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*"To the solid ground
Of Nature trusts the mind which builds for aye."*—WORDSWORTH.

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NOTES ON THE ABORIGINES OF SOUTH AMERICA.

Aborigines of South America. By the late Colonel G. E. Church: Edited by an Old Friend, Clements R. Markham, K.C.B. Pp. xix+314. (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1912.) Price 10s. 6d. net.

THE author of this posthumous work was a descendant of the earliest New England colonists. Born in 1835, he became a surveying engineer, and his first introduction to South America was of a kind sufficient to shape his whole career. As a member of an expedition sent out by the Government of Buenos Aires in 1859 to explore the south-western frontiers, he partook of severe fighting with the then still unsubdued Araucanians and Patagones. Then he served through the whole of the Civil War in the United States, and next he joined the General Staff of Juarez against Maximilian. After that episode we find him in Bolivia, which he reached once by Buenos Aires, another time by Peru, busy with concessions of the navigation of Bolivian and Brazilian rivers. A political mission to Ecuador, the building of an Argentine railway, business in Panama, Costa Rica, and elsewhere afforded him well-nigh unrivalled opportunities of studying land and peoples of South America before he settled down in London, where he devoted much time to his favourite geographical and ethnological studies.

The author's intention to write a comprehensive work on the aborigines of South America was frustrated by his death in 1910, and only the less incomplete chapters have been edited by his friend, Sir C. R. Markham, himself a traveller in those parts of the world. They are apparently not so

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much notes by the experienced, observant traveller as critical, carefully sifted extracts from the numerous accounts of previous explorers, whose accounts alone can bear upon the "history" of these wild, roaming, barbaric tribes. In many cases the bewildering number of names, mostly nicknames bestowed upon each other by the various clans and muddled by the Europeans, have been reduced to synonymic order. Presumably all the aborigines of the whole continent are of one stock, but time and separation and environment have diversified them. One of the most vigorous were the Caraios, Caraiibes, Guaranis, or Tupis, with their origin in Paraguay, whence this dominant race made its influence felt from La Plata to Orinoco and spread even to the Antilles. Several chapters are devoted to the unravelling of the resulting dislodgment of the coast-tribes of Brazil and those of Amazonia, and to the troubles brought upon them by the Portuguese and Spaniards. The scanty notes made by the white man, not always well educated, be he soldier, trader, or missionary, about customs, arms, and ornaments, are often the only facts known about many a so-called tribe.

Within late Tertiary periods the whole continent seems to have been divided into an eastern and a western half, from Uruguay to the Orinoco, by a system of enormous lakes. Our author evidently believed that such a division still existed when man already inhabited South America, before the Pampean and Amazonian inland seas and other lakes, of which Titicaca is a remnant, had yet been drained by the present great river systems. This somewhat rash idea is on a par with the suggestion that South America may have been connected with Africa or Australia via Antarctica at a period when climatic conditions made these dreamlands a pleasant abode for man and thus account for the puzzling origin of the Patagonians.

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