

## A PHILADELPHIA EDITOR LOOKS AT LATIN AMERICA, 1823-1834

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**D**URING twelve eventful years of the nineteenth century—from January, 1823, through December, 1834—Presbyterians in the United States could have read, and certainly hundreds of them did read, in the monthly issues of their leading denominational "miscellany," pertinent comments on affairs in many parts of the world. The first number of the *Christian Advocate*, the name by which this magazine was known, appeared in Philadelphia in January, 1823, under the editorship of Dr. Ashbel Green, lately president of the College of New Jersey. Dr. Green was no stranger in the City of Brotherly Love. In fact, after an absence of several years, he had come home to the city in which he had achieved professional prominence. A son of Jacob Green, a Presbyterian minister, he was born in Hanover, New Jersey, on July 6, 1762. After his graduation by the College of New Jersey, in 1783, he taught for a while in that institution and also studied theology there under the guidance of President John Witherspoon. He was ordained and installed as pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia in 1787, and he continued in service to this church for twenty-five years, from 1793 as its principal minister. From 1792 to 1800 he was one of the chaplains to the Congress of the United States. During his pastorate in Philadelphia, he rose to prominence as an executive in the expanding Presbyterian Church, and he took a prominent part in the growing missionary movement in the United States. He was one of the founders of the Theological Seminary in Princeton, and he served as president of its board of directors until his death in 1848. Resigning his pastorate in 1812, he accepted the presidency of the College of New Jersey, an office which he held for ten years.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the brief sketch of Ashbel Green's life, by Robert Hastings Nichols, in the *Dictionary of American Biography*, VII, 536-537, and *The Life of Ashbel Green*, V. D. M., *Begun to Be Written by Himself in his Eighty-*

When he returned to Philadelphia in 1822, his health was somewhat impaired, but he had no thought of retiring altogether from public life. He knew well that the age in which he lived was a momentous one, and he believed that there was useful work he yet could do. His pecuniary situation, moreover, was such as to make it desirable for him to seek some gainful employment. Consequently, he may well have considered himself a fortunate man when the managers of the *Presbyterian Magazine* invited him to take over the editorship of that magazine, with the understanding that thenceforth it would be published under a new name which might be expected to make a wider appeal to the American Christian public.<sup>2</sup>

Although the business of publishing magazines was no novelty in the United States in 1823—it had been begun in Philadelphia as early as 1741—Ashbel Green nevertheless waged an uphill fight to make his magazine pay its way. At the end of his first year as editor, when he informed his patrons that he had assumed the full ownership of the *Christian Advocate*, he remarked that the receipts were barely paying the expenses of publication.<sup>3</sup> But he did not lose heart, and as the years went by his diligent labors were to some extent rewarded. At the end of the third year he was obviously pleased that he could say that his magazine was going into nearly every state of the Union.<sup>4</sup> Two years later, with a subscription list of somewhat more than a thousand, he could say that “The profits of publication, a little, and but a little, exceed a thousand dollars annually.” In view of this situation, he felt that he was no longer justified in adhering to a pledge he had made in the beginning of his undertaking of giving a tenth of the profits of the magazine to the “treasury of the Lord.”<sup>5</sup> After all, he had to live. By the end of the year 1829, with a subscription list still somewhat short of twelve hundred, he was of the opinion that the magazine had acquired a sufficient patronage to ensure its per-

*Second Year and Continued to His Eighty-Fourth* (Joseph H. Jones, ed.; New York, 1849). See also “Introduction,” *Christian Advocate* (January, 1823), I, 1-2, and “Retrospect and Valedictory Address,” *ibid.* (December, 1834), XII, 521. A scholarly study of Green’s career is needed.

<sup>2</sup> The title-page of the first volume of the new series reads as follows: *The Christian Advocate, Being a Continuation of the Presbyterian Magazine.*

<sup>3</sup> *Christian Advocate* (December, 1823), I, 580.

<sup>4</sup> “Preface,” *ibid.* (1825), III, iii.

<sup>5</sup> “Preface,” *ibid.* (1827), V, iii-iv.

manence.<sup>6</sup> Perhaps this was about as much support as the magazine ever received, for Green confessed, in December, 1834, that, although the *Christian Advocate* was not folding up for want of subscribers, its circulation nevertheless was not likely to rise high enough to answer his design of doing extensive good to the Presbyterian Church. Being now no longer dependent upon editorial labors for his support, he believed that the time had come for him to retire from his editorial post.<sup>7</sup>

Whoever they were and wherever they were, the readers of the *Christian Advocate* could be certain that every number of that magazine bore the heavy impress of Ashbel Green's personality. A man strong in his convictions and plain-spoken in his speech, Ashbel Green was not much given either to compromising issues that were important to him or to tempering his utterances in respect of persons who were wrong. After seven years of editorial effort, he was proud to say that his *Christian Advocate*, "while invariably catholic in its tone toward all evangelical protestant denominations, has been for a series of years, the steady, open, and unequivocal advocate of Presbyterian institutions, doctrines, and measures—in opposition to much that has been, and still is, either calculated or intended to discredit, undermine and subvert them."<sup>8</sup> Specifically, he meant that he had become the "decided friend" of the doctrine that it belonged to the church, "in its distinctive character, to evangelize the world."<sup>9</sup> Voluntary societies, such as the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions and the American Home Missionary Society, were therefore suspect. Presbyterian missions could properly be conducted only by a board appointed by the General Assembly of that church and made responsible to that judicatory. So he hammered away at an issue which was destined within a few years to do much to split open the Presbyterian Church, and by so doing he doubtless incurred the lasting ill-will of many Presbyterians who otherwise would have become subscribers to his magazine.<sup>10</sup>

And if Ashbel Green was uncompromising and outspoken in his defense of Presbyterian doctrines, he was no less unyielding

<sup>6</sup> "Preface," *ibid.* (1829), VII, iii.

<sup>7</sup> "Retrospect and Valedictory Address," *ibid.* (December, 1834), XII, 522.

<sup>8</sup> "Preface," *ibid.* (1829), VII, iii.

<sup>9</sup> "Preface," *ibid.* (1828), VI, iv.

<sup>10</sup> "Retrospect and Valedictory Address," *ibid.* (December, 1834), XII, 521.

and forthright in his defense of the English language. In the beginning it was made perfectly clear that the editor of the *Christian Advocate* reserved the right to make indispensable alterations in manuscripts submitted to him, but it was made equally clear that the editor of this magazine did not intend to become merely a "re-write" man. He would neither take the time to recast the careless composition of indifferent writers nor would he submit to the humiliation of having his "miscellany" made a "receptacle for crudities."<sup>11</sup> Here, indeed, was a laudable ambition, but to realize it Ashbel Green soon discovered, as many another editor since his time has discovered, that he would have to hurt many feelings and to endure much exasperating toil. As early as May, 1823, "mad angry" because of the poorly written manuscripts that had been sent to him, the old man gave his "Readers and Correspondents" a piece of his mind on the subject of respectable writing.<sup>12</sup> "Many of those who write with a view to publication," he snapped,

seem to have no conception of the pains which they must take, if they ever write what will be worth the reading—or what will actually be read. One object of our work is to promote literature, in subserviency to religion. And we verily believe that we should render a most important service to religion, if we could induce those who discuss its sacred topics publicly, to do it in a manner more worthy of their hallowed theme—Not surely with wordy declamation and gaudy ornament, but with chaste simplicity, lucid statement, and natural gracefulness. There is a sad want of this in our country, in many of those who write and speak on religious subjects: and if our humble labours may have any influence in producing a change for the better, the best of causes will be served, and all concerned will be profited.

