Africa. Truly, Darkest Africa is better known to-day than darkest South America, our sister continent. I have journeyed 3,000 miles through the interior without meeting a single Protestant missionary.

Wild, savage tribes, there are many, roaming about through the great forests like wild beasts, unclad, untaught, uncared for, speaking a Babel of strange



THE GRAND CATHEDRAL, LIMA, PERU

tongues, and practicing in pathetic ignorance cruel and revolting customs; yet eager for something better than they know. When among a tribe of Chiquitanos, to whom I was preaching through an interpreter, I said, "The Bible is the Word of God," some wanted to kiss the book and to kiss my hand. A man of seventy years said: "Blessed be God for this good news. It is the first time I have heard it in all my life." A young man, semi-civilized, to whom I gave a Bible,

had heard some vague story of a "Book of Life," had been seeking it for three years and received it with unspeakable delight. In Bolivia alone there are over one million Indians; in the depths of Brazil, four millions more. And this mighty host are as sheep without a shepherd! In New York you have one preacher to every six hundred people; in South America, with its nearly eight million square miles and forty million population, we have only about two hundred Protestant preachers,—one to every two hundred thousand souls.

The tremendous difficulty of reaching these inland tribes, and the dangers attendant, furnish explanation of the world's ignorance of them. My last journey, covering some four thousand miles, from Buenos Ayres to the Amazon,—a journey that had never before been made by a missionary of the Cross,—occupied many months, during which I had no news from family or friends. I went through trackless forests, where deadly serpents hung overhead or crawled under foot. Wild beasts howled around our camp at night, and tigers crept almost upon us.

\* \* \*

On the lecture platform and in the religious press I am pleading for the dying millions in South America. I am going back, and I hope to journey again into the heart of South America, carrying my Bibles and preaching through an interpreter, wherever possible. My wife is now at work in our little mission at Adrogue, Buenos Ayres, doing all in her power for native children. Here and there, as best we could, we have established little missions all over the conti-



LADIES OF SOUTH AMERICA

This picture represents a number of Spanish-American women of the better class, taken in their ordinary costumes. The Spanish-American women are, as a rule, much more devoted to the church than the men, and are, in fact, the chief dependence of Romanism in South America.

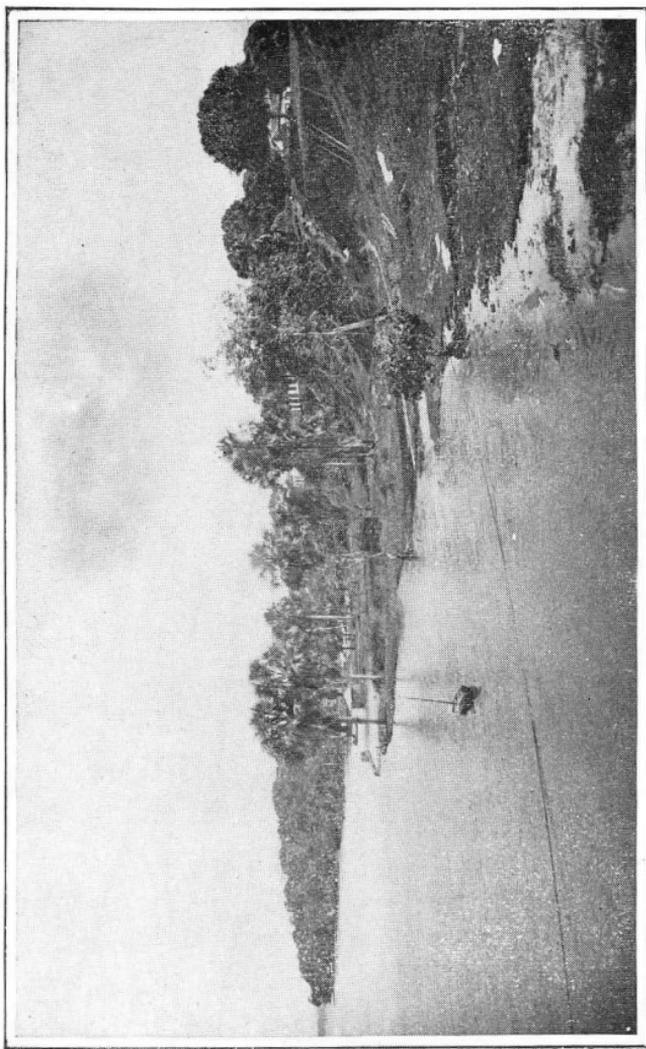
ment. We purpose starting an Indian school wherein we may gather children of benighted races, train them up as missionaries, and send them back to their people. We also hope to found a school of interpreters, who are greatly needed in the work. In this work, which is one of faith, we are depending wholly on the



IN THE LAND OF THE INCAS

kind coöperation of God's people in the United States and elsewhere, and all the material aid they can give us will be gratefully acknowledged. All contributions should be sent to "The Christian Herald," and letters regarding the work may be addressed to the undersigned at Androque, F. C. S., Buenos Ayres, South America.

EMILIO OLSSON.



A VIEW ON THE UPPER AMAZON

## IN WILDEST SOUTH AMERICA

*An address delivered by Rev. Emilio Olsson before the Second Baptist Church of New York City.*

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS:—I am very happy to be here to-night and for the kind introduction of your pastor, but one thing he forgot to tell you, and I had better mention it before I go any farther into my story: I am a Swede by birth, my wife is French, and my children were born in South America and speak Spanish, and now I have to talk to you in English.

My heart's desire to-night is that the Lord might send us a shower of blessing, and lay on your hearts this great and mighty continent, our sister continent, our next neighbor.

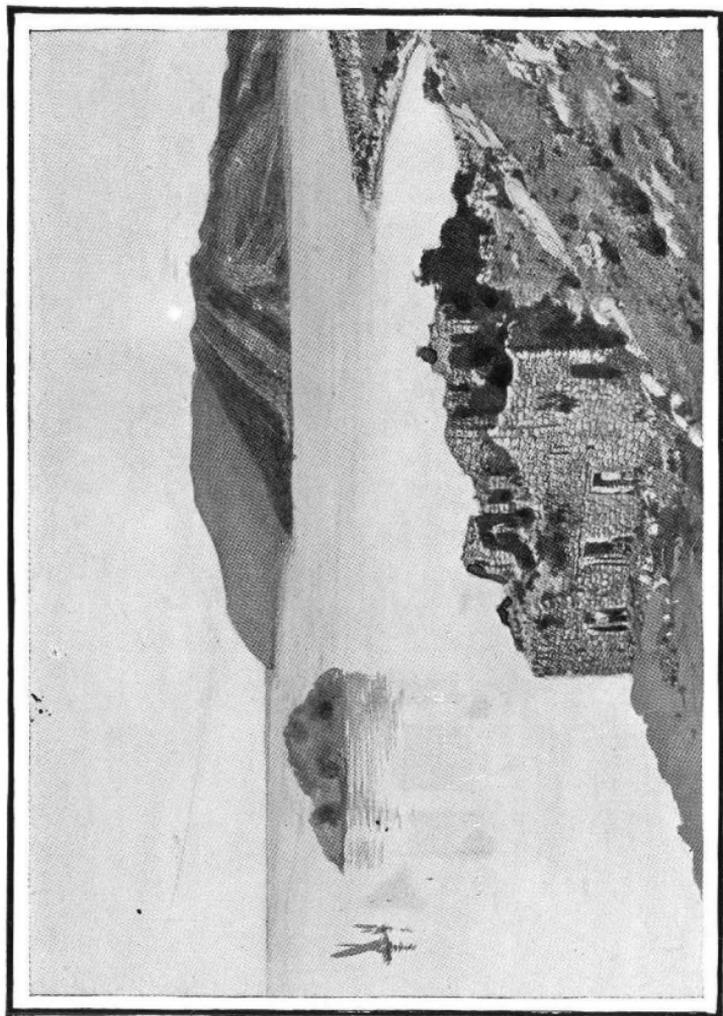
Before taking your minds right down to the heart of South America, I wish to tell you how the Lord brought me there. About twenty years ago, I left my native land, and had a great desire to see the wonders of the deep. I had a dear Christian mother at home, who was praying for me, but I would not give my heart to God then. It was not until I was cast upon the deep, and when I was shipwrecked and in dangers and perils, then I cried to my mother's God, and I wanted to know something of her wonderful Saviour. After some time the Lord brought me from almost the North Pole to near the South Pole,—to the Falkland Islands, —the most southerly of England's organized colonies,

where Allen Gardiner, that noble martyr of the Gospel, bade goodby to civilization before going to meet death on the bleak shores of Tierra del Fuego. There God converted me, and I have been happy ever since, and I desire to praise God for his goodness and for his wonderful keeping power.

### **God's Call to Spread the Gospel**

After my conversion, God called me to spread the Gospel. I was so overjoyed, I could not keep still. The Lord brought me to the mainland, and laid it on my heart to travel with the Word. One of my first converts there was my own wife. So the work went on, and we started a little sailors' mission, and it is flourishing to-day. After this we started a Spanish mission, which grew into different branches of Christian work. Even the Salvation Army came out through the influence of one member belonging to that little meeting. Last night I met a Salvationist, and I asked him why they don't send more soldiers to conquer South America. These dear souls are doing their very best in South America. I trust God will send more real soldiers of the cross to preach the Gospel to those heathen.

I am so glad that your pastor and this mission are so interested in giving the Gospel to all nations and climes. It makes my heart rejoice when I see those who are longing to have the world evangelized. Of course, we cannot all go, but we can help others to go and pray for the evangelization of the heathen, and take part in the greatest enterprise of saving a perishing world.



