

Literature in South America

By Rollo Ogden

It is at first sight a little puzzling that a literature of such extent as actually exists in South America to-day should be almost entirely unknown in this country. The reason cannot be that it is embodied in a foreign language. Spanish, it is true, is little read among us, yet the most notable writers of Spain find translators and a market in the United States. More than that, South American books are almost as rare in Spain as here, and when the leading Spanish critic, Juan Valera, set himself a few years ago to making known to his countrymen some of the literary workers in the former Spanish possessions across the Atlantic, he was like one exploring an unknown continent.

The real reason is to be found in the lack of diffused education, and the limited number of the reading classes, in South America as a whole, and in the condition of the book trade in that part of the world. Those who read at all are much fewer, both absolutely and in proportion to the population, than in the United States or in almost any country of Europe. For the few who do read, the abundance and cheapness of foreign literature in pirated editions make an alluring bid, and the native author is in danger of being overlooked. French literature conquered Spain in the beginning of this century more thoroughly than Napoleon ever did, and is only just now suffering some dethronement; from Spain it went out to overrun her ancient colonies, and among them founded a dominion which is scarcely shaken to this day. More than that, indigenous writers have had to contend with the prestige of the more distinguished authors of Spain. The lack of anything like an international copyright makes it easy for the works of men who have a fame as wide as the reach of the Spanish language to be put on sale in South America at prices with which native productions find it impossible to compete. German publishers have sinned grievously in this respect—one firm in particular, that of Brockhaus, having most shockingly pirated some of the best-known Spanish writers. Immense numbers of unauthorized reprints of Trueba's works, for example, have been sold in Spanish America, from which he never received a penny. It is pleasant to know, however, that a project of some of his South American admirers to buy him a home for his old age came to cheer his last days.

Such conditions as these really prevent the existence of a regular book trade in South America. On this subject the late Argentine Minister to this country, himself an author of note, says, in the course of a private letter to the writer: "The great difficulty, in my opinion, is to establish the sale and circulation of Spanish-American books as an article of commerce. . . . The greater part of the Spanish-American editions are very limited, and are sold only within a single country, for there is no book trade; there are no publishers who print books on their own account and as a business." Thus it is, he adds, that many important writings go unpublished, "because not every one has the money to print his own books, or the time to waste in unproductive labor." In keeping with this is the fact that many volumes of South American authorship are printed in Paris or Madrid or Barcelona—or even New York. It is simply a question of getting a job of printing done at the lowest rates, and not at all a question of securing a publisher and access to the channels of the book trade.

In the face of such a state of things, with the certainty that an adequate pecuniary return can be looked for by no writer, even the most successful, with most of the motives of literary fame taken away, the existence in every South American country of a small but enthusiastic and trained band of literary workers—poets, novelists, historians, philosophers, jurists—is a most astonishing thing. It witnesses strikingly to the survival of the old literary tradition of Spain. The decades in which Spanish ideals were most powerfully impressed upon the New World were the age when Spain was at the head of the literature of Europe, as well as in the front rank of power and civilization. From the first there existed among the Spanish emigrants and

colonists a love for scholarship and letters. It lived in the pure air on the heights of the Andes, and it survived the fevers and miasms of Central America. Relations with the literary authorities of the mother country were as speedily established as with the political administration of affairs. Little offshoots of the Spanish Academy began to appear here and there across the Atlantic, and to perpetuate, in their miniature way, the solemn functions of legislating in matters literary. This enthusiasm for literature was inevitably, in those early days, a pure, unselfish flame, the rewards of authorship being to be found only in the consciousness of work well done, and in the approval of a few kindred minds, with perhaps the possibility of that rare distinction, winning the notice of the Royal Academy of Spain; and it is undoubtedly to this early impetus that the existence of a like spirit to-day is due.