So Ashbel Green, too old to become progressive, clung tenaciously to the odd notion that good writing could be made to serve the cause of God. He saw no reason for doubting that one could be pious without being crude; no reason for doubting that one could diffuse Christian knowledge without being ungrammatical; no reason even for doubting that one could denounce the pope or

<sup>11</sup> "Introduction," *ibid.* (January, 1823), I, 4.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.* (May, 1823), I, 240.

utter other "pious words" without mixing one's metaphors. To his way of thinking, slovenly expression was unbecoming to a Christian, a patriot, and a Presbyterian; it was as displeasing to God as it was distasteful to Ashbel Green. Steadfast in this as in other worthy causes, he fought a good fight until he was well past seventy-two. But the evidence is unconvincing that he won many converts to the cause of good writing, "in subserviency to religion," for he continued to complain of poorly written articles and of heavy editorial duties.<sup>13</sup> In the end, as he was laying down his editorial pen, he affirmed, perhaps a bit pridefully, that it

is believed to be questionable whether any monthly miscellany of 48 octavo pages, has been continued for twelve successive years, in this or in any other country, with so little assistance to the editor, as that which has been received by the present writer.<sup>14</sup>

Like other American religious leaders of his time, Ashbel Green was deeply involved in various phases of the modern missionary movement, and with them he shared the conviction that the world was rather soon by human means to be converted to Christ. And, flourishing as he did in the era of upsurging nationalism in the United States, he was more or less disposed, like many another American minister of that era, to stir his patriotic sentiments with his theological beliefs and thus produce a conviction that the republic of which he was a citizen was destined, under God, to play a significant part in spreading the Redeemer's kingdom to the uttermost ends of the earth. As a Christian, therefore, he tended to read his history as a record of the prophecies fulfilling themselves, and as a patriot he was inclined to watch the signs of the times to discover the duties of Christian Americans. Everywhere, as he looked about him, he could not help seeing what appeared to be God's hand turning and overturning, shaking the nations, as it were, and thus opening doors for the entrance of His gospel into unevangelized lands. Clearly the time in which he lived was a momentous one, a time of great crisis, a time in which Christians, and American Christians especially, should be alert to the pointings of the finger of Providence.

<sup>13</sup> See, for example, *ibid.* (April, 1825), III, 192.

<sup>14</sup> "Retrospect and Valedictory Address," *ibid.* (December, 1834), XII, 522.

What, then, by 1823, had become the meaning of the wars of liberation that had long been raging in Spanish America? What was the duty of Christians and patriots in the United States in respect of their southern neighbors? What, specifically, in respect of all Latin America, was the duty of Ashbel Green, editor of the leading Presbyterian "miscellany" in the United States?

Of the foregoing questions the one that seemed vital to Green was the last one, and the answer that he would give to it is not far to seek: it was clearly suggested by his own *Weltanschauung*. As a Christian editor of an evangelical magazine, it was his duty to study current happenings everywhere and to interpret these happenings to his readers. From a true interpretation of happenings in Latin America would emerge the answers to the first and the second of the foregoing questions. If the trend of events clearly showed that doors were opening in Latin America to the true gospel, then the meaning of the political convulsions in the revolted colonies of Spain would be clear enough. And if the doors were truly opening in Latin America, then it would be the duty of Christians and patriots in the United States to pass through these doors with the true message of salvation. In partial fulfillment of his editorial duty, therefore, Green prepared from month to month a survey of world happenings and published this survey under the title of "View of Publick Affairs." It was in this department of his magazine that he principally, though not exclusively, imparted to his readers some news and more views of Latin America.

A man of strong convictions and of steady courage, Ashbel Green could be trusted to approach the subject of Latin America with the same directness and with the same forthrightness that enlivened his approach to any other subject. His object would be to promote knowledge of neighboring peoples, "in subserviency to religion." Given the climate of opinion in which he moved and had his being, he could look at Latin America only as a patriot, a philanthropist, and a Christian. As a patriot, he believed in republicanism as it was then practiced in his own "favored country"; as a philanthropist, he believed in the kind of beneficence then being exemplified by American and by British evangelical groups; as a Christian, he believed especially in Presbyterianism as it was then understood by conservative Presbyterians in his own country.

And, among the things he emphatically disliked—and of such the number was not small—the “superstition of popery” occupied a place of high honor.

Like nearly all of his fellow-countrymen, Ashbel Green could lay no claim to special knowledge of Latin America. Like them, he could only take the news that came into the United States from that area and ponder its meaning. His magazine, therefore, has no value to students of inter-American diplomatic or economic history, but it does have great value to one who would study the impact of Latin America upon the mind of Protestant Christians in the United States between 1823 and 1834. In our time Ashbel Green seems important as a reflector of a segment of early American thought with respect to the Latin-American world; in his own time he was important as one of the makers of that segment of the American mind. The audience to which he spoke was a relatively small one, it is true, but this audience was select and important.

But however much Green may have lacked first-hand knowledge of Latin America, there is no denying that well before 1823 he had acquired a keen interest in that part of the New World. As an educated American, he could hardly have ignored the information which was making Americans of his generation increasingly aware of their southern neighbors. Moreover, as an officer of the Philadelphia Bible Society, formed in 1808, and as an officer of the United Foreign Missionary Society, formed in 1817, his attention had been drawn with peculiar force to Spanish America as a field of missionary effort, for both these societies were alert to the possibilities of Christian labor in that area.<sup>15</sup> Nor could he have been unaware of the publicity that Samuel J. Mills had been giving in the United States to Latin America as a field of potential missionary effort;<sup>16</sup> and it would be sheer folly to suppose that he was not well acquainted with the efforts of British and American Christians before 1823 to distribute Bibles

<sup>15</sup> *Panoplist*, n. s. (January and May, 1809), I, 378, 554; *ibid.* (September, 1817), XIII, 428; *A Digest Compiled from the Records of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America . . .* (Philadelphia, 1820), pp. 216-220.