RUINS OF THE PALACE OF THE INCAS

I have had many terrible experiences in South America. Once I had to swim to save my life. I have been among savages and evil men, but I was kept by the wonderful keeping power of Jesus Christ, and I desire to praise Him to-night that He has permitted me to come to this little meeting. I trust He will put that dark continent on your hearts to-night.

### **A Marvelous Continent**

South America is a marvelous continent. Just think of the great need of that country,—more than twice as large as the United States, including all your recent conquests and colonies, and with probably half the population,—or about forty millions in all. There are only about three hundred missionaries, and I hardly think there are so many. In South America there is one worker to every two hundred thousand souls, while in New York City, I believe, you have one preacher to every six hundred souls. I wish that half the preachers in New York would come to South America and preach the Gospel to those tribes and people. You can easily count the mission stations in South America, and most of them I have visited. In the heart of the continent there is not one station.

The interior of South America is not known to the civilized world. Truly, Central Africa is better known to Christian nations than Central South America. I traveled four thousand miles in that great interior, not meeting one missionary until I reached the coast.

O, let us remember dear South America! The great command is, "Go ye into all the world and preach the

Gospel, and lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world!"

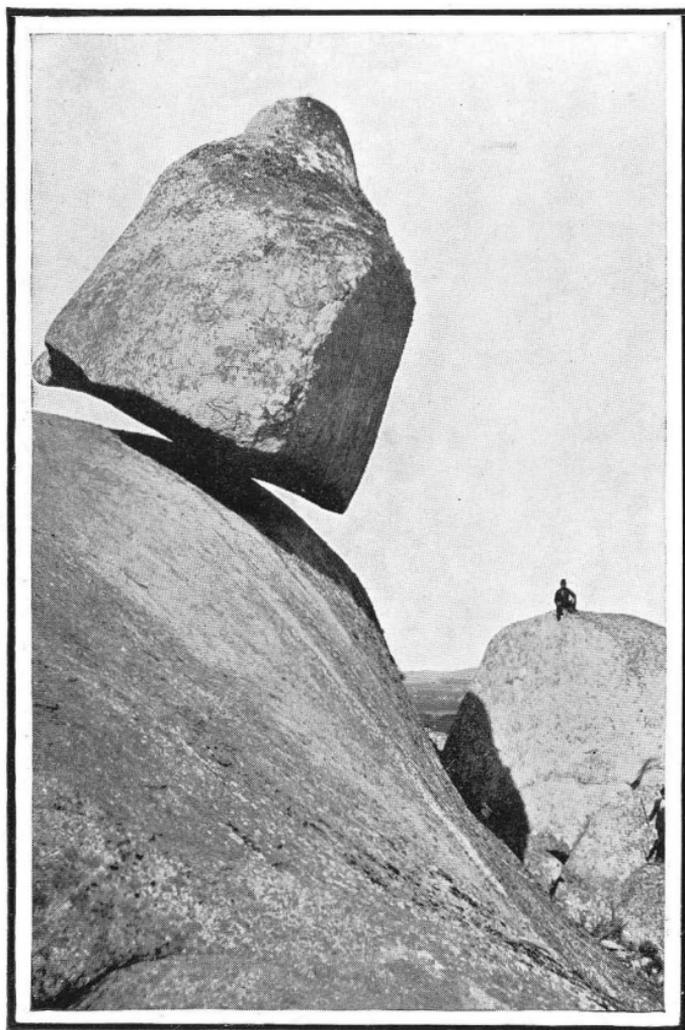
It seems to my mind that New York is the Jerusalem, to see so many preachers and Gospel tents. I do not see how people can fail to be saved in a city like New York. If any are lost here, they will be worse off than those poor heathen who have never heard of Jesus Christ.

### **Traveled Fifty Thousand Miles**

I have been in South America seventeen years, and my wife and children are still down there. My travels represent about fifty thousand miles. I have visited all the Spanish-speaking countries in South America, and have met at least forty different nationalities and tribes, to whom I have presented the Word of God, and, possibly, I have reached with the Word of God and the Gospel about one million souls. I praise God that he has permitted me to carry over twenty thousand copies of his Word to this neglected people. I do not give a straw for my preaching, but I do praise God for allowing me to carry his precious Word to those hungry souls. I hope, if God spares my life, to go into the heart of Brazil.

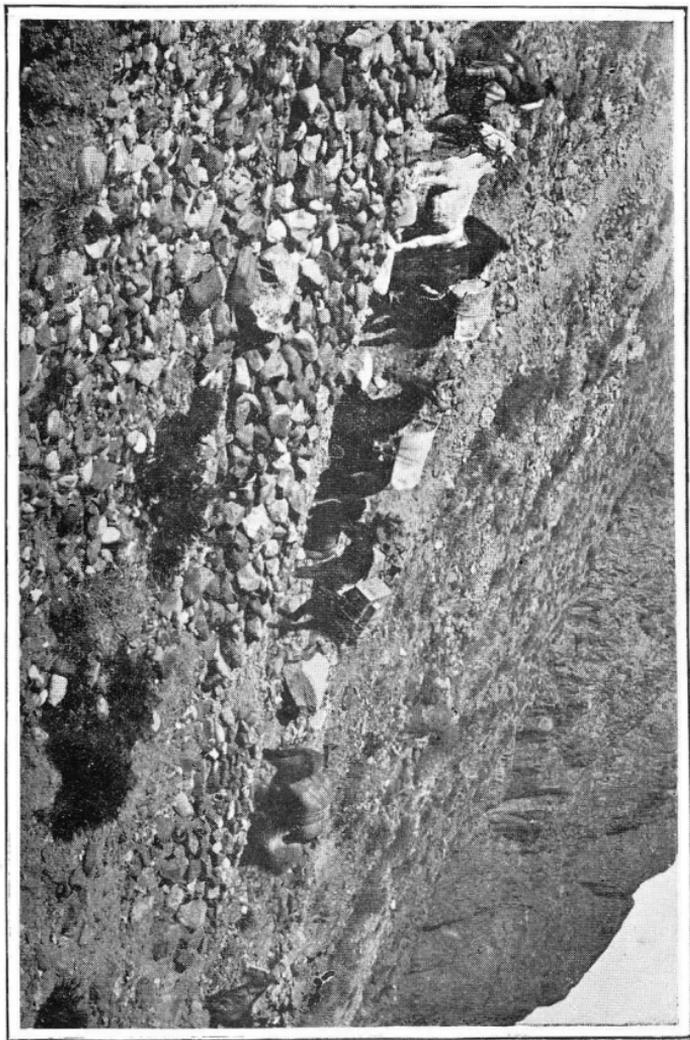
I have traveled about three thousand miles on muleback with my Bibles. As soon as the Lord taught me the language, I received a distinct call to penetrate, and to carry the Word of God to those natives.

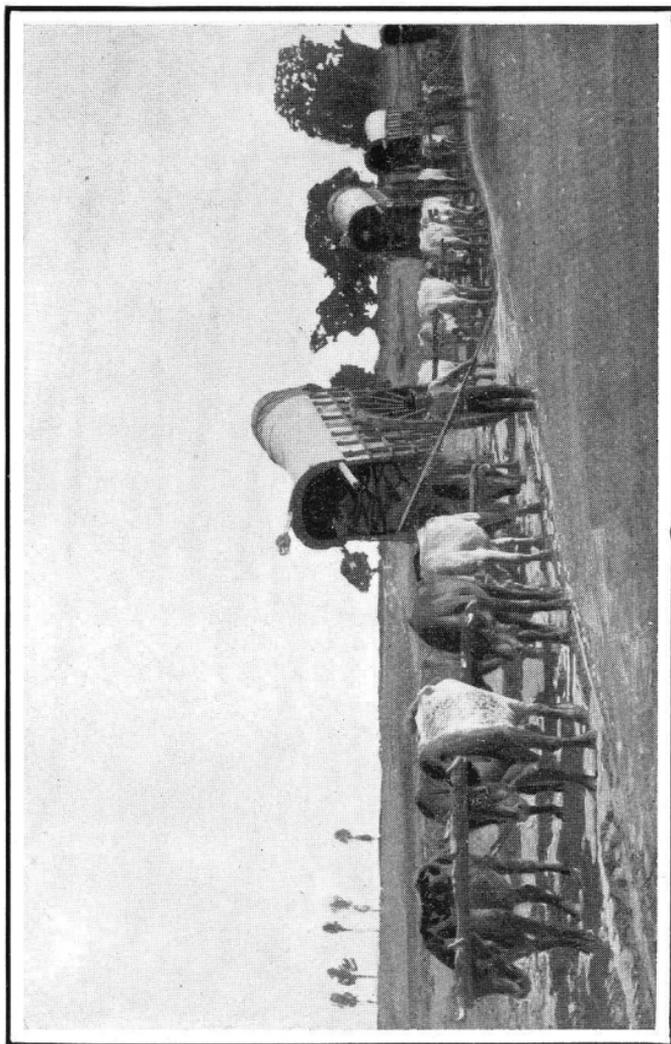
I set out on my long journey, leaving Buenos Ayres, which is the central station of South America, and probably it will be the New York of this great continent. It is a great gateway to all parts of South



THE ROLLING-STONE TANDIL AT ARGENTINA

MOUNTING TO THE SUMMIT OF THE ANDES





TRAVELLING ON THE PAMPAS OF PATAGONIA

America. All my travels commenced here. I have crossed the Andes six times. These mountains extend from Patagonia to Colombia, a distance of four thousand, seven hundred miles. They are the greatest chain in the new world. When I crossed with my wife and two children, we suffered much in the cold, bleak regions known as the "Puna." The "Puna" is the name given to the high table-lands and cold, bleak regions lying between the central and the coast ranges of the Cordilleras. The lofty ranges form the highest points of the South American highlands, standing at an altitude of fifteen thousand feet above the sea. The air is very light, and my wife and children fainted, and I had great trouble to get them down. It is very hard, in some parts, to cross the Andes.

