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VOLUME 1

THOMAS COCHRANE



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# CHILI AND PERU.

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NARRATIVE OF SERVICES  
IN  
THE LIBERATION OF  
CHILI, PERU, AND BRAZIL,  
FROM  
SPANISH AND PORTUGUESE DOMINATION,  
BY  
THOMAS, EARL OF DUNDONALD, G.C.B.  
ADMIRAL OF THE RED; REAR ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET,

ETC. ETC.

—◆—  
VOL. I.  
—◆—

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TO THE MOST NOBLE  
THE MARQUIS OF LANSDOWNE, K.G.

ETC. ETC.

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MY LORD,

I am proud to have been honoured with your Lordship's permission to dedicate to you the following narrative of historical events, respecting which the public has not previously been placed in a position to form a correct judgment. Your Lordship's generous acquiescence enables me to discharge a double debt: First—of thanks to one whose high political character this country will ever warmly cherish;—Secondly—of deep-felt gratitude for the countenance and efficient aid experienced from your Lordship at a period when party faction made me the object of bitter resentment; the injustice of which could in no way be better demonstrated, than by the fact that—in the midst of unmerited obloquy, it was my high privilege to preserve your Lordship's friendship and esteem.

I have the honour to be,

Your Lordship's obliged and faithful Servant,

DUNDONALD.

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## P R E F A C E.



THE first of these volumes forms a history of the consolidation of Chilian independence, and of the subsequent liberation of Peru—through the instrumentality of the Chilian squadron under my command; a service which called forth from the Governments and people of the liberated states the warmest expressions of gratitude to the naval service collectively, and to myself personally, as having planned and conducted the operations whereby these results were attained.

It records also the strangely inconsistent fact that—beyond these marks of national approbation—neither Chili nor Peru ever awarded to the squadron or myself any more substantial reward—though, in a pecuniary sense, deeply indebted to us; for, during the greater portion of the war of independence, the subsistence of

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the crews, and the repairs and equipment of the Chilian squadron were solely provided for by our own exertions, without cost to the Government; since, in addition to the capture of Spanish ships-of-war and merchant vessels—money, provisions, and stores to a great extent fell into our hands; all of which—though our own stipulated right—were voluntarily devoted to state exigencies, in the full conviction that, at the expiration of the war, the value of our sacrifices would, as a point of national honour, be returned to us by Chili. As regards Peru, our still unpaid for captures of ships-of-war formed her first naval force, for which the only requital has been, a vote of her first National Assembly—almost its inaugural act—ascribing to me the double praise of her liberation from the Spanish yoke, and of her subsequent deliverance from an intolerable military tyranny.

The volume contains another point, which forms a yet stranger sequel to my services on the Western shores of South America. After the expiration of thirty years, Chili granted me the absurdly inadequate sum of £.6,000 *in full of all my claims!* And this, with the knowledge that, after my return to England I was involved in litigation on account of the legal seizure of vessels under the orders of her former Government

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—by which I was subjected to a loss, directly and indirectly, of *more than three times the amount*. The Chilian portion of this history, therefore, resolves itself into the fact, that not only did I reap no reward whatever, for the liberation of Chili and Peru, but that the independence of both countries was achieved *at a heavy pecuniary sacrifice to myself!* in compensation for which, as well as for my recognised services—Chili has thought its national honour sufficiently vindicated by allotting me *one-third of my losses only*, without other compensation of any kind! I regret to add, that my necessities at the time, arising for the most part from the pecuniary difficulties to which I had been subjected on Chilian account, compelled me to accept the amount tendered.

The second volume is of a character somewhat similar. It narrates the circumstances under which—by promises the most inviting, and stipulations the most binding—I was induced to accept the command, or rather organization of the first Brazilian navy. It details the complete expulsion of all Portuguese armaments, naval and military, from the Eastern shores of the South American Continent, by the squadron alone, wholly unaided by military co-operation; in the course of which arduous service, ships of war, merchant vessels, and valuable property to

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the extent of several millions of dollars were captured under the Imperial order, and their value—in spite of previous stipulations—*refused to the captors*, on the falsely assumed ground that the provinces liberated were Brazilian—though a Brazilian military force had been recently beaten in an attempt to expel the Portuguese—and though these provinces were, at the period of my assuming the command, in the uninterrupted occupation of the very Portuguese fleets and armies afterwards expelled, it was falsely pretended that the property captured was not enemy's property—though expressly described as such in numerous Imperial decrees—and more especially by the instructions given to me by His Imperial Majesty to seize or destroy it wherever found.