<sup>16</sup> Gardiner Spring, *Memoirs of the Rev. Samuel J. Mills . . .* (New York, 1820), p. 105, and *passim*.

in Spanish-speaking America.<sup>17</sup> Before the end of 1822 his sympathy for his southern neighbors was thoroughly aroused, and, encouraged by the knowledge that his own government had begun to recognize Latin-American countries,<sup>18</sup> he was ready, when he took up his editorial duties, to speak his mind freely on Latin-American affairs. Accordingly, nearly a year before the battle of Ayacucho, he wrote for the first number of the *Christian Advocate* as follows:

There is no longer room to doubt of the independence of Spanish America. We should indulge, without reserve, our pleasure at this result of the war, could we believe that our brethren of the South will retire from the field in the same spirit that our fathers felt, at the close of the war which established our independence. But there is too much reason to fear that the contending interests in Southern America cannot readily be reconciled; that discordant passions cannot be soothed; and even that freedom is, for them, too early a gift to be properly prized. . . .<sup>19</sup>

A month later he was squirming because of the difficulty he was experiencing in getting trustworthy information about his southern neighbors, but he tried to curb his impatience with the thought that, when one can do nothing to change a condition, one does well to be patient about it.<sup>20</sup> He observed that American "ministers" had been appointed to "Mexico, Buenos Ayres, Colombia, and Chili," and he was at least mildly thrilled by contemplating "the vast change that will, in a few years, probably take place, in the

<sup>17</sup> See the *Reports* of the British and Foreign Bible Society from the year 1807 to the year 1823. These *Reports* contain much information on the activities of the earliest Bible societies in the United States. The American Bible Society was formed in 1816 with the expectation that Latin America would be an important part of its field of operations. N., "General Bible Society," *Panoplist*, n. s. (March, 1814), X, 120; American Bible Society, *Third Report, 1819* (New York, 1819), p. 12.

<sup>18</sup> By the recognition of the United States government in 1822, Colombia was the first of the Latin-American states to enter the family of national states. Arthur P. Whitaker, *The United States and the Independence of Latin America, 1800-1830* (Baltimore, 1941), p. 388.

<sup>19</sup> This and all subsequent quotations (except as otherwise indicated) may be found in Green's "View of Publick Affairs" of the month and the year specified in the text.

<sup>20</sup> *Christian Advocate* (February, 1823), I, 96.



relative importance to our merchants and politicians, of the old and new worlds."<sup>21</sup>

But however confident Green may have been that Latin America would ultimately be free of European overlordship, he was from 1823 to about 1825 deeply apprehensive of a developing situation in Europe which might plunge both Europe and the Americas into a disastrous war. Specifically, he feared the concert of continental European powers which was striving to suppress doctrines and practices it considered subversive of "legitimate monarchy." At the moment, these powers were threatening to close in upon Spain, and, should they accomplish their purpose in Spain, the whole world would, as Green believed, indeed "wear a gloomy aspect."<sup>22</sup> Writing in April, 1823, he made known his fear that the allied powers, once they possessed the continent of Europe, would endeavor to hush up the free press of Britain; but he was persuaded that Britain, unwilling to submit to so humiliating a restraint, would again fight Europe, and fight her single-handed, unless, he added significantly, "our own country, anticipating its destiny if Britain were conquered, should afford her aid."<sup>23</sup> In December, 1823, Green was confident that Spain and Portugal were determined, with the aid of France, to re-assert their authority in the New World. Their attempt to do so, he could scarcely doubt, would involve the United States in war.

We are certainly not regarded with a favourable eye by any of the lovers of despotick rule [he warned]. They think, and with less error than often marks their opinions, that our own revolution and existing government are to be regarded as the source and vital spring of that spirit of liberty in Europe which has caused them so much trouble, which of all earthly things they most hate and most desire utterly to destroy.

But Green believed that Britain, ever alert to protect her commercial interests, would not willingly tolerate the subjugation of the newly emancipated countries in Latin America. These views Green

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.* (April, 1823), I, 192.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

expressed before he had read President Monroe's famous message of December 2, 1823, to the Congress of the United States.<sup>24</sup>

For several months Green played with the idea of Anglo-American armed co-operation to protect the New World from the evil designs of the Old World.<sup>25</sup> With the recent "spirited declaration" of President Monroe in his mind, he asserted in January, 1824, that "Britain and the United States, acting in concert, may protect the whole of the new world against all the force, and machinations, and despotism of the old—and," he concluded, "we hope they will." A month later he wrote:

A rumour is abroad that the court of St. James has made a distinct overture to our government, to unite in measures to prevent the interference of any European power, not naturally a party, in the quarrel of Spain and Portugal with their former colonies. If there is truth in this rumour, we think that no interference will take place. The British fleet, with our aid, or without it, can,

<sup>24</sup> In a brief addendum to his "View of Publick Affairs," December, 1823, Green said that he had carefully read the President's message. In general, he commended it, but he said nothing about its significance for the situation in Latin America. At the moment Green was much perturbed about another matter. He was sorely grieved and disappointed to discover that Monroe's message contained "no recognition of our dependance [sic] on God, or of our indebtedness to Him for the unparalleled prosperity and happiness of our country."

<sup>25</sup> Green's enthusiasm for Anglo-American co-operation, however, was not an enthusiasm derived exclusively from his perception that both British and American national interests would be served if European intervention in Latin America should be prevented. It ran far deeper than that. Green trusted the British nation as he trusted no other European nation. To him Britain had been, and was, "the great focal and radiating point of the pure light of revelation, by which the moral darkness of the world is eventually to be chased away, and the glorious day so long the subject of scripture prophecy, be made to dawn on all the people and kindreds of the earth." Observing, in the summer of 1825, "a cordial disposition to cultivate the friendship of our country, in the religious part of the British community," he remarked fervently: "May this disposition continue, and may it be cherished on our part, as conducive not only to the benefit of the parties immediately concerned, but to the extension of real freedom and true religion to other nations, both civilized and savage, in every quarter of the globe. We earnestly hope that while anti-Christ is combining and arraying his forces, to obstruct the progress of rational freedom and revealed truth, the two freest nations in the world will withstand him, by a front and force that shall look him into dismay, turn him to flight, and carry the conquests of reason and revelation successfully and far into his own territories." *Christian Advocate* (August, 1825), III, 380-381. How different, therefore, in his eyes, as we shall see, was the empire of Britain from the empire of Brazil! It is not a matter of record (at least in the *Christian Advocate*) that he thought that Protestant Britain ought to adopt a republican form of government.

humanly speaking, easily control the whole adverse naval power of Europe.

Somewhat later, rejoicing to learn that Britain had no part in the "measures of the Holy Alliance," and that she appeared in fact to be on the point of recognizing both Brazil and some of the revolted colonies of Spain, Green wrote as follows:<sup>26</sup> "To our apprehension, it seems as if Britain and the United States were to form the sheet anchor of the hope and happiness of the world." "But," he added, somewhat as if he believed that he had been speaking out of turn, "perhaps we are indulging too much in speculation and conjecture." When he learned that Britain had adopted the policy of recognizing Latin American states, and of making commercial treaties with such nations as it recognized—a policy whose adoption he announced in March, 1825—Green breathed more easily.<sup>27</sup> He now had little reason to fear an intervention in the New World by a European concert. "Britain," he declared,

will maintain her treaties of commerce—for commerce is her life and her idol—with as much determination as if they had been treaties of alliance offensive and defensive. And in opposition to the determination of Britain and the United States to favour the independence of our southern sister republics, we do not believe that any party of the Holy Alliance will be found mad enough to give them any farther trouble. . . .