#### Among the "Gauchos"

On my first journey, I went down south into Patagonia. You have all heard about the Patagonians,—those tall and powerful savages, whom early voyagers spoke of as giants. My plan was first to take a sailing vessel, but there was no way to get down south by sea; but the Lord opened my way. There was a caravan ready to travel across the continent, escorted by *gauchos*. These *gauchos* are very treacherous, and also very quarrelsome. At night they lay down without any shelter, and I had to follow their example. A fire was made, and all the *gauchos* and Indians used to sit around and drink *mate*, or Paraguay tea, which is a refreshing but not an intoxicating beverage. A vessel containing the *mate* was passed from one to an-

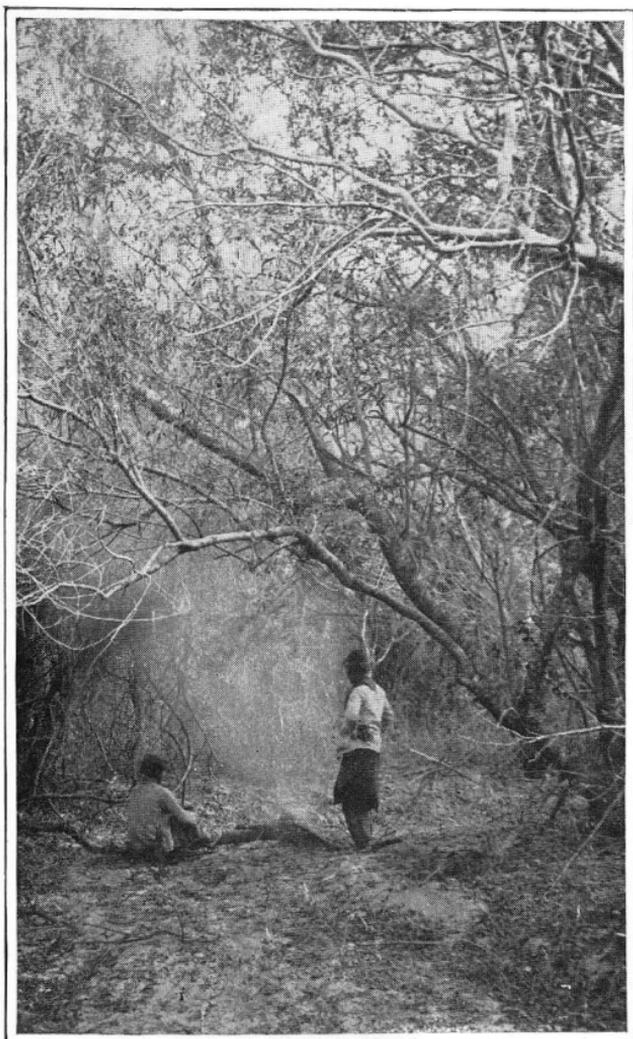
other, and one had to drink, or give offense. These *gauchos* and Indians would take a large piece of meat on a stick and roast it in the fire, and when it was half done, each one got a knife and cut off a piece, and ate it with their hands. I had no knife, and so they would cut me off a slice, and throw it to me as to an animal.

At night they laid their revolvers under them, ready to jump up and fight one another at a moment's notice. I had no revolver. I carried one only one day, and it was the most miserable day I ever put in. Everything went wrong. Though I had no revolver, I had plenty of Bibles, and instead of putting a revolver under my head, I put my Bibles, and slept as a prince in his palace. No one will harm you, if you believe in the keeping power of the Saviour.

One man said, "I saw you sleep last night." "Well, how did I sleep?" "You slept like an angel," he answered.

After a few days, those people got interested, and wanted to know about the Great Spirit. The *gauchos* were very kind to me afterwards, and they cut the best piece of meat for me, and did not throw it to me, but handed it to me.

One night, after supper, they asked me to tell them something about Jesus Christ. Then I told them the wonderful story of Jesus and His love. I asked one man if he ever heard of such a person as Jesus Christ, and he said, "No, who is he, where does he live?" What a privilege to tell those Indians about Him who is called "Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace!" They were



LOST IN THE DEEP FOREST

lost in astonishment. "Is it possible that God sent His Son for poor lost Indians?" they would say. It was glorious to be able to tell them that Jesus saves even in the depth of South America. We had glorious times together.

### **Sleeping on Scorpions**

One night, I had a very narrow escape, sleeping on two scorpions, but God kept them still all night, and I slept like a child. In the morning, one man said, "You have been sleeping on two scorpions. You are a wonderful man. Don't they bite you?" "No, they don't," I answered, "because God keeps me."

I remember one day one of the Indians was thrown off his beast into the air, and could not move, and he was sick for some days, but we could not leave that poor Indian. I got some fat and rubbed him, and after awhile the poor Indian got up, and he was well. He thought it was a wonderful cure, and was grateful for my operation.

Their ignorance was pitiful. I asked an Indian, "Are you married?" "Married, what does that mean?" "Have you a wife?" "Wife, what does that mean?" Then I explained, and I asked him how he got his wife. "I bought my wife for a cow," he said, "and I have not been able to pay for the cow yet. If I can't pay for the cow, my wife's parents will take her from me."

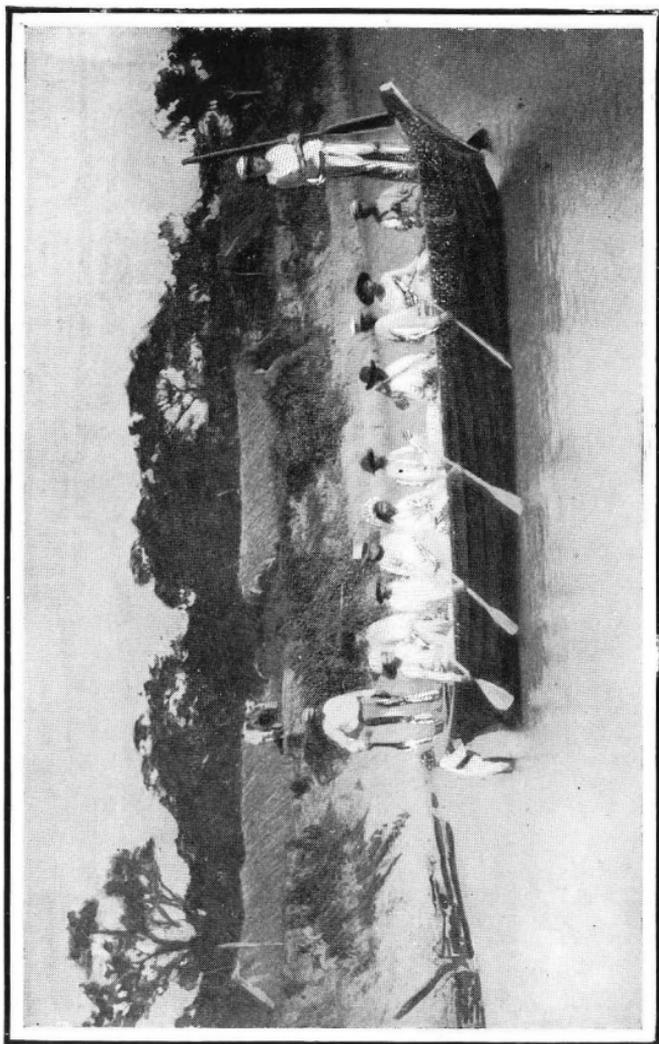
### **Persecuted by Priests**

When I was doing mission work among the Spanish-Americans, the priests used to persecute me terribly;

but when we were persecuted in one place, we went to the next. I gave a priest a tract once, and he said to me, "Get thee behind me Satan." I said in reply, "Suppose I am a lost child, away from God, what is your mission? You call yourself a minister of God, won't you bring me back to God as a lost sheep to the Good Shepherd?" That priest got interested, and he said, "I will convert you." I brought out my Bible, but he told me to put it away, he didn't need that. "But," I said, "this is the Word of God. Before we left, that priest said, "God bless you." I believe that God touched that man's heart.

In a journey from Paraguay to Chili, and from Chili to Bolivia, I had some wonderful experiences. An aged man, eighty-six years old, after hearing me talk about the love of God, said, "Blessed be God for this good news. It is the first time I have heard it in all my life." Another man, who could read a little, and to whom I gave a New Testament, returned it, and said, "Take this Book back. I cannot read it without crying. I never knew I had such a hard heart." God spoke to that man's heart. At another time I met a young man who had been seeking for a Bible, and he said, "I am so glad I found you." It was to him like finding the pearl of great price.

Then we traveled up to Oruro. Bolivia is one of the darkest countries in the world. I learned that one man had lost his life here while attempting to teach pure Christianity. I tried to find something out about him, but I could only find out that the fanatics who had taken the martyr's life themselves perished within a year after their crime. The story



A BOATING PARTY ON THE AMAZON

of this martyr is yet to be told. In one place, a wife of a missionary had her head cut open, and it was a wonder that she was not killed. I tried to cheer her by saying, "You have been honored to wear on your brow the Saviour's mark." It is a great honor to die on the battle-field of the Gospel, and to be carried by angels to the glory-land.