At any rate, it does exist. In the most unlikely spots you will find an "Ateneo," holding regular discussions and preserving the literary tradition after the manner of its prototype in Madrid. In the most unpromising surroundings a "Society of Writers and Artists" will have its meeting-place, its stated gatherings, its hospitable welcome for any chance traveler who may evince a desire to frequent with those who love the life of the spirit. A sort of literary tournament or jousting is kept up in the Spanish fashion, and laurel wreaths and bay-leaves (the prizes really amount to little more) are given to successful essayists and poets. One might lately read of such a literary contest in Honduras—Honduras, which suggests to the average American only swamps and fever and revolutions. Greetings to and from the older sister literary societies in Spain go back and forth in stately phrases, and rare is the great literary event in Spain that is not participated in by some son of greater Spain across the sea. At the coronation of Zorrilla as national poet of Spain, a personal representative of Dom Pedro was present to convey Brazilian congratulations, and a delegate from the leading literary society of Caracas had a place accorded him in the pageant. This solidarity of race and language still holds her old colonies to Spain with clasping links that do not break with time or the turns of politics. It is the resolute contention of Valera, in his valuable "Cartas Americanas," that the literature of Spanish America is a part of the literature of Spain; and the facts warrant the assertion. In like manner the most recent historian of Brazilian literature acknowledges that it is but a rivulet going to make up the main stream of the great Portuguese literary movement.

Coming a little closer to the actual productions of Spanish-American writers, it might be fair to say that the total literary result is made up of about seventy-five parts of poetry, fifteen parts of fiction, five parts of history, and the rest of criticism and technical writing. There is no doubt that South American literature drops into poetry with a fatal facility. Valera admits that it may fairly be accused of "exuberance in its lyric poetry," but thinks that symptoms of improvement are already visible, "a part of the sap which is now employed in lyric compositions going to vivify other branches of the tree of knowledge." And he goes on to cite some of the names of Spanish-Americans who are "skillful, industrious, and successful cultivators of criticism, jurisprudence, history, geography, linguistics, philosophy, and other severe studies." Such a change of tendency unquestionably exists, and it must be considered as a sign of promise for the future.

For anything like a complete outline of the actual literary movement of South America the writer has neither the knowledge nor the space at his disposal. Some parts of the field have already been well worked. A good deal has appeared in English about the literature of Mexico, in the writings of Bishop Janvier, and, notably, Bishop Hurst. One or two Cuban authors have been introduced to the American public—two at least of Heredia's poems having been translated by Bryant. Perhaps a better idea of what is being done in South American literature can be given by a few details about the writers of a single country than by scattering remarks about the whole subject. For this purpose I will choose the Argentine Republic. That country probably surpasses most of the other republics of South

America in the extent of its literary productions, yet what is true there is measurably true elsewhere. I am indebted to Señor Quesada, formerly Argentine Minister at Washington, for much information on this point.

Among Argentine historians figure an ex-President of the Republic, General Bartolomé Mitre, the author of several volumes, as well as of many monographs, and of some very important studies in American bibliography; Vicente F. Lopez, Minister of Finance, whose standard history of his own country has been published in eight volumes, and whose work on the native races has been printed in French; Luis L. Dominguez; Minister Quesada himself, who has written many volumes of history and travels, as well as criticism; Manuel R. Trelles, and a half-dozen others. At least ten writers have published their collected works, of whom one, Santiago Estrada, has been most highly praised by the leading critics of Spain, on the occasion of the appearance of his eight volumes recently printed in Barcelona. In poetry, besides the great historical names of Echeverría, Balcarce, and Mármol, there must be considered Olegario Andrade, who died but a few years ago, and whose poems won the enthusiastic praise of Valera, in his first volume on South American literature; Carlos Guido Spano, Juan María Gutierrez, Ricardo Gutierrez, J. C. Varela, and very many others. A host of names could be cited as authors of travels and novels. Specialists appear in works on bibliography, archæology, editions of the classics, and international law; in the latter department, Carlos Calvo, author of "Le Droit International," in five volumes, and "Dictionnaire du Droit International," is an acknowledged authority. A large number of literary reviews and of scientific and technical journals witness to the literary activity of the La Plata Republic. In 1887 there were published 452 papers and periodicals of all sorts, and the "Anuario Bibliográfico" corresponding to the same year counts up 899 books and pamphlets published in the course of 1886, having to do with science, travels, literature, law, etc. This quantity of literary production, as Minister Quesada well says, is no proof of high quality, but it is a proof of intellectual activity.

It may be worth while to give the titles of a few books relating to the whole subject or a part of it, which may be of service to any who may care to look more into the matter for themselves:

"Poesías de la América Meridional. Coleccionados por Anita J. De Wittstein. E. A. Brockhaus, Leipzig, 1874." "Escritores españoles é hispano-americanos. Por M. Cañete, Madrid, 1884." "Escritores y poetas sud-americanos. Por Francisco Sosa. Mexico." "Historia de la Literatura en Nueva Granada. Por José María Vergara y Vergara. Bogota, 1867." "Galería de poesías de los mejores poetas de la América del centro. Por Ramon Uriarte. Guatemala, 1888." "La Poésie Castellane Contemporaine (Espagne et Amérique). Par Boris de Tannenberg. Perrin et Cie, Paris, 1889." "Cartas Americanas. Por Juan Valera. Fuentes y Capdeville, Madrid, 1889." "Nuevas Cartas Americanas. Por Juan Valera. Fernando Fé, Madrid, 1890."