Of no less concern to Green than his desire that European political intervention should fail in the New World was his hope that the spirit and the practice of good neighborhood should prevail in the Americas. With much satisfaction he recorded events such as the exchange of diplomatic representatives between the United States and the newly formed Spanish-speaking republics of the south and the formation in Central America of a republic

<sup>26</sup> *Christian Advocate* (August, 1824), II, 380.

<sup>27</sup> In May, 1824, Green had written as follows: "The French court have declared that no intention is cherished to aid the Spaniard, by sending a military force to South America. We believe the declaration—and we equally believe that they have *relinquished* the intention, because our President and the British government have let it be known, that the United States and Britain will be found on the side of the colonies, if Spain is not left to settle her dispute with them, unassisted by other powers." *Ibid.* (May, 1824), II, 239-240.

that was desirous of cultivating "intercourse with the United States."<sup>28</sup> Of a treaty of alliance, offensive and defensive, concluded by Mexico and Colombia, he remarked, in 1825, that this "is a most important measure, in reference to both domestick peace and to foreign aggression."<sup>29</sup> And as late as 1829, when he believed that Spain was seriously attempting to re-assert her authority in a part of her former American colonies, he regretted that "civil dissensions in the South American republicks should encourage their enemies, and enfeeble and distress themselves."<sup>30</sup> An American family of nations, held together by bonds of filial affection, informed by a conscious solidarity of New World interests, and secure as against aggression from continental Europe—such appears to have been the ideal that Green was formulating for a New-World state system. At one time, indeed, his all-American patriotism mounted so high that he caught a glimpse of an era when all the Americas, motivated by the principles of "pure" religion, might play a significant part in reclaiming a sin-ruined world.<sup>31</sup> But it was not of a New World in complete isolation from the Old World that he dreamed, nor yet a New World community which his own country would dominate. He appeared to have no fear that an increase of trade between Latin-American countries and European nations would disturb the harmony he hoped to see established in the New World. A confessed disciple of Adam Smith, he was an ardent champion of free trade, and nothing in his writings in the *Christian Advocate* would sustain the belief that he wished his own country to control the economic life of the Americas.

Every project that envisaged inter-American relationships was, indeed, a subject of keen interest to Green. One such project to which he gave attention at least three times within a period of about two years was the project of constructing an interoceanic canal. Pleased at the thought that in Central America a republican government similar to that of the United States was likely soon to be formed, he observed in July, 1824, that "an ambassador from this republick has arrived among us, who, it is affirmed, has brought out a plan of a canal, which, in an extent of not more

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* (April and May, 1824), II, 192, 240.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.* (June, 1825), III, 288.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.* (July, 1829), VII, 333.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* (September, 1827), V, 474-475.

than five or six leagues, will unite the Atlantick to the Pacifick Ocean." Six months later he noted that there was considerable interest in such a canal in Mexico, Colombia, and the United Provinces of Central America, and he was led to believe that the Mexican government had "invited proposals for actually cutting this canal through the isthmus of Tehuantepec."<sup>32</sup> In the autumn of 1826 the subject of a canal came to his attention in a more favorable light.<sup>33</sup> "It appears," wrote Green in September of that year,

that about a year ago the Government of the Republic of Central America, called for proposals for effecting a navigable communication between the Atlantick and Pacifick Oceans, through Nicaragua, one of the States of Central America; and that several companies have been formed for the purpose in Europe, as well as one, if not more, in the United States. Official information has lately been transmitted to President Adams, that the contract for this noble and interesting undertaking, has been given to the company in New York, of which A. H. Palmer, Esq. is the leading member. The route of the contemplated canal is by the river St. John into the Lake of Nicaragua, and from the western extremity of that lake, about seventeen miles, to the Pacifick. The company is to have the right of toll, and certain other exclusive privileges, supposed to be of great value. A plan of this kind has been long in contemplation; and if it shall be successfully executed, it will produce wonderful changes in the commercial world—A voyage from our country to the Gallipagos, or even to the Otaheitan or Sandwich Islands, will be about as easy as to Britain, France, or Spain.

An interoceanic canal in the New World, as we know, was not completed until more than a half-century after Green's death, and this latter-day enterprise was begun under circumstances of which Green most certainly would not have approved.<sup>34</sup> It may

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1825), III, 48.

<sup>33</sup> On the subject of a proposed Nicaragua canal in this period, see Gerstle Mack, *The Land Divided* . . . (New York, 1944), pp. 172-173, and Miles P. DuVal, Jr., *Cadiz to Cathay* . . . (Stanford University, c. 1940), pp. 23-25.

<sup>34</sup> On the acquisition by the United States of the Panama Canal Zone, see Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 2d ed. (New York, 1942), Chapter 23 and works therein cited.

seem remarkable, therefore, given his ideal of good neighborhood in the Americas, that he should have suggested, in 1826, a project which, if it had been adopted, would have set one part of Latin America against another part thereof—a project that squinted at the establishment of a balance of power in Latin America. In March, 1826, he announced that at last Dom Pedro I, emperor of Brazil, had declared war on the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata—an unjust war, as Green believed—over the Banda Oriental, a province which Green was firmly persuaded the emperor could not rightly claim.<sup>35</sup> Observing that delegates from the United Provinces had consulted Bolívar and Sucre on this subject, and that these men had promised assistance to the United Provinces, Green expressed the following opinion:

Indeed we see not how the republicks of South America, generally, can forbear to do this. The emperor's dominions are already enormous; and to allow him to extend them, and subject neighboring republicks to his sway, would not consist either with principle or the common safety.<sup>36</sup>

Here was a definite suggestion that Spanish-speaking America should unite against Portuguese-speaking America. But it seems clear that Green did not so much envisage a balance of power in Latin America based upon the principle of linguistic differences as one based upon the difference between the principle of republicanism and the principle of monarchy. As we shall see presently, his attitude toward Brazil was deeply colored by his dislike of the fact that Brazil was an empire.

It may be, indeed, that Green's suggestion of a coalition of Spanish-American republics against Brazil contemplated only a temporary combination, a combination that would disappear when Brazilians should expel their emperor and become good American republicans. However that may be, we do know that at this very time Green was deeply interested in a proposed inter-American congress which might possibly realize for the Americas the goals of freedom from war at home and freedom from aggression from

<sup>35</sup> *Christian Advocate* (January, 1826), IV, 47.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.* (March, 1826), IV, 143.

abroad. Of the prospective Panama Congress Green, as early as May, 1825, wrote as follows:

A kind of Amphictyonick council, or congress, consisting of representatives from all the new States in Southern America, is expected to meet at Panama, in October next; to form a confederation for their mutual protection against foreign claims and invasions, and for making such arrangements of their internal concerns as may be calculated to prevent disputes, and to ensure peace and concord. This is a most important measure; and we hope the result will be favourable to the interests of pure and undefiled religion, as well as to those of civil liberty, and special happiness of every kind.