Sometimes I have preached the Gospel with stones flying over my head. It is a glorious thing to suffer for Christ. To be willing to lay down your life for the Master's cause,— then you will be filled with his wonderful peace and joy, which passes all understanding. I do not wonder about those old martyrs. Oh! it is very easy to lay down your life for the blessed Saviour, if Christ is in you.

### **On the Great Pampas**

I penetrated the great Pampas. We had some wonderful meetings here. It seemed as if God's Spirit was working mightily. One night we had thirty souls seeking their Saviour.

At one meeting I asked all who wished to be saved to raise their hands, and all raised their hands; and then I asked all who wished to be saved to kneel, and all knelt. They all professed to accept Christ; but to find out the reality of their conversion, we went to see their homes, for superstition and dirt go hand in hand in South America, and I tried to teach them to be clean as well as to be Christians. When their homes were swept, and the pigs outside, and the children washed, we believed the work of God was going on.

On my last long and dangerous journey, I left Buenos Ayres to penetrate the great River Rio de la Plata. On board the steamer, I counted members of twelve different tribes. I asked the captain if I could preach to them, and he said, "Oh! yes, you can have the ship," and he invited the people to the meeting, and we had a most glorious time. What a blessed privilege to preach the Gospel! I preached in Spanish, mostly all understanding Spanish.

The Lord laid it on my heart to penetrate inland. When I told my wife to get my things together, ready for the start, I saw the tears roll down her cheeks, but I said to her, gently: "No, no; I must do the work of the Lord;" and so, without another word, she helped me to prepare for the journey.

We passed up the Paraguay. Here we lost a bright young missionary. Sometimes God's ways are very mysterious.

### **Starting for the Interior**

At last we reached Corumba, about two thousand miles inland from the coast. You can go into either Brazil or Bolivia from Corumba. Now I commenced my long overland journey of one thousand miles on mule-back to Trinidad, on the Mamore river. We find here savage tribes whose very existence is hardly known to the civilized world. There is a great work indeed to be done in the mighty interior of South America. In Bolivia alone, there are about one million savage Indians, and there are supposed to be about five million Indians in all those regions. They are waiting



"BRUJOS" OR FETISHMEN OF THE TOBAS

for the Gospel. Who will carry the message of the King to those dark heathen ?

Then we penetrated into the forests. One night,—the most terrible night I ever spent,—we lost our way in the forest, surrounded by wild beasts. It became so dark that I could not see my Indian guide; then I could not see my mule nor my hand, and at last I could see nothing. The only thing for us was to travel on. When you are exhausted, it is not safe to lie down. We had no food, no water, and it seemed as if God had forsaken us. Still we went on and on, until my Indian's mule broke down, and would not go any more. I said: "We cannot stop for that. Get hold of my lasso, and I will pull you along." On we went, and then my mule could not go any further.

#### **Lost in the Forest**

We were lost in the forest, and my Indian at last threw himself on the ground, saying: "We will have to lie down."

After a few minutes, he jumped up and screamed most fearfully. I thought he was mad, and wondered what I should do. In South America there are terrible ants, about one inch long, whose attacks are often deadly. The Indian was covered with them. I had on boots and clothing, but they got inside both, and bit me until I was nearly delirious. The two of us jumped about and screamed like wild men. We hurried away from that place, and struggled on through the forest. About daylight we found a stream of water, and I said, "Get in and swim," but he said, "No, I can't swim. I am too tired to swim across the

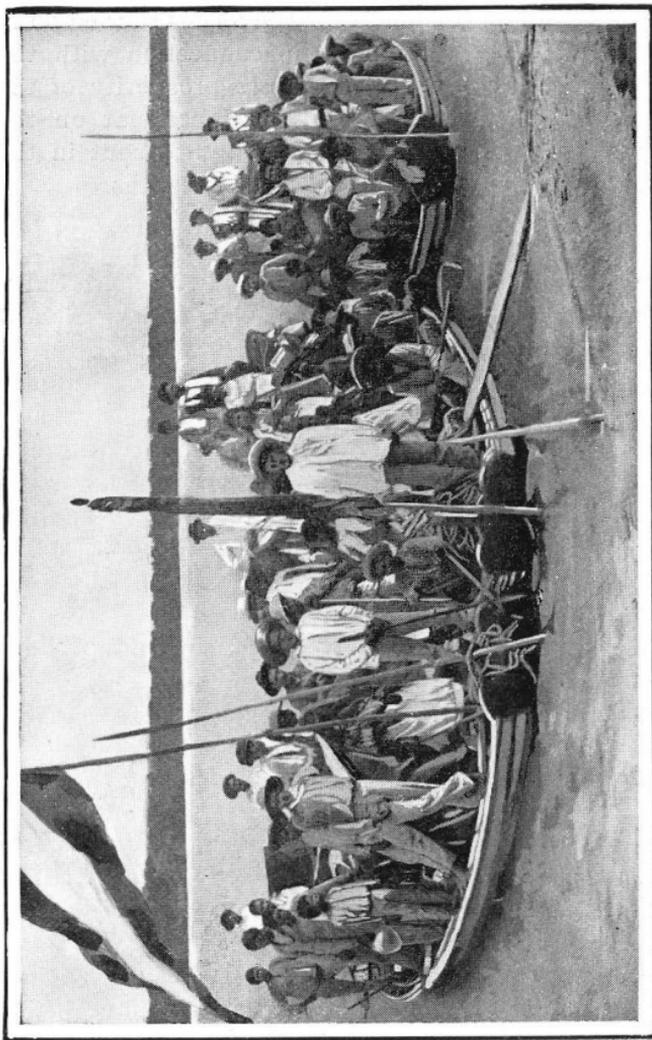
stream," I drank as much as I could. It is always a sweet symbol when a man is thirsting after the Water of Life, and is satisfied. When the morning light came, I pulled off my boots to see my legs. They were one great mass of sores. I was in a pitiful state. My agony seemed intolerable, and I cried to God for deliverance. Hope took possession of us, believing that God would open the way, and before that day was over we reached a place of refuge, where I had a chance to rest and recover from my awful experience. One morning a tiger came up to our camp, but God did not allow it to harm us.

When the tropical sun is right over one's head, it is necessary to wear two and three hats to protect the head from the scorching rays. I was longing sometimes for God to send a little cloud, and when a cloud passed over, I was praising God. Do we praise God for the clouds? Above the clouds is the sunshine and our Father's face. I desire to praise God for the clouds that are passing over my life.

One night the savages came around our camp and were making preparations to kill us off. All I could do was to pray to God, and ask him to watch over us, and I slept beautifully that night, and in the morning they were all gone.

### **Every Bicycle Represents an Indian's Life**

After reaching Trinidad, we sailed down the River Mamore, until we reached the great India rubber territory. The rubber runs down the trees like milk. These poor Indians have to work like slaves. I believe every bicycle running up and down New York



INDIA-RUBBER WORKERS ON THE BENI RIVER

represents one Indian's life. Slavery is carried on in the heart of South America in connection with the India rubber trade, and the future prosperity of the India rubber business is largely dependent on the evangelization of those tribes, roaming about in the great forests, where we find the rubber trees.

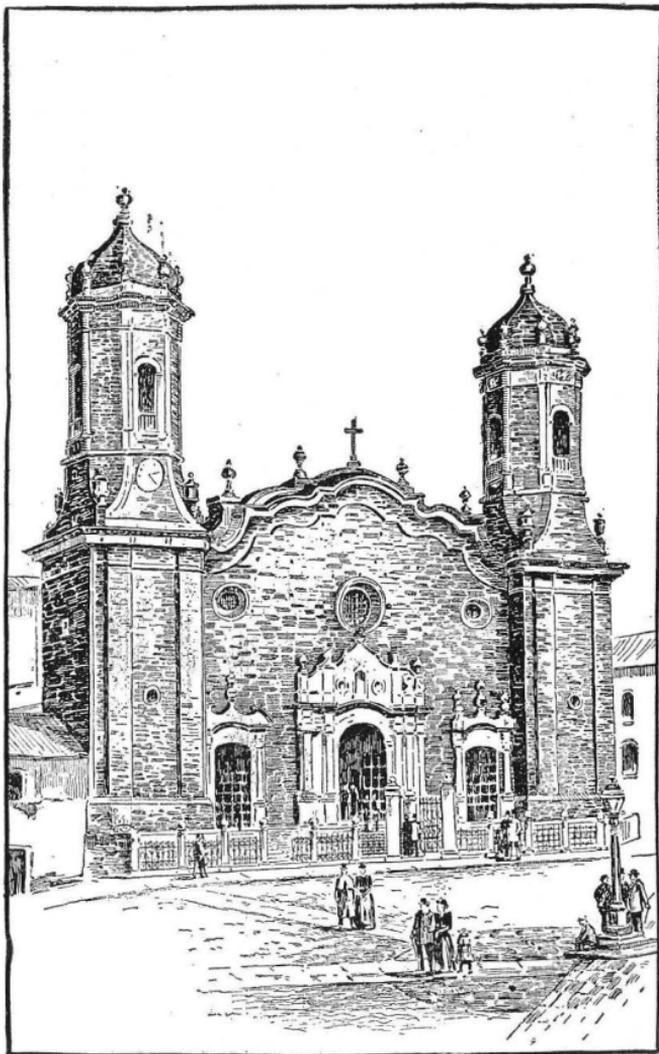
### **The Falls of the Madeira**

In shooting the terrible rapids of the Madeira Falls, we were traveling in canoes, and we nearly perished. I am sorry to say that one boat that came after us was capsized in the awful cataract, and five Indians lost their lives. All I could do at the time was to kneel down, and pray God to steer our boat through the narrow channel of those dangerous paths.