It was, in short, subsequently decided by a Court of Admiralty—for the most part composed of Portuguese members, acting under the influence of a Portuguese faction in the Administration—that neither myself nor the squadron were entitled to the prizes made—though most inconsistently, the same tribunal condemned the ships of war taken—as “*droits*” to the crown—for which, compensation was awarded to the squadron by His Imperial Majesty, but never paid by the ministers to whom the order was directed.

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Not to anticipate the contents of the volume devoted to Brazilian affairs. It being found after the expulsion of the enemy, that the stipulations made with myself were too binding to be easily set aside, several futile attempts were made to evade them, but this being found impossible, the unworthy expedient was resorted to of summarily dismissing me from the service, after the establishment of peace with Portugal—an event entirely consequent on my individual services. By this expedient—of the rectitude or otherwise of which the reader will be able to judge from the documentary evidence laid before him—I was got rid of without compensation for my claims, which for thirty years were altogether repudiated; but, at the expiration of that period, fully recognised as *having been due from the beginning!* The Brazilian Government, however, satisfied its own sense of justice by awarding me less than *one-half the simple interest of the amount stipulated in my patents*; thus retaining the whole of the principal admitted to be due.

The preceding remarks form a *synopsis* of my career on both sides of the continent of South America; the narrative, where dispute might arise, being carefully founded on, and in all cases accompanied by documentary evidence, which admits neither dispute nor contradiction.

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The trifling amount awarded by Chili, would probably not have been granted at all, but for the earnest remonstrance of Lord Palmerston, warmly seconded by the efforts of the Hon. Mr. Jerningham, British Minister to the Chilian Republic, by whose joint exertions the Government was induced to admit—that national honour was involved in fulfilling national obligations; though an infinitesimal view of either the one or the other was certainly taken when awarding me the insignificant sum previously mentioned.

In Brazil the case was somewhat different. It is to His present Imperial Majesty, Don Pedro II that I owe any investigation of my claims, by the appointment of a Commission (*Secções*), which reported that they ought never to have been withheld, as being my stipulated right. But even the limited amount awarded in consequence of this decision, was on the point of being further diminished one half by its projected payment in a depreciated currency—and, had it not been for the intervention of Lord Clarendon, and of the Hon. Mr. Scarlett, British Minister at Rio de Janeiro, of whose zealous exertions in my favour I cannot speak too warmly—this further injustice would have been perpetrated without the knowledge or sanction of His present Imperial Majesty.

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It may be asked, why—with the clear documentary evidence in my possession—and now adduced—I have for so many years endured an amount of obloquy and injustice, which might at any time have been set aside by its publication? The reply is obvious. The withholding of my claims by the Governments of both sides the South American Continent, and the ruinous expense to which I was put on account of Chili, entailed upon me many years of pecuniary difficulty. To have told even the truth—unbacked as I then was, by the British Government—would have been to have all my claims set at defiance, so that compulsory discretion was a sufficient reason for my silence. It was long before I could induce a British Minister to satisfy himself of the rectitude of my conduct—the soundness of my claims—or the dishonesty of those who, believing me to be powerless, laughed at reiterated demands for my stipulated rights. Yet more I have never sought from those to whom I gave liberty and dominion.

There is, however, a reason for the present publication, of which I have never lost sight. Amidst all the injustice which it has been my lot to sustain, I have ever determined—for the sake of my family—to whom my character is an heir-loom—that no obloquy shall follow me to the grave, for none have I merited. On the

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day these volumes see the light, this resolution will be partially fulfilled. On that day I shall have completed the eighty-third year of a career strangely chequered, yet not undistinguished; and, therefore, the opinions of either Chilians or Brazilians are now of small moment to me in comparison with a reputation which has been deemed worthy of belonging to history. None of the present ruling powers in either Chili or Brazil can possibly be offended with me for giving a guardedly temperate documentary narrative of what must hereafter form the basis of their national annals. I do not for a moment contemplate that men of enlightened views such as now direct the affairs of both countries have either part or sympathy with self-interested adventurers who in popular revolutions too often rise to the surface, and for a time make confusion worse confounded; till replaced—as a matter of course, no less than of necessity—by men of greater grasp of mind and more exalted aspirations.