Here his language indicates that he believed that all the states of "Southern America," the empire of Brazil no less than the Spanish-speaking republics, were to participate in the meetings of this congress, and that the United States was not to take part in the deliberations of this body. Yet in July, 1825, he wrote: "A congress of all the republicks was expected soon to assemble, at the Isthmus of Panama." Ordinarily Green wrote very precisely, saying exactly what he meant to say. If he still understood that Brazil was to be invited to this congress, he would hardly have disposed of the matter by saying "all the republicks." And again, as late as December, 1825, he was saying that, inasmuch as Bolívar—a man of "known wisdom and patriotism"—had taken great interest in getting this congress together, he hoped that there was "a prospect that much benefit to all the new republicks will be the result." It may be that the first news he received of this proposed gathering led him to believe that Brazil would participate in its sessions, but that later news raised a doubt in his mind. In any event, Green never cleared up this ambiguity.

When he finally learned that the United States had been invited to participate in the Panama Congress, and that President John Quincy Adams had submitted to the Senate the names of two delegates, he showed increased interest in this international gathering. He was exasperated at the delay of the Senate in consenting to the appointment of United States delegates. Like a contemporary editor, Jared Sparks, he believed that opinion in the United

States was very strongly in favor of American participation in the deliberations of this body.<sup>37</sup> "If," he wrote in April, 1826,

the opinions and feelings of those who originated the discussions which have proved so tedious, and have so unhappily excited much acrimony, are not contrary to the wishes and views of the great body of the American people, we do grievously mistake. We doubt if any important measure could be named, not immediately touching our domestick interests, that would insure in its favour a larger share of the popular voice, than the mission to Panama.

By October, 1826, he had heard that the Congress of Panama, without waiting for the arrival of delegates from the United States and of delegates from some of the Latin-American states, had formulated a treaty of alliance and amity and had then adjourned to the city of Tacubaya, in Mexico. "We are glad to learn," he continued, "that Mr. [John] Sergeant and Mr. [William B.] Rochester will probably set out for the place of meeting, in a month or six weeks from the present time." From that time onward until the next August, he kept mentioning the subject of the congress, generally having nothing to say of it, however, except that there was no news of the "Congress of Tacubaya."<sup>38</sup> In August, 1827, he made his final mention of the subject, in these words:

The unsettled condition of the South American governments renders it uncertain when, or whether ever, the Congress of Tacubaya will assemble. Our representative and fellow citizen, John Sergeant, Esq. has returned to his family in health and safety. We have seen no publick statement of the intelligence he may be expected to communicate.

Although he did not parade his disappointment over the failure of the Panama Congress, we may suppose that Green was deeply chagrined at the outcome of that ill-fated conference. His hopes for its possible accomplishments had indeed been high; in fact,

<sup>37</sup> Whitaker, *op. cit.*, p. 570.

<sup>38</sup> For a recent scholarly treatment of this subject, see Whitaker, *op. cit.*, Chapter 19.



he had all but anticipated a pan-American program which more than a century later, under the leadership of the United States, has been more or less realized by the adoption of the "good-neighbor" policy. "The great desideratum," he wrote in March, 1826,

for the preservation of American liberty and happiness, throughout our whole continent, is, some effectual means to prevent discord and war among ourselves, and to guard against foreign aggression—to preserve the entire independence of individual states, and yet provide for combination and concert, in all cases that demand co-operation—If the congress of Panama can solve this problem, it will do much. What part the United States are to take in this concern, or whether any, is yet undecided.

Here is language broad enough to include all the American countries, the monarchy of Brazil as well as the republics of both North and South America.

From the beginning of his editorial career, Ashbel Green made no bones about his belief that monarchical government was an anachronism in the New World. At the very time, in May, 1823, that he was announcing the demise of the regime of Iturbide in Mexico, he was disclosing his astonishment that a large majority of Brazilians should appear so "dotingly fond of regal state and absolute power;" and he concluded his remarks on this subject by expressing the opinion that the time would come when neither kings nor emperors could exist anywhere on the "American continent." Later in that year, noting that the "emperor of the Brazils" was having trouble with his neighbors in Buenos Aires, he remarked that when republican and imperial governments were taking form in adjoining territories, it would not be easy to preserve "good neighbourhood."<sup>39</sup> So obnoxious, indeed, did monarchs in the New World appear to him that, in chronicling the execution of Iturbide, following an unsuccessful attempt of that ill-starred man to reinstate himself in Mexico, he could muster up no sympathy for the late emperor. He was glad that adequate provision had been made for Iturbide's widow and children—that was all.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>39</sup> *Christian Advocate* (November, 1823), I, 531.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* (September, 1824), II, 431.

The annoyance of imperial Mexico was of a moment only, but the annoyance of imperial Brazil was of years on end. Questions of political theory aside, there can be little doubt that imperial Brazil was to Ashbel Green both a literary nuisance and a logical encumbrance. Its presence in the New World made difficult the use of an inclusive term to designate the underlying unity of all the Americas. Brazil was not covered by the term "sister republics," and most certainly it was not a part of Spanish America. Unhappily—or perhaps happily, as one pleases—Green never succeeded in pulling out of the barrel a term such as "Latin America." The best expression of general significance that he came upon was "Southern America," a term that left something to be desired. Then, too, there was the ugly fact that imperial Brazil laughed in the face of every attempt to conceive of an American community set apart from the state system of Europe. Though it was in the Americas, Brazil very definitely was not of the family of American republics. Brazil, as Green well knew, had become independent, but Brazilians to his way of thinking had not yet taken the first step toward achieving their emancipation. All this, we may be sure, was exasperating to a man so precise and so unyielding as Ashbel Green. In the very nature of things he could hardly think well of the imperial Brazilian government or of the head of the Brazilian state.

As a matter of fact, Green made no effort to conceal his dislike of Dom Pedro I. That the "emperor of the Brazils" had some ability, he could not deny.<sup>41</sup> But he objected to the arbitrary way Dom Pedro went about giving a constitution to Brazil,<sup>42</sup> and whenever insurrection lifted its head in the dominions of the emperor, Green was almost certain to drag out his prediction that presently emperors and kings would be no more in the Americas. When, early in 1826, it appeared that Brazil would soon be involved in war over the Banda Oriental, Green expressed the confident opinion that such a war would turn the empire of Dom Pedro into "republics."<sup>43</sup> "Empires and republics," he wrote

—we repeat a remark that we made nearly two years ago—are not calculated, especially when in a forming

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* (March, 1826), IV, 143.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1824), II, 48.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1826), IV, 47.

state, to be good neighbours. It would be wonderful indeed, if Brazil should remain long under an absolute sovereign, when all its territories join on free and independent republics.