The deadly tropical fevers were indeed very dangerous, and some of our men had a narrow escape, and I myself had a touch of the fever twice, but the Lord delivered me from all harm.

I do praise God for saving my life in that perilous journey.

There is a mighty work to be done for God in the heart of South America. Oh, do pray for those lost tribes, for those perishing tribes, who have never heard the name of Jesus Christ! If you cannot help some one to go, and cannot go yourself, pray for those dear missionaries down there. Pray, dear friends, that God may raise up men and women and anoint them with power, and send them forth into all lands and climes, and thus hasten the Redeemer's Kingdom, because I believe that Christ will have in his glorious crown jewels from every tribe and clime.



LA MATRIZ CHURCH, POTOSI, BOLIVIA

I am going down to South America soon, I trust, to try and seek for those precious jewels for the Redeemer's crown.



AN AMAZONIAN CHIEF IN WAR DRESS

## AMONG THE SAVAGE TRIBES

During my extended and remarkable journey through the very heart of South America, from Buenos Ayres to the great Amazon River, a distance of four thousand miles, I came in touch with a number of Indian tribes dwelling in the vast interior of the South American continent in the regions of the rivers Cuapore, Mamore, Beni, and the Madeira, the last-named one of the greatest tributaries of the Amazon. It takes from three to four months of hard traveling to reach some of these inland tribes, and my last missionary tour was the severest of all. Truly, Central Africa is better known to the civilized world to-day than dark Central South America, our sister continent.

I hope, in a larger work soon to be published, to give a detailed description of my travels of fifteen thousand miles across the South American continent, but my object now is chiefly to describe a few of the strange tribes who are roaming about like wild animals, in the unknown forests of the great interior of South America.

I do not pretend, and am unable, to give any complete description of these tribes, but I will endeavor to give facts of interest, which came to my knowledge either from personal observation or from information which I deemed to be accurate, regarding those human

inhabitants of the deep forests, where hardly a white man has yet set foot, and in some parts of which the writer was the very first.

In the great interior, about five million Indian savages are to be found. In the immense territory of Brazil, there are at least 182,400 square miles of land occupied by these tribes. They are possessors, or, at least, in control of mineral mines of silver, gold, dia-



A PEACEFUL INDIAN SETTLEMENT

monds and other unknown riches, but are, with rare exceptions, almost in utter ignorance of the intrinsic value of this untold wealth. In Bolivia there are believed to be over one million Indians whom the government has not been able to subdue. Indeed, very little has ever been attempted to effect the civilization and uplifting of these immured tribes, so impossible,

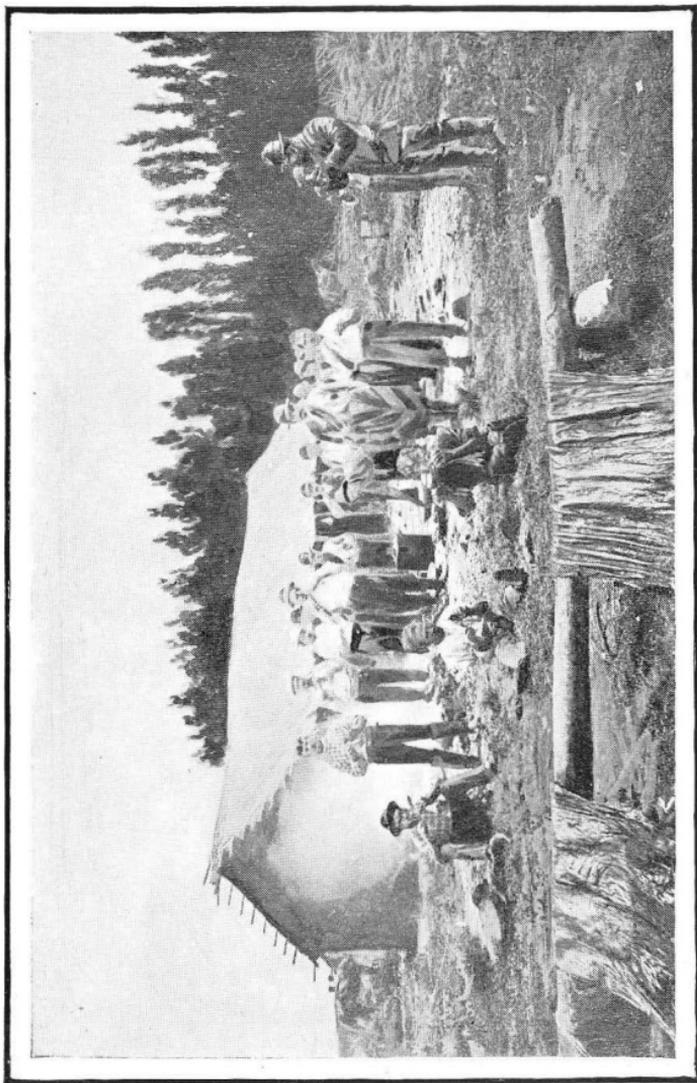
almost, are they of approach, because of their wildness.

I will now give a brief description of a few of the tribes, commencing with the Chiriguanos tribe, living in the southern part of Bolivia.

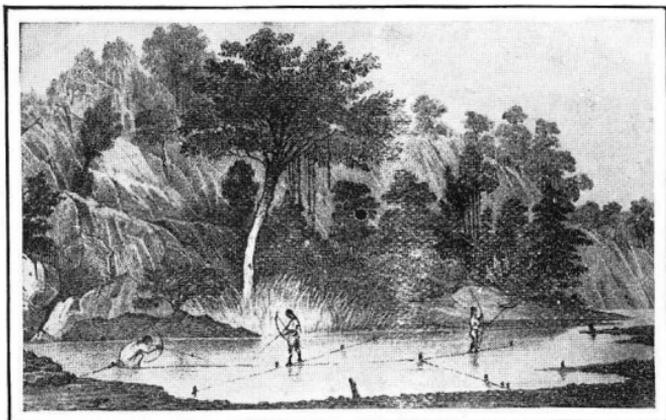
### **Chiriguanos**

The Chiriguanos are inhabitants of the valley that forms the slopes of the eastern side of the great Andes, and in the plains of the oriental part of the Gran Chaco, extending to the bounds of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, and reaching the margin of the river Bermejo. The Chiriguanos tribe is also known by the names, "Abas," "Cambas," and "Tembetas;" the last, because of a ring which is worn in a hole pierced through the lower lip. They belong to the Guarani race, and speak the same language. It is almost impossible to state the exact number of the tribe, but it probably approaches fifty thousand. They live in complete independence and separation from the so-called semi-civilized tribes. Upon festal occasions they congregate in small groups,—family reunions,—and paint their faces. They are always on the alert to preserve their country from intrusion, and have often engaged in fierce conflicts to bar all strangers from their territory. The Jesuit Fathers have been unable to Christianize or civilize them, although several attempts have been made. The Chiriguanos were not always so fierce in nature, but the whites have treated them cruelly, and their chiefs, who exercise despotic rule, are unyielding in their hatred of strangers.

Like most of the South American Indians, the Chiriguanos have a natural repugnance to hard work,



A "RANCHO" OF SEMI-CIVILIZED INDIANS



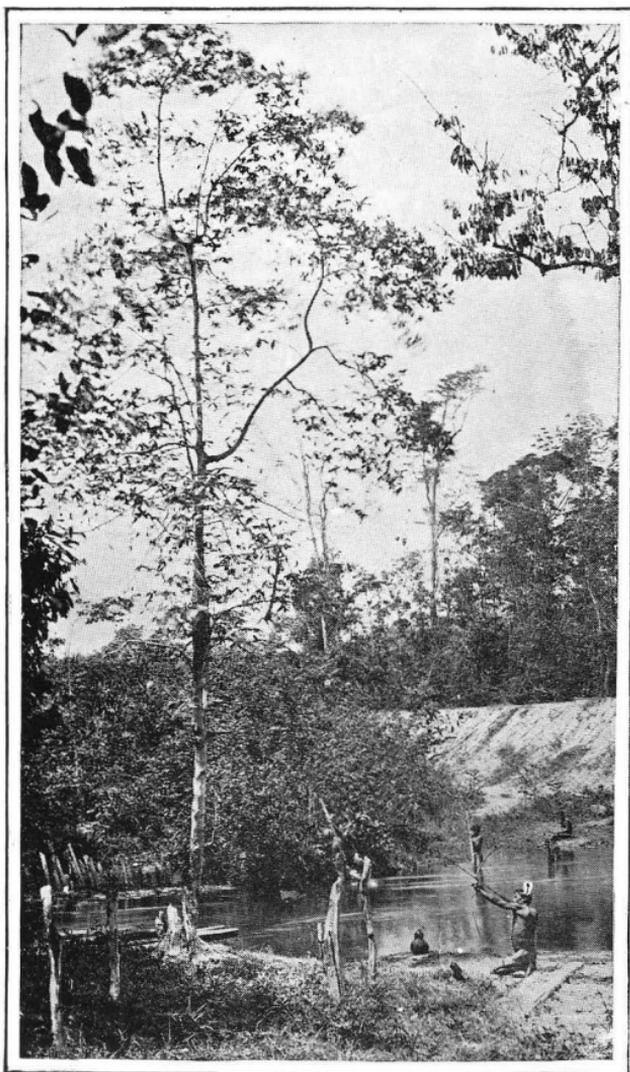
INDIANS FISHING WITH BOW AND ARROW

and very few of them are willing to till the land. They exist mainly on animal food, which they hunt in the great forests, though some are disposed to maintain *chacos* (gardens,) for the cultivation of maize, (corn,) from which they distill a popular drink called *chicau*. They are intensely fond of *chicau*, and enjoy its intoxicating influence, which reduces them to worse degradation than ever. The women and children are cruelly neglected, and for days are left almost in destitution while the men are wandering about the country in search of intoxicating liquor. The women are abject slaves to their *patrons*, as their husbands are called. The few Chiriguanos who have any covering wear a woollen material cut square, like a large shawl, with a hole in the center through which they put their heads. This is called a *pancho*. The chil-

dren are allowed no covering whatever until upwards of twelve years of age. Both children and their elders go barefooted, and travel long distances in this condition. I remember one Indian chief who traveled one thousand miles barefooted, with four of his men, in search of a missionary to teach his tribe. At night a few sleep in hammocks, but the greater number of them lie on the skin of some animal, which they spread upon the ground. Indians are very fond of dogs, and while frequently they have no food to give them, they still keep them as companions, for these dogs are valuable on the hunting field.