But be this as it may—my reputation as a British seaman is to me of the highest moment, and it shall not be sullied after my death by the aspersions of those who wilfully revenged the thwarting of their anti-Imperial designs, by imputations which can alone enter into the minds of men devoid of generous impulses, and there-



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fore incapable of appreciating higher motives. I have not followed their example, but where it is necessary to bring forward such persons—they will be viewed through the medium of their own documents, which are incontestible and irresistible, and which would as easily convict me of untruth as they convict my maligners of practices unworthy the honour of a nation.

To my own countrymen these volumes can scarcely be matter of indifference; though, perhaps, few reflect that the numerous fleets of British merchantmen which now frequent both shores of South America, are the consequence of the deliverance of these vast territories from an exclusive colonial yoke. It is true that England had previously formed a treaty with Portugal, permitting English vessels to trade to her South American Colonies, but such was the influence of Portuguese merchants with the local governments, that it was nearly inoperative; so that, practically, the Portuguese were in the exclusive possession of that commerce which my expulsion of the fleet and army of the mother country unreservedly threw open to British enterprise. The same, even in a higher degree, may be said with regard to Chili and Peru.

Yet, scarcely had my mission to Chili become known, than the influence of Spain induced the British Ministry to pass a “Foreign Enlistment

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“ Act,” the penal clauses of which were evidently aimed at me, for having entered into the service of unacknowledged governments without permission—though I had shortly before been most unjustly driven from the service of my native country.

In blind animosity towards me, my former English persecutors failed to perceive the advantage to British commerce, of freeing both sides of South America from lingering war and internal dissension. An amusing instance of this occurred on my return to England. Having occasion to wait upon the then Attorney-General relative to a patent which I had in hand, he brusquely inquired “ *whether I was not afraid to appear before him?* ” On my replying that “ I was not aware of having reason to fear “ appearing in the presence of any man,” he told me the question had been officially put to him, whether I could be punished under the “ Foreign Enlistment Act,” for the part I had taken in the liberation of Chili, Peru, and Brazil? To this I replied, that “ if Government was “ indiscreet enough further to persecute me for “ having thrown open to British commerce the “ largest field for enterprise of modern times, “ they could take what steps they chose, for “ that I, having accepted service in South “ America before the passing of the Act, was not

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“ afraid of the consequences of having infringed  
“ its provisions.” It is almost needless to say  
that no such prosecution was instituted, though  
the will was good, despite the national benefits  
conferred.

I will not enter farther into the subject in a  
preface to volumes which themselves form only  
a summary of events in which I was a principal  
actor, but at the same time, one, which I hope  
will prove satisfactory and decisive. It would  
have been easy to have dilated the narrative, but  
my object is solely to leave behind me a faithful  
record of events which must one day become  
history, and there is no history like documentary  
history.

To those high personages who have advocated  
my cause with other nations, the present volume  
will give satisfaction, as affording additional  
proof that their advocacy rested upon no vision-  
ary basis. To the members of the press, who  
have adopted the same views, this exposition  
will be equally satisfactory. To all these  
I owe the thanks of recognising in me, a  
love for that service, from which—for a time  
I was unjustly expelled. It is my intention,  
if God spare my life, to add to these Memoirs a  
narrative of my former experience in the British  
navy, and, what may be of greater utility, an

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exposition of that which, from jealousy and other causes no less unworthy, *I was not permitted to effect*. To these I shall add a few remarks upon my connexion with the liberation of Greece, developing some remarkable facts, which have as yet escaped the notice of historians. These reminiscences of the past will, at least, be instructive to future generations and if any remarks of mine will conduce to the permanent greatness and security of my country, I shall deem the residue of my life well spent in recording them.

At my advanced age, such a task as that now partially executed, would, perhaps, have presented insuperable difficulties, but for the assistance rendered me by MR. EARP, who, with great perseverance, has unravelled—what, in the lapse of time, had become the almost inextricable confusion of my papers. That, however, has, with his assistance, been accomplished in such a way as to base upon original documents every incident contained in the work—the more important of these documents being adduced, so as to admit of neither doubt nor question. The same course will be pursued in the forthcoming English portion of my career, with a result, I trust, equally clear and convincing.

DUNDONALD.