Throughout the course of the war over the Banda Oriental his sympathies were consistently on the side of those who were fighting the armies and the navy of the emperor; and when the American *chargé d'affaires* to Brazil, Condé Raguet, asked for his passports because of injuries inflicted during the war by the Brazilian government upon Americans, Green hoped that the government of the United States would "publicly and speedily" contradict assertions of the Brazilian government to the effect that the American government did not approve of the manner in which Raguet had withdrawn from his post.<sup>44</sup> Feeling as he did about the imperial government of Brazil and about the Brazilian emperor, we may presume that Green experienced some personal satisfaction when he wrote, in September, 1831, that it "seems that Dom Pedro has made a happy escape with his family, from his new empire." But he was compelled to add, a few months later, that in Brazil "all was confusion."<sup>45</sup> Unfortunately for Green's predictions, the abdication of Pedro I did not liquidate monarchy in Portuguese America, nor was Ashbel Green ever to see the day when Brazilians would live under a republican regime.

If Green's hope that, in response to a strong drift of tendency, monarchy in Brazil would give way to republicanism was not soon to be fulfilled, his hope that Iturbide's regime in Mexico would be followed by stable republican government was likewise in his time destined to disappointment. In the summer of 1823 he was encouraged to believe that Mexico had enlightened leaders who understood the "nature of civil liberty and the means of preserving it,"<sup>46</sup> but by the opening of the next year his confidence was wavering. "In Mexico," he declared, "we fear there are too many like the Spaniards of the mother country."<sup>47</sup> He still hoped that

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.* (October, 1827), V, 480. This subject is treated at considerable length in Lawrence F. Hill, *Diplomatic Relations between the United States and Brazil* (Durham, 1932), Chapter 2.

<sup>45</sup> *Christian Advocate* (December, 1831), IX, 664. On the abdication of Pedro I, see J. P. Calogeras, *A History of Brazil* (Percy Alvin Martin, tr.; Chapel Hill, 1939), pp. 117-118.

<sup>46</sup> *Christian Advocate* (July, 1823), I, 336.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1824), II, 48.

the Mexicans would prove themselves to be capable of free government. "But from what we have seen," he went on,

both in the publick papers and in private communications, we very much fear, that although there may be wise and enlightened men in the Congress, the *people at large* are too superstitious and ignorant to support a free government. Indeed we know not what ideas can be entertained of freedom, when in the most important of all concerns, those of conscience and the worship of God, nothing is to be tolerated, or permitted, but the religion of the state. We do not believe that the best and wisest men in Mexico are in favour of this measure; but the very circumstances that it is necessary to satisfy the populace, shows that they are wretchedly ignorant and degraded, and we fear incapable of freedom. At the same time, venality and corruption are represented as dreadfully prevalent. But the experiment of a free government is, it seems, about to be tried, and we repeat, that we cordially wish it success.<sup>48</sup>

Such was his view of Mexico in 1824: a view in which hope was rather heavily weighted with fear. Yet he clung, as faithfully as he could, to the belief that in Mexico time would "shake off the trammels of education and habit."<sup>49</sup> In the mid-twenties, when his hopes for all Spanish America were at high tide, he allowed himself to believe that Mexico was approaching stability and tranquillity. But the illusion could not last long. In the spring of 1827 he observed that Mexico was faction-ridden;<sup>50</sup> in the spring of 1829 he reported that this "great republick" was fearfully agitated. More than ever he was persuaded, after hearing that insurgents had pillaged the city of Mexico, "that good republicans cannot be made without knowledge, virtue, a right education, and religious freedom."<sup>51</sup> Yet he was certain that the policy of the United States should be that of conciliating the Mexicans without surrendering any American rights—a policy which he confessed to be a difficult one to put into effect; for the Mexicans, he argued, "from their neighbourhood to the United States, are far more jealous of our citizens, and the measures of our govern-

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.* (February, 1824), II, 94.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.* (November, 1824), II, 527.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.* (March, 1827), V, 144.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.* (February, 1829), VII, 96.

ment, than any of the other republics in the Southern part of our Continent."<sup>52</sup>

At the beginning of the decade of the eighteen-thirties, Green confessed that he could not comprehend the Mexican situation. "We are utterly at a loss as to the real state of Mexico," he declared.<sup>53</sup>

It seems as if there was a government, and yet no government. It is said to be tranquil, yet in some parts of its extended territories there seems to be an active civil war. When it is likely to enjoy stable peace and real freedom, seems placed beyond human foresight, or reasonable conjecture.

To him the ways of caudillism<sup>54</sup> in Mexico were beginning to be ways that were past finding out.

But if as early as 1824 Green had some doubt as to whether Mexico could establish and maintain republican institutions, he had, on the other hand, as early as 1823, no such doubt in respect of Colombia. In May, 1823, he was convinced that Colombia had established its independence and that it had set up a government which gave promise of being stable. For some three years thereafter he saw little reason to change this belief. Observing in July, 1824, that Colombians were rejoicing because the pope had acknowledged the independence of their country, he graciously consented to waive his own objection to so outrageous a thing if only he could be certain that papal recognition would frighten the "imbecile monarchs of Spain and Portugal out of a war with our southern neighbors." More to his liking than papal recognition of Colombia, however, was his conviction, expressed a month later, that Colombian independence was "considered as established even in Britain," and his almost certain belief that Colombia would be the first southern republic to be recognized by the British government. But even more important in his estimation than the friendly attitude of Great Britain to Colombia, important as that was, was the signing of a treaty, on October 3, 1824, be-

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1829), VII, 48.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.* (August, 1830), VIII, 376.

<sup>54</sup> This word was coined by Professor Charles E. Chapman. See his *Republican Hispanic America: A History* (New York, 1937), p. 106.

tween the United States and Colombia.<sup>55</sup> "This is the first treaty formed with any of the provinces of old Spain," Green wrote in exultation in December, 1824. And, he continued, "We hope that before long we shall have treaties or conventions with them all." In June, 1825, he announced that the Dutch government had recognized the independence of Colombia. For yet another year he had nothing unfavorable to report of Colombia, but in June, 1826, he had to record the unpleasant fact that a revolution had broken out in the city of Valencia, and that Vice President Santander had retired from office. The Colombian ship of state, as the sequel was to show, had begun to drag its anchor; and in December, 1827, Green felt compelled to say that the "state of Colombia is not far different from that of Mexico"—from him a serious indictment, indeed. But still he could hope that the Liberator, Simón Bolívar, might yet put things to rights in Colombia.

Of all the persons who passed across the Latin-American stage during his editorship, only one of them, the Liberator, made a deep impression upon Ashbel Green. Just before his retirement, it is true, he had some good things to say of two Colombian statesmen, Joaquín Mosquera and Francisco de Paula Santander.<sup>56</sup> But, speaking generally, Latin-American leaders flitted into and out of his consciousness. San Martín had faded out of the picture before Green began to write of Spanish America, and so we read in the *Christian Advocate* nothing at all of that remarkable man.<sup>57</sup> The career of Bolívar, however, Green followed with much concern to the unhappy end of that distinguished leader.<sup>58</sup> To only one other Latin American, Emperor Pedro I of Brazil, did he pay attention comparable to that which he paid to Bolívar; and of Emperor Pedro, as we have seen, he had a rather low opinion.