### **Curious Courtship**

The courtship of the Chiriguanos is very unique. The brides of this tribe are not won by honeyed words, languishing smiles, and dainty attentions, like the American belles. The young Indian who loves and desires to win his sweetheart, at night time piles a great heap of wood outside her parents' abode. If, on the following day, the head of the house puts a heap of wood beside the lover's pile, that is accepted as a signal that the latter may woo the daughter of the family, and he is at liberty to present himself to her parents and ask for his bride. But if the heap of wood remains in the same place for a few days unnoticed, or if the owner of the house throws it farther away, then the young Indian knows to his sorrow that his worship at this shrine has been in vain; and, in consequence, he must needs repeat the same ceremony at other *ranchos* until he succeeds in obtain-



WILD TRIBEMENS HUNTING IN THE FOREST

ing a wife. As a general rule, a Chiriguano has only one wife, but the chiefs indulge in polygamy.

### Marriage in Patagonia

The Patagonians have a different way. One day, while traveling in company with a Patagonian Indian, I asked him if he was married. In great wonderment he asked, "What is that?"

I explained, and then asked in what manner he obtained his wife.

"Oh," he replied, "I bought and paid for her with a cow;" but he added, with evident sadness, that he had not yet completed the payment for the cow, though he hoped to soon, or the parents of his bride would compel her return to the parental roof, as is the custom, and he would then be degraded.

### Strange Burial Ceremonies

One strange thing about the Chiriguanos is that they have no outward forms of religion, nor do they have any idols or temples, neither do they appear to worship anything. It is evident, however, that they entertain some vague belief of the existence of mysterious spirits in far-off worlds, and a *Timpa*, or God, and a demon, which they call *And*. From the demonstrations over and provisions for their dead, it is also evident they believe, to some extent, in a future existence. They bury the departed under the ground of the house which he or she occupied when living. The body is dressed in the best the relatives can afford, and is placed in a sitting posture, with a light beside it, and also some *maté de chicha* (the favorite drink of

South American Indians,) to quench the thirst during the long journey to the unknown. A parrot is usually buried with the remains. [Other Indian tribes frequently bury a favorite horse or other animal with the dead.] The relatives remain seated during the burial

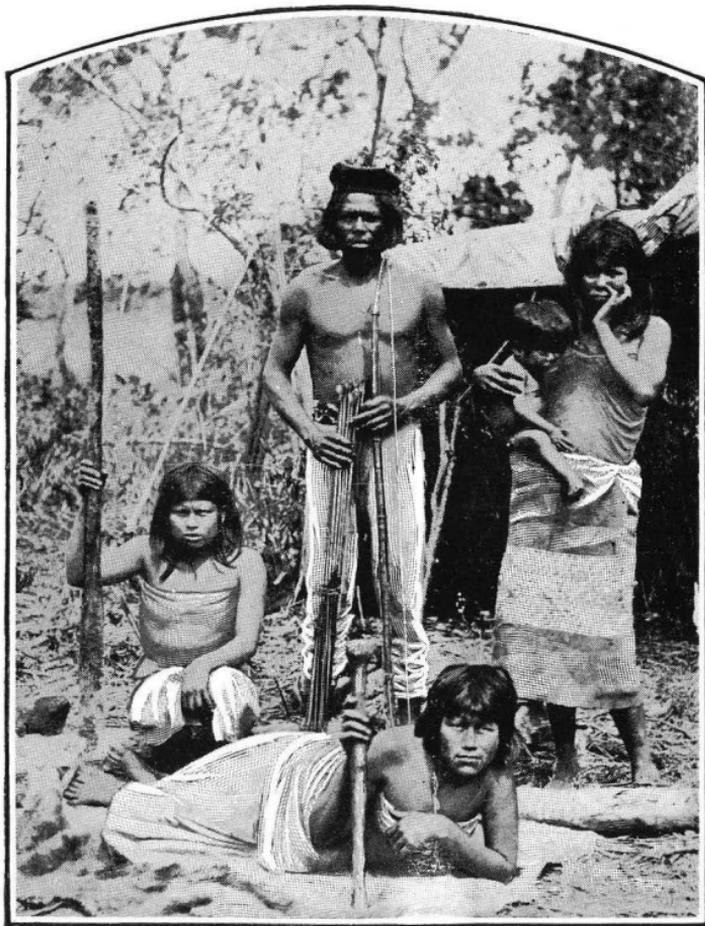


AMAZONIAN CHIEF

ceremony. Their grief for the departed lasts for several months, and their crying and lamentations commence at sunset and continue until sunrise; but at certain periods they hold their lamentations day and night and are constantly wailing. Since in many of the Indian villages numbers frequently die from prevalent diseases, the lamentations are almost unbearable, and the impression made is most distressing. It is like hearing the groans of a vast

number of souls in torment,—a sound that one who has heard it is never likely to forget.

The superstitions of the Chiriguanos render them afraid to travel in the night, and in some places they fear even to pass in the daytime, being persuaded that there are some unknown and invisible spirits



A TOBAS FAMILY

near at hand to do them great harm. They also believe that certain men are gifted with supernatural power to produce sickness or plagues, to stop the rain, and to be capable of anything that would destroy the tribe. These men the Indians call *Brujos*,—some being good *Brujos* and some bad. The Indians are very much afraid of the evil *Brujos*, but the good *Brujos* are held in high esteem and lead enviable lives, as the Indians, in their superstition, will do almost anything to win their favor, especially when they think a *Brujo* is vested with power to raise the dead or to kill.

The Chaneses live close to the Chiriguanos, and often commingle with their tribe; but are regarded and treated as inferiors. The Chaneses, in former years, were very numerous, but recently were almost extinguished in battle with the Chiriguanos. The Chaneses speak the language and dialect of the Chiriguanos, and their customs are a counterpart of that tribe, of which it is probable they are an offshoot; but, owing to dissensions, have retired to the regions of Itiyuru and the slopes of the valley of Caipipendi.

### **Matacos**

The Matacos tribe is known also by the names, Matagnayos, Notenes, Vejoses, Ocoles, Malbalas, Chunupis, and other names, according to the different places which they occupy in their own territory. There is hardly any difference in these branches, however. They all speak the same language, and their customs are alike. This tribe dwells in the

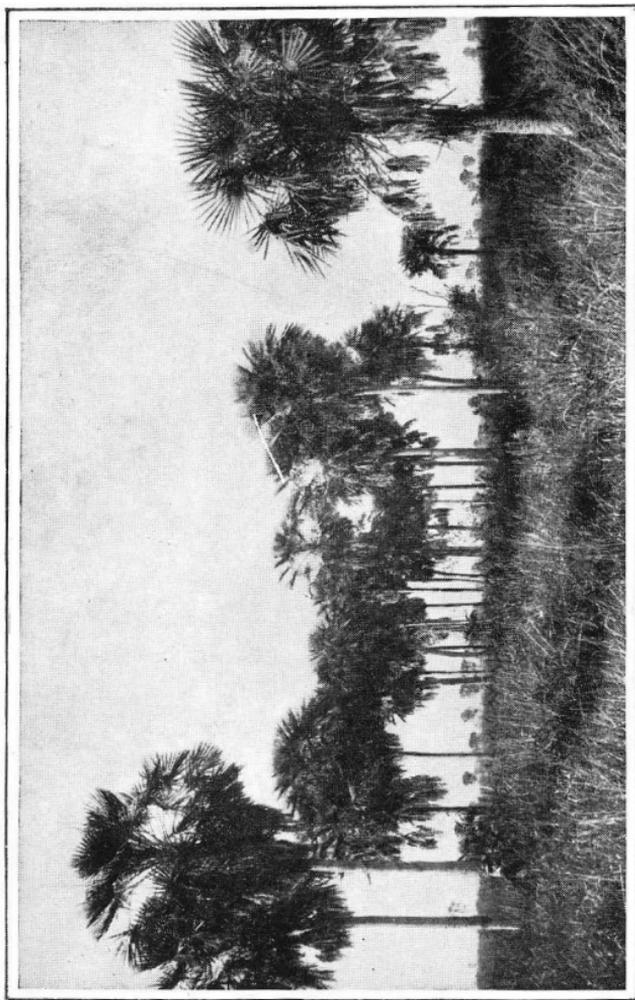
territory extending to the eastern part of Central Chaco, and reaching as far as the margin of the River Bermejo and on the right bank of the River Pilcomayo. They number about 20,000 in all. One peculiarity of this tribe is that, almost without exception, the height of adults is five feet. They are thin and not so muscular as most tribes; but, though not



NEARLY SWAMPED ON THE MADEIRA

expert warriors, they fight hard in battle. They have but few powerful chiefs. Their arms consist of the bow and arrow and the spear. In disposition they are reserved, and their look is suspicious and treacherous; they are naturally cowards and revengeful.