An Initial Party

By Mae Myrtle Cook

Grace Smith gave an initial party to about thirty of us young people last week, and we all enjoyed it so much that I think perhaps some other party of young people may like to know of it.

The invitations were very odd-shaped affairs, being cut out in form of Grace's monogram. Her initials are G. A. S. They were united in a very pretty monogram, which was then painted in three shades of purple upon the folder to be used as the invitations; it was very pretty. Upon opening the invitation one read as follows:

"G. A. S. requests the pleasure of the presence of J. K. L. at an initial party on Friday evening next."

Of course we all wondered what an initial party was, but, although we besieged Grace with questions, all the satisfaction we got was the answer, "Wait and see." Our curiosity was wrought up to the highest pitch, and when the evening appointed came not one of those invited was missing. After a short time Grace asked us all to find seats. Then, handing her brother Frank a bunch of cards with pencils attached, she said:

"Now, while Frank is supplying you with cards and pencils,

I will explain to you what is desired of you. You will notice that at the left of each card is a column of figures. Now I have here a list of questions, one for each number on your cards. As I ask these questions you will answer each in just three words, using as the initial letters of each answer the three initials at the head of your paper. Do you all understand?"

But as some were a little doubtful, she explained that the initials of each person present would be found on some one of the cards, and that no person could have the card containing his or her own initials. It happened that one or two had received cards with their own initials, but they exchanged with others, and soon all were settled down waiting for the questions. Grace took her place with us, and her mother read off the questions, which we were given just three minutes each to answer. A great deal of laughing and much knitting of brows went on as we puzzled over the answering of the questions, without using other than the given initials. There were fifteen of the questions, as follows:

1. What is your name?
2. Describe yourself.
3. How old are you?
4. What are you doing?
5. Where do you live?
6. What is your greatest fault?
7. What is your favorite fad?
8. What is your present occupation?
9. What do you intend to be?
10. What is your favorite article of food?
11. What are you wearing at present?
12. Who is your favorite author?
13. Shall you ever marry?
14. What is your best quality?
15. What is your favorite flower?

Of course the first question was easily answered, as we knew each other's names so well, but the rest were difficult to answer sensibly.

When the questions were all answered, the cards were exchanged until each person held that containing his or her own name. Mrs. Smith then read the first question, and the answers as written on the cards were read in succession; then she read the second, and so on, until all the answers were given.

It was very amusing, and the absurdity of some of the answers, and the undeniable cleverness of others, together with the grammatical construction of others, kept us laughing constantly. Some were very good and especially applicable, and of these I give a few, in order to show what ordinary young people can do in a very short time with a really somewhat difficult game.

Frances Orton Franklin, a gay, popular girl, was described as "Fond Of Flirting," her greatest fault was "Fooling Old Fogies," her present occupation "Following Of Fashions," and her favorite fad "Finding Other Fellows."

Our young hostess, a pleasant girl with artistic tastes, was said to have for a fad "Giggling And Singing," her best quality was a "Groping After Sacrifice," her favorite food "Grapes And Sausages," and she was to be a "Great Artist, Sir."

George W. Dean, the studious boy, was described as a "Grave Wise Donkey," he "Grew Wiser Daily," was to become a "Great, Wealthy Doctor," and his favorite author was the "Gentle, Witty Dickens."

Inez Lillian Yothers was an "Idle, Lazy Youngster," and when asked if she would marry, replied, "It's Leap Year."

Will F. Allen's favorite food was "Well-Fried Alligators," his favorite flower "White-Flowering Asters," he wore "Well-Fitting Attire," his age was "Warranted Fifteen Ages."

Supper was now announced, and we all trooped out to the dining-room. At each plate was a dainty card bearing a monogram, and each guest must search for his or her own place as thus indicated.

After supper the time was variously employed with games, one of which was very much enjoyed on account of its novelty. It was played after the plan of the childish game of "I know something that begins with" a certain letter. Only this time the leader said:

"Who is the 'Jolly White Ragpicker'?" also announcing that it was the name of a favorite poet.