Bolívar's name first appeared in the columns of Green's maga-

<sup>55</sup> This treaty was proclaimed on May 31, 1825. "Treaties and Conventions Concluded between the United States of America and other Powers since July 4, 1776," *Senate Executive Document No. 47* (48th Congress, 2d Session), pp. 186-194.

<sup>56</sup> *Christian Advocate* (June, 1833), XI, 288. Both these men were highly regarded in religious circles in the United States. Early in the decade of the eighteen-thirties each of them was elected vice-president of the American Bible Society.

<sup>57</sup> On San Martín, see Anna Schoelkopf, *Don José de San Martín* . . . (New York, 1824).

<sup>58</sup> On Bolívar, see F. Loraine Petre, *Simon Bolívar, "El Libertador"* . . . (London and New York, 1910), and *Cartas del Libertador* . . . 10 v. (Caracas, 1929-1930).

zine in January, 1824, when Green began to notice the Liberator's activities in Peru. Throughout that year and the next Green frequently mentioned Bolívar's movements, and in March, 1825, he announced the great victory at Ayacucho on December 9, 1824. In May, 1825, observing that Bolívar had "published a most flattering and animated address to the army which won the decisive victory of Ayacucho," he remarked that Bolívar "seems to be a man of noble spirit, of sterling integrity, and of true republican principles." But by July, 1825, his faith in the republicanism of Bolívar was perhaps somewhat shaken, for he found it difficult to approve without reservation the despotic power that the constituent congress of Peru had conferred upon the Liberator.

He appears to possess the entire confidence of all descriptions of the people [Green observed], and from what has taken place already, we hope he will not abuse it; and that he will again resign his power at the proper period. But when a people thus put themselves at the absolute disposal of a single man, and authorize him to be and to do what he pleases, it shows that they greatly distrust their own. No man would have ever been *so* trusted and empowered—not Washington himself, to be *like* whom is now the high praise of Bolívar—by the Continental Congress of our revolution. But our circumstances, although critical enough, were never like those of the Peruvians. We are not certain that the Peruvian Congress have done the best they could do. For ourselves, at least, we certainly would rather trust Bolívar than trust them—in any manner, and to any extent, that could be named. . . .

In the later years of the eighteen-twenties, when Colombia was falling upon evil times, Green watched intently the conduct of Bolívar in the affairs of that distracted state, and as he watched he wavered between hope and fear as to the outcome.<sup>59</sup> If, thought

<sup>59</sup> "Nothing among our southern neighbours," wrote Green in 1825, "has of late interested us half so much, as the reports and statements recently become current, that the Liberator Bolívar is likely to prove recreant to the cause of liberty. It is confidently stated in letters from Lima, not only that he has acted in the most tyrannical and offensive manner in Peru, but that it was there confidently believed, that he was taking measures to form Colombia, Peru, and Chili into an empire, to place himself at the head of it, and to form an alliance with the Emperor of Brazil. It is even intimated that the late movements in Colombia by General Paez, have been, and still

Green in March, 1827, Bolívar would use the dictatorial power he had acquired only to restore peace to his country and would then resign that power, he knew not "in what manner his patriotism and fame could receive an addition to their lustre." For months thereafter, notwithstanding ugly rumors he heard as to the dictatorial ambitions of Bolívar, notwithstanding the fact that some of the measures of Bolívar wore "a frowning aspect on his character," Green clung to the belief that the Liberator was honest. Writing in September, 1828, he said:

We are not satisfied whether he has done wrong or right in accepting the dictatorship. It appears now, and we have always feared it would so turn out, that the present generation of Southern Americans are too ignorant, and have been too long under the influence of bad habits, to become at once good republicans; and if they must have a master, probably Bolívar will make as good a one as any other man—There never can be real freedom in any state in which religious intolerance exists—the thing is impossible. Now this intolerance has existed, and still exists, in all the new South American states. . . . In Colombia our hopes have been disappointed; and we fear for all her sister republics—We fear that they must and will have masters. A military spirit and military ideas are prevalent—absolute command, and absolute submission, seem to be all that the mass of the people can understand—that is, *practically* understand.

Two years later, as he saw Great Colombia disintegrating, Green was hoping that Bolívar would carry out his announced intention to go into exile. "It is, and always has been," he said, "our sincere wish that he might be able effectually to falsify the allegations and indications unfavourable to the purity of his patriotism, and his integrity and honor as a man"; and he regretted that Bolívar did

are, with his connivance. We hold it, however, to be equally the dictate of justice and candour, when a man has, for a length of time, acted so nobly as Bolívar has confessedly done, not to place reliance on accounts that deeply implicate his character, till they are fully authenticated. The accounts in question are not so authenticated, and therefore we do not accredit them. The long, and to us unaccountable, absence of the Liberator from Colombia, is a circumstance which gives us some anxiety; but we still hope that in time, the whole will be explained; and that the well earned laurels of Bolívar will not be blighted, but remain unsullied and even increase in lustre." *Christian Advocate* (December, 1826), IV, 576.



not hasten his departure.<sup>60</sup> But Bolívar stayed on in South America, and in December Green again expressed his belief that Bolívar would make the Colombians as good a dictator as they could find; but, he added, "he has certainly acted in a manner that must forever destroy, in our minds at least, all confidence in his integrity and his most solemn declarations." Green did not know, as he wrote the foregoing lines, that Bolívar was in the last stage of tuberculosis.<sup>61</sup> In February, 1831, when he had good reason to believe that Bolívar was dead, he could only say: "The effect of his removal from the theatre on which he has acted so conspicuous, and for a while at least, so glorious a part, time will decide; and time alone, it would seem, will enable us to pronounce a just verdict on his whole career and character." But Green was not entirely willing to follow his own advice, for in July, 1831, observing that Colombia had become a prey to "a succession of factions," he declared that "Bolívar was right in his general views in regard to his countrymen," and that, while trying to do the best he could for them, he had sacrificed himself to party contentions that he could not control.

To the portions of Latin America other than those heretofore mentioned, the United Provinces of Rio de la Plata excepted, Green gave only slight attention in his "View of Publick Affairs." In Buenos Aires and the country adjacent thereto he had begun to acquire a particular interest as early as 1823. In the summer of that year Theophilus Parvin, a graduate of the Theological Seminary in Princeton, and John C. Brigham, a graduate of the Theological Seminary in Andover, had sailed from Boston to Buenos Aires with a commission from the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions to explore Spanish America.<sup>62</sup> After staying together in Buenos Aires for a year, they decided that Parvin should continue his labors in that city, and that Brigham alone should complete the exploration they both had been appointed to make. Accordingly, Brigham traveled overland from Buenos Aires to Chile, and from Chile he went on to Peru and then to Ecuador. From Guayaquil he took ship to Acapulco, and

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.* (July, 1830), VIII, 376.