The homes of this tribe are most uninviting. The several generations of one family flock together at night under the roof of their one-room dwelling, with



SCENE IN THE COUNTRY OF THE TOBAS

the company of their dogs added. They all sleep on the ground, or perhaps on the skins of stolen cattle, and to economize space they pillow their heads upon each other's breasts, allowing their dogs the same privilege; perhaps twenty or thirty beings huddle together in this way beneath one roof. The crowding and the unsanitary atmosphere make the homes of these Indians centers of disease, and make them teem with poisonous and troublesome insects. So utterly unendurable does this baneful condition become that at last the Indians are compelled to burn their dwellings, and migrate to other parts, where the experience is repeated.

On festive occasions, the Matacos paint their faces with charred coal from the fire. It is seldom, indeed, that they bathe, but whenever they do, for a bath towel, they roll in the sand of the shore. In cutting the hair, a piece of sharp fish-bone is used. The men have no need of barbers, because with their claw-like nails they extract each separate hair from the face. Their chief adornment consists in wearing a piece of wood in a hole pierced through the ears.

The Matacos have no form of marriage ceremony. At an early age, a child is allowed to select a companion, after which they both start for the solitude of the forest to spend their honeymoon. After a few days, they return to the parental roof, taking up the ordinary duties of life, and are thereafter loyal and faithful to each other. A separation is a most unusual occurrence among the Indians, savage and uncultured as they are.

No idols are worshiped by this tribe, neither have they any temples; but they entertain a superstitious regard for a mystic spirit, which they call *Ohott-at*, which means the Great Spirit, and also for some invisible being, called *Taj-juaji*, (Unknown,) and while to them a soul (*nausec*.) is a fact, it teaches

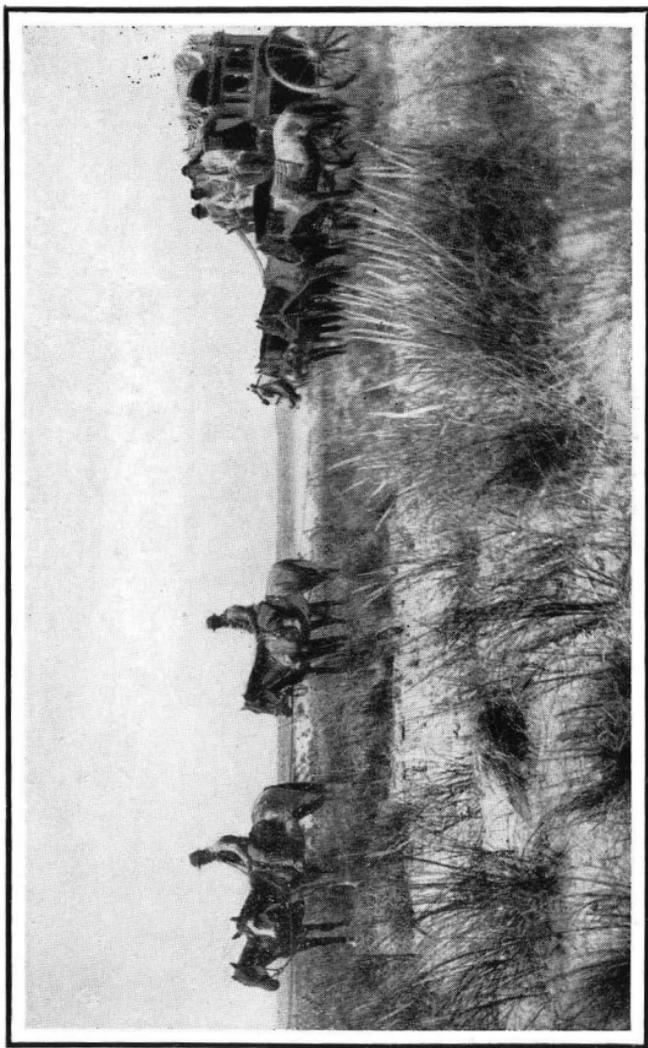


PLANTATION IN BOLIVIA

them nothing of a future destiny. *Brujos*, or wizards, also abide in this tribe, and, at the time of new moon, call the Maticos together for strange dances, accompanied by weird melodies.

#### **Peaceful and Domestic**

The Guisnais live together in small families on the right bank of the River Pilcomayo. They are peaceful and domestic, and manifestly thrifty, as is evi-



"GANCHOS" ON THE PAMPAS

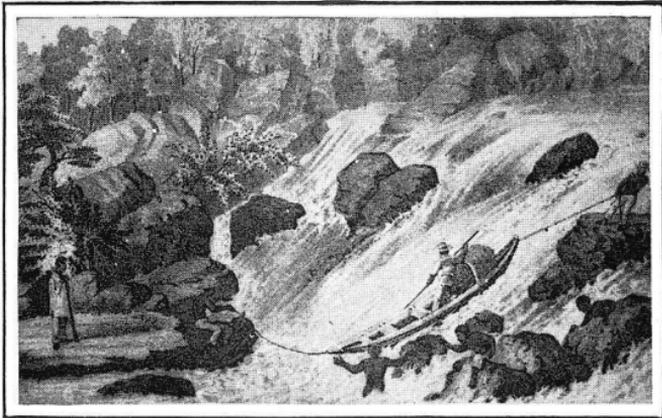
denced by the well-cultivated land. Fine cattle and horses are among their possessions. This tribe is not an important one, and is few in numbers. It would be very easy to civilize the entire tribe, and through it it would be possible to reach the savage tribe called Tobas.

The Tobas are a very distinguished tribe, warlike and dangerous, and noted for their great daring. They occupy the left bank of the river Pilcomayo, and the territory in front of the Chiriguanos tribe. In stature they are of medium height, averaging about five feet six inches, and are exceedingly strong and able-bodied. They have an intense and bitter hatred of the white man, and many explorers and travelers have lost their lives in the rich territory of the river Pilcomayo and the Gran Chico.

The Tobas often make fierce and deadly attacks upon the white settlers on the frontier of the Argentine Republic, stealing cattle, desolating their homes, and destroying property. They ride wild horses bareback over the country, guiding them simply with a small cord, yet keeping them under such perfect control that, though riding swiftly, they can throw their spears right and left with accurate aim. From the waist down only are they clothed, the women wearing *trapos* and the men *pantanos*. During warfare, the men paint their faces and the greater portion of their bodies with varied colors, black predominating.

The Tobas, as represented in an accompanying picture, are some of the semi-civilized portion of the tribe. The wild ones cannot be persuaded to stand

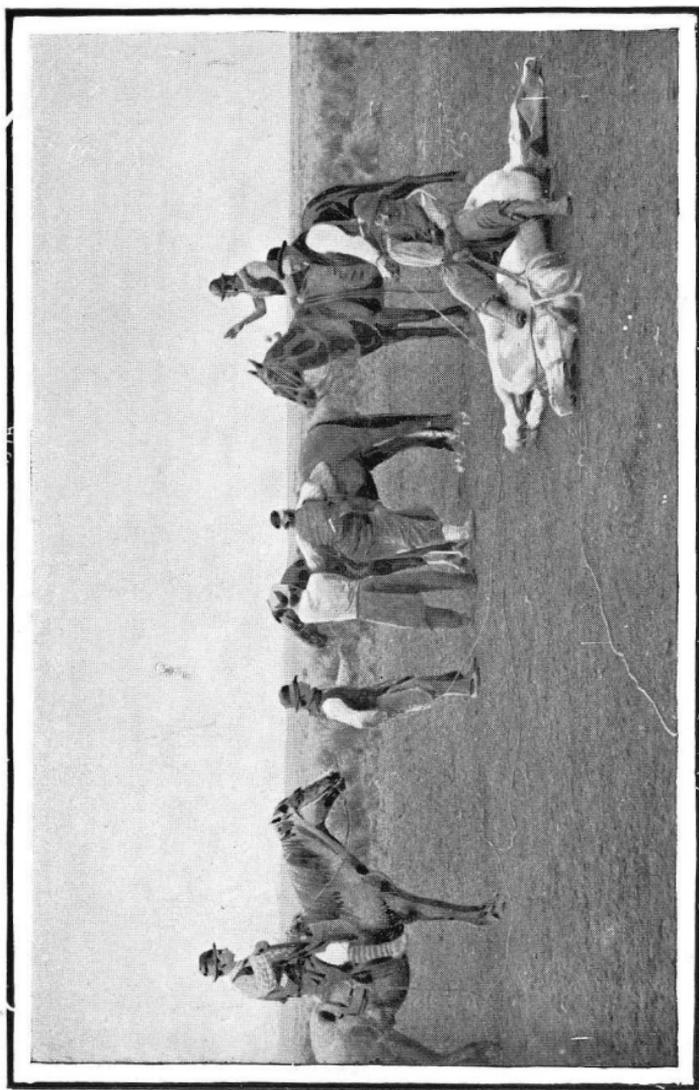
for a picture, and are almost impossible of approach. While traveling farther north, through the Chiquitano tribe, to whom I preached through an interpreter, the Indians treated me with great distinction, and embraced me at parting, as is their custom. Yet, though I had, to a degree, won their confidence, so superstitious were they I could by no strategy get them to



THE FALLS OF THE MADEIRA

stand for a picture, because they said I would carry away their souls in *su cajon negro*—(my black box).