After much guessing it was correctly announced to be James Whitcomb Riley. Some of the others were:

- Scotch Rustic Child—S. R. Crockett.
- Greatly Celebrated—Grover Cleveland.
- Eccentric Writing Woman—Ella W. Wilcox.
- Reckless Bard—Robert Browning.
- Lovable Modern Author—Louisa M. Alcott.
- Hypercritic Skeptic—Herbert Spencer.
- Engaging Evangelistic Helper—E. E. Hale.

The time passed so pleasantly that we were all surprised to find that it was growing late, and we departed, assuring our hostess that we had enjoyed our evening greatly.

Books and Authors

The Life to Come¹

The Free Presbyterian Church in Scotland and the Congregational churches in England and the United States are close competitors for the honors of fecundity in influential theological works. In the present volume, however, the conservative interest will rejoice more than the innovating or progressist. The traditional views are nevertheless presented with a cautious reserve on crucial points, and a judicious moderation of statement, as well as a tone of thoughtful appreciation toward controverted doctrines, which cannot fail to win consideration in dispassionate minds.

What Christianity brought to the world on the subject of Immortality was new light on the truth already glimpsed, and the subsequent transformation of a feeble and vacillating belief into the assurance of a glorious hope. Of this preparatory stage Dr. Salmond gives a full history. The student will find here a thesaurus of well-digested information on the beliefs of the lower races of men, and the ideas of the more civilized ancient nations. So many cases of seeming exception have given way before careful scrutiny that he holds it certain that there has been no people devoid of the belief which "the quenchless instinct of life" inspires, that it shall outlast death.

The primitive belief in the persistence of life gradually took on a moral form, especially in Egypt, Greece, and Persia, in the idea of a retributive judgment beyond the grave. Here we can only note the historical lesson, significant even now, how "the canker of sacerdotalism" destroyed the moral value of this idea by its substitution of magical devices and ceremonial practices for a life of virtuous endeavor.

Of closer interest to us is Dr. Salmond's account of the Hebrew preparation for the Christian doctrine. Hebrew ideas of the future are traceable to Abraham's early Babylonian home. The Hebrew *Sheol* and the Babylonian *Arāth* were each a realm of shadow, a scant half-life, joyless, abhorrent even to pious souls. Out of this dreary conception the great prophetic souls of Israel rose through no borrowing of foreign beliefs, but through their unique intuitions of God, as the Living God, from whose grace neither life nor death could separate, for that he was in Sheol as well as in the heavens. This impassioned hope of the righteous soul in God gave birth also to the national Messianic hope of his universal reign over the nations, in which Israel through repentance should rise again to national glory. But it could not be that God's dead people would be worse off than his living people. Thus the resurrection of Israel on earth prompted hope in a resurrection of Israelites from Sheol. Dr. Salmond repudiates all alleged indebtedness of the Old Testament on this point to Zoroastrianism. "Its conception of God explains the entire history of its conception of a future life."

But the Old Testament does not go beyond the idea of a resurrection limited to Israel. It is Christ who extends it to "all that are in the graves," the evil as well as the good. The shadow side of the truth he seldom shows, and only to sober the scorner. He does not so much teach immortality as manifest in himself the life which is indestructible. As the prophets' thought of immortality grew out of their thought of God, so the Apostles' thought of it grew out of their thought of Christ, as the One who could not be holden of death. He has assured them, "Because I live, ye shall live." To die is to be with him in the bosom of God.

The prophets' conception of the kingdom of God as conceived in their Messianic hope, Christ purified of later notions which had narrowed and debased it, then transfigured it into the conception of a sovereign moral order, in which the present and the future are related as the *now* and *then* of a continuous life, and made it, as Dr. Salmond observes, "the central point of his teaching." His teaching is, therefore, viewed as apocalyptic by those who ignore the grand differences it shows to all other teaching which wears that name: first, in insistence that the Kingdom is now here demanding allegiance; next, in reticence about its future disclosures. The main concern of Christ is not other-worldly, except so far as the issues of the other world are involved in this world. It is with the present that he has to do, but a present which is the future in the making.