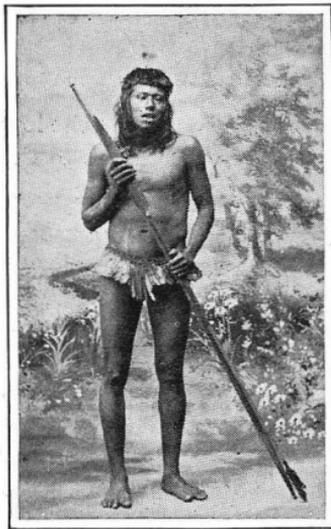
The Tobas also have their *brujos*, or what would be called in Africa *fetishmen*. But in this tribe the *brujos* wield greater power and their commands are more strictly carried out, for they are held in great fear and awe. For instance, if a *brujo* decides that a sick person cannot be cured, especially should the patient be young, the *brujos* exercise their authority,



THE "GAUCHOS" TAMING A WILD MARE

and immediately the order is given to club the person on the head until he is dead, even though he be able to go about. But an old Indian, as a rule, is not so disposed of, but is simply buried alive; and, strange to say, in some instances, an old Indian will, of his own volition, ask to be thus put an end to, because he is tired of life. Others are sometimes taken from the *rancho*, or home, forcibly, by relatives, to a selected spot in the forest, and in the presence of the doomed person a grave is dug of sufficient size, into which the poor unfortunate is put, perfectly nude and in a sitting posture, and his head is forced down upon his breast firmly, and held in that agonizing position

while the earth is filled in about him, until, in fright and horror, he finally dies. After this ceremony, the only tombstone erected to his memory is a pile of wood heaped on the top of his cruel grave, and sometimes a jar of water. If a woman has much love for a husband, she places a bunch of fruit on a tree beside the grave to refresh him on his far-away journey. The work of killing and burying the dead, de-



A FOREST INDIAN

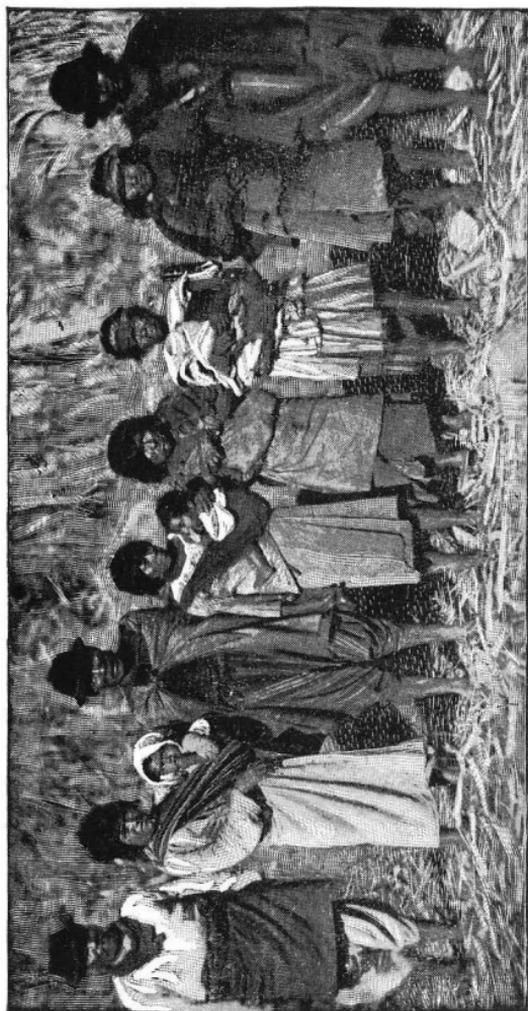
volves almost exclusively upon the women of this tribe. And they do not shrink from this duty, believing that they are performing a noble deed and pious function. It is also their belief that when a man, by reason of illness or old age, has passed his day of usefulness, he is timid and a coward, and unable to do his part in war and in the chase, and should no longer have a place among them.

The Tobas have no definite idea of the soul, nor of a future life and destiny, and only a visionary conception of a Supreme Being, whom they call *Paeyac*. Cruel and bloodthirsty, they are most difficult to reach, much more to civilize. In 1883, the explorer, Crevaux, and twenty of his expedition, were assassinated by the Tobas, and all their effects seized.

### **Great Fighters and Thieves**

In Bolivia and other parts, this tribe occupies the low lands on the bank of the Pilcomayo River, close to the River Paraguay, and are assumed to be a branch of the Tobas family, for their language is much the same, though it is more probable they sprang from the intermingled races of Tobas, Guaranis, Guarayas, Payaguas, and other tribes unknown and without names. The Guaicurus Indians are very numerous, and most of them are great fighters and thieves. Some few travel with the whites on the River Paraguay, trading tiger skins, for which they receive a few asses, knives, fishhooks, etc., which the Indians prize very highly.

The Chorotis tribe is settled southeast of the Tobas



A GROUP OF SEMI-CIVILIZED SOUTH AMERICAN INDIANS

tribe, and occupies the right bank of the River Pilcomayo between Cabayurepoti and Piquirenda. It is a large tribe, and somewhat fierce. It is given much to hunting, but its principal occupation is fishing. A few attend to the cultivation of the land, and possess domestic animals. They have a manifest desire to come in touch with semi-civilized tribes, but in bygone years were in continual warfare, which resulted disastrously to the tribe. The Chorotis Indians are much afraid of the Tobas, with whom, however, they hold some communication. I think, in time, this tribe could be brought to a civilized condition through kind and judicious treatment.

The Tapietes dwell in the territory north and south-east of the Chorotis tribe, in the immediate vicinity of the Pilcomayo River. This tribe belongs to the Guarani race, but speaks the Chiriguanos language, and while their origin is uncertain, it is possible they were once closely allied to the Chiriguanos and were formerly from Paraguay. The Tapietes roam about clad only by nature, and are, therefore, known by the name *Tirumbae*, which means, without clothing.

It is not an easy task to master the languages and dialects spoken among the Indian tribes of South America. For instance, in the language of the Guariurus, the name *Dios* (or God,) is pronounced *Cano-huainatagodit*. The name of *Diablo* (or devil,) is pronounced *Itainianaigoljigodo*; *Cielo* (or heaven,) is *Dibidibimaidi*; and again such awful words as: *Guarapachizayapum*, *Onitinaguindisamocosz*, *Gua-chachitiapae-bicachi*, *Nidisomocosxti hua Tupasx*, are

almost beyond the power of pronunciation by anyone except the Indians themselves.

**A Wonderful Tribe**

And now we come to the most wonderful and peculiar-looking tribe I have ever met in all my travels,—the Sirionos. They live in the territories of Bibosi, Guarayos, Carmen and *Loreto de Mojos* and *El Rio*



**A YOUNG BOLIVIAN SAVAGE**

*Piray.* They are a powerful, ferocious race, and great hunters. With the bow and arrow they are wonderful experts, aiming with marvelous accuracy. Their bows are very large and the points of the arrows are infected with poison, death-dealing in its flight. Their raiment is naught but the zephyrs of the woodland and the shadows of the forest foliage. The peculiarity of these Indians is they are what is called slant-eyed,—that is, each eye looks out in an exactly opposite direction at the same time. They can look behind them, sideways, upward and downward, but never straight in front with both eyes. If their moral and mental vision could but attain such varied mastery, what wonderful adepts they would soon become in diplomatic service! what powerful officials in governmental chambers!

This tribe has been compelled, for many generations, to be on sharp lookout for the stealthy attack of the venomous serpents and the sudden spring of the tiger and other wild beasts of the vast forests, and each eye has become so strained and forced into an unnatural focus that it looks out to the right or left. But in spite of this defect, they can see more at a glance than a white man can in a week, and their hearing is acute. Their feet turn directly inward, and they cut their hair with a sharp piece of sugarcane.

### Indians of the Amazon

The Indians of the Amazon live in the impenetrable forests of the upper valley of that mighty river, where no European explorer has yet penetrated, and they

roam about much like beasts, unclad and untaught. On the banks of the Purus, a single tributary of the Amazon, there are believed to be over thirty Indian tribes whose names are known, and there are rumors of many more. The Indian chiefs of this race bedeck themselves with wonderful adornments; their skin is very dark and smooth, and they are fierce warriors.

#### **Descendants of the Incas**

Then there are the Quichua-speaking Indians, the descendants of the Inca race, who speak a language "that will never die." Many ruins of their magnificent works of architecture remain, speaking of the ruined civilization and remote antiquity of their marvelous race, whose empire was crushed by the Spaniards. The sun circles of Scandinavia and Tartary, the stone circles of Carnac in Brittany, and Stonehenge in England, find their counterparts in the stone circles of Peru. The prehistoric and comparatively high civilization of the Inca dynasty which, rising in the eleventh century, attained its greatest extension and supremacy at the time of the discovery of America by Columbus, fell before Pizarro, in 1532.

The scattering tribes of Indians on the great Orinoco River are also very little known to the world, and the great problem of South America's future prosperity and power can only be solved, to my mind, by the evangelization and civilization of these dark, wild, benighted races of the hidden forests. The country is rich in forest trees, sublime lakes, medicinal barks, India rubber, and mines of untold wealth,—silver, gold, diamonds and precious stones,—a field,

indeed, of great magnitude for industrial development and the opening up of new veins of commerce. But evangelization and civilization are the two first mighty stepping-stones to future possibilities, and can only be safely crossed by the use of the gospel. The gospel is God's all-conquering power over tribes and nations, the only perfect civilizer of fallen man in every land and clime, and, as the illustrious Gladstone rightly called it:—

“The greatest gift to mankind.”



SKETCHED NEAR THE BEN!