The three particulars of the future which are distinctly touched by Christ are his Return, the Resurrection, and the Judgment. Dr. Salmond takes the traditional view, according to which these are successive *events* taking place at "the end of the world." This view coheres with the ancient idea of human life on earth as recently begun and soon to end, but not with the modern idea of a race whose feeble beginnings are immeasurably

remote in the past, and whose maturity is to be coeval with the habitability of the earth for thousands of centuries. In this vast course of things, whose successive stadia will be marked off, as in the past, by great crises and catastrophes, by ice-ages and cataclysms, we must distinguish more clearly than Dr. Salmond the time-worlds of history from the space-world of science. The Revised Version suggests this, as often as it reads "the consummation of the age" for "the end of the world." Equally important is it to note that while Dr. Salmond's phrase, "the Return," implies an event, Christ's word, "Parousia" (Presence), implies a period, a continuity.

An "intermediate state" of purgatorial or sanctifying influences is a favorite postulate of those who relegate the Return, etc., to a remote end, as catastrophic events. For this hypothesis Dr. Salmond finds no Scriptural warrant, and is fain to leave in obscurity the question of souls awaiting a far-off "bodily resurrection." Substitute now for a catastrophic event an evolutionary *process*, and the Return (or Presence), the Resurrection, and the Judgment are transferable to the present, as stages in the progressive unfolding of spiritual life, in continuity of development here and hereafter. The evolutionary idea is no less accordant with the New Testament teachings than the catastrophic, while it clears away some refractory difficulties.

"Annihilation, Restoration, and Continuous Retribution" are each, in Dr. Salmond's view, possibly coherent with the New Testament, but the last named demonstrably so, and in the sense that retribution is unending. His discussion is elaborate: thirty pages to the great texts in 1 Peter concerning Christ's preaching in Hades. He will not concede that "everlasting" can mean anything but lasting forever. But even so he does not leave us wholly hopeless. "Eternal," to him a fateful synonym for endless, he says, "is not to be associated with metaphysical ideas of eternity." It is not the only case in which we have known a Scotch theological professor to vindicate the creed uncompromisingly, and then offer some consoling counterbalancing considerations.

Those who do not agree with Dr. Salmond will generally find their own views fairly stated either in the text or in copious notes from representative writers. For a writer of positive convictions he is a model of fairness and modesty. Our general criticism is that he does not admit that an age which has outgrown the Apostles' conceptions of the world and the universe may in some points more truly apprehend Christ than they. Also, that in dealing with the shadow side of the future he relies too much on the interpretation of *texts*, not allowing proportionate weight to the fundamental and architectonic *principles* of Christ, as related to the unapparent possibilities even of unhopeful lives; seeing that, as Jesus said of the Father, "all live unto him." We prefer to seek relief here from the gloomy results of text-grinding, rather than to think, with Dr. Salmond, that in the mysterious crisis of death may occur the regenerating change, whose last opportunity expires when the final breath that leaves the body leaves the soul in a moral condition unalterably fixed.

The Martyrs of To-Day¹

A strong, timely, trenchant book. The author, the Rev. George H. Filian, was banished by the Turks from Marsovan, where he was a church pastor. He is vouched for by the Faculty of Chicago Theological Seminary, and by men like Drs. Storrs, Barrows, and Van Dyke. He tells the story of Armenia from the earliest time, but dwells at length on what has happened since the Turkish tyrant undertook to crush the noble race, whose only crime was that it was becoming, under its American teachers, more intelligent and prosperous than its Moslem neighbors. With the tale of outrage, blood, and devastation, and its sequel of famine and pestilence, we have been harrowed in the daily journals, until the stimulating dose, so often repeated, has begun to have a narcotizing effect, and our sensibilities grow numb. Yet the facts are these, and we cannot say it concerns us not that bloodthirsty cruelty like that of the Assyrian butchers in the eighth century before Christ defies the sentiments of Christendom by the carnage wrought under the orders of Hamid II. in this nineteenth century A.D.

We may be sure that the end is not yet. Pastor Filian believes that ultimately the American and British missionaries, refusing to abandon their work, will be murdered, and that England and the United States will avenge them. However incredulous of this one may be, no one can deny that the policy of our Government on the question of American treaty rights in Turkey has been such as to encourage the aggressive policy of the Sultan in his efforts to rid his land of the steadfast friends of the Armenian martyrs. The New York "Times" last spring edi-

¹ *The Christian Doctrine of Immortality*. By Stewart D. F. Salmond, M.A., D.D., Professor of Theology, Free Church College, Aberdeen. Charles Scribner's Sons, New York. \$5.

¹ *Armenia and Her People; or, The Story of Armenia by an Armenian*. American Publishing Company, Hartford, Conn.