<sup>61</sup> Bolívar died on December 17, 1830. For a brief account of his last years, see J. M. Herrero and Gerardo Arrubla, *History of Colombia* (J. Fred Rippy, tr.; Chapel Hill, 1938), Chapters 28-30.

<sup>62</sup> *Missionary Herald* (January, 1824), XX, 4.

from that port he traveled by way of Mexico City to Vera Cruz, in which port he embarked for New Orleans in the spring of 1826.<sup>63</sup> Parvin, meanwhile, had returned to the United States, and in January, 1826, he was ordained by the Presbytery of Philadelphia in a ceremony in which Green himself participated. On the same day that he was ordained, Parvin married a daughter of Caesar A. Rodney, minister from the United States who recently had died at his post in Buenos Aires. Late in January, 1826, Parvin with his wife and a young woman assistant returned to Buenos Aires to conduct an independent educational mission,<sup>64</sup> and there Parvin was soon joined by another Presbyterian missionary from the United States, the Reverend William Torrey.<sup>65</sup>

In the communications that Parvin and Brigham sent from Spanish America to the United States, and in the work of Parvin and Torrey in Buenos Aires, Green was much interested, and this interest he disclosed in many of the pages of the *Christian Advocate*.<sup>66</sup> By 1827, as a member of the board of missions of the General Assembly, he had become truly enthusiastic about the prospect of establishing Presbyterian missions in South America,<sup>67</sup> and presently he was pleading for money to support such missions.<sup>68</sup> But, oddly enough, this subject Green barely mentioned in his monthly "View of Publick Affairs." It is elsewhere in the *Christian Advocate* that we must look to discover his interest in Presbyterian missions to South America.

Accordingly, in his monthly "View," Green tended to write of the United Provinces pretty much as he wrote of other areas of Spanish America. The recognition of that republic by the United States and the favorable reception in Buenos Aires of the American minister, Caesar A. Rodney, he noted with satisfaction; and, in general, as the months went by, he inclined to the belief that the political situation in the Plata country showed signs of im-

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.* (February and March, 1826), XXII, 42, 79; American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, *Report, 1826* (Boston, 1826), pp. 100-101.

<sup>64</sup> *Christian Advocate* (February, 1826), IV, 94-95.

<sup>65</sup> *New York Observer*, April 28, 1827, quoting from the *Philadelphian*; *Christian Advocate* (January, 1827), V, 38.

<sup>66</sup> *Christian Advocate* (November, 1824), II, 522; *ibid.* (February and December, 1826), IV, 94-95, 562-563; *ibid.* (January and April, 1828), VI, 41-42, 183-184.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.* (September, 1827), V, 474-475.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.* (February, 1828), VI, 93.

provement. By June, 1824, it seemed to him that the "Colombian Republic and that of Buenos Aires" were "settling into something like a permanent civil order." Presently, however, his concern for the United Provinces was revolving about the impending war over the Banda Oriental, and about the actual progress of the war itself, a subject which has been briefly treated in an earlier part of this paper. But in June, 1825, several months before the outbreak of that war, he was rejoicing over an event which, as he believed, was big with significance for that republic. Having learned of a treaty between Great Britain and the United Provinces in which it was "affirmed that a full toleration of religion" was stipulated, he expressed his satisfaction as follows:

This we regard as one of the most important events that has lately taken place in Southern America. There can be little real freedom where the rights of conscience are not held sacred; and where there is freedom of religious opinion, true religion will ultimately prevail and triumph.

But, contrary to Green's expectations, this treaty did not mark the beginning of a brighter era for the people of the United Provinces. For the end of the war with Brazil in 1828 brought them no lasting peace. Instead, civil war distracted the United Provinces. Federalists contended fiercely with Unitarians, and from the welter of such controversy emerged presently a strong man, Juan Manuel de Rosas, whose dictatorship outlasted Ashbel Green. In this period, too, the mission of Parvin and Torrey disintegrated, and the desire of Presbyterians in the United States to support missions in South America withered away.<sup>69</sup>

By this time the thought of Green with respect to his Spanish-American neighbors was well along in its final stage. There was no concealing the fact—and he didn't try very hard to conceal it—that he had been disappointed. He had begun his editorial labors firm in the conviction that independence for Spanish-America was certain to come, but not so firm in the conviction that Spanish Americans would make the best use of their freedom. But until at least the middle of the year 1826 his hopes were in the ascend-

<sup>69</sup> Ashbel Green, *Presbyterian Missions, with Supplemental Notes* by John C. Lowrie (New York, c. 1893), pp. 85-89.

ant: until then he could believe that the "sister republics" were settling down to a peaceful life under republican governments. Then followed a period of increasing doubt, a period which was certainly nearing its end by mid-summer of 1829, when he wrote as follows:

. . . Republicans, we have frequently remarked, cannot be formed but by education; and we have long feared, and often hinted our fears, that the generation that had grown up under Spanish despotism could not enjoy the blessings of free government. We did, however, at one period, hope that sanguinary conflicts were at an end. We are not, however, greatly disappointed that this hope has not been realized. There are real, and the most serious difficulties, in the way of establishing free and orderly governments among our southern neighbours. To remove them without convulsions and bloodshed, more virtue, more enlightened views, and more patient endurance of temporary hardships, are necessary, than are to be found among the ignorant, depraved, and superstitious mass, which composes the population of these recent Spanish colonies. They have some enlightened men, but even these seem, in general, to lack patriotism and moral principle, to a lamentable degree, and they are at best but a small minority. It must probably be in the school of much affliction that our neighbours must learn wisdom; but we doubt not eventually the southern part of our country, as well as the northern, will exhibit such a spectacle of social happiness as can never exist under the sway of those rulers of the old world who now rejoice in the calamities that afflict the republics of the south.<sup>70</sup>

Such had come to be his view in 1829. He could still set off republican America rather sharply from continental Europe; he could still conceive of the New-World republics as one country. But he perceived that the southern part of that country was sick, very sick.

What Green wrote about Latin America during the next five years did not materially alter the picture that he had drawn by 1829. Now and again he reiterated his former hope—but without much enthusiasm—that the "sister republics" in southern America were advancing to "something like a permanent settlement."<sup>71</sup> But

<sup>70</sup> *Christian Advocate* (July, 1829), VII, 336.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.* (July, 1833), XI, 336.

more often he had to lament the fact that the political condition of these "sister republics" continued to be "deplorably unsettled."<sup>72</sup> Sometimes he varied his language by saying that there was nothing new to say of these states: "They remain *in statu quo*, and a lamentable state it is."<sup>73</sup> Of the word "caudillism" Green had no more knowledge than he had of the expression "Latin America," but of the phenomenon in Spanish America which we have lately come to designate by the word caudillism he had become disgustingly aware. For something with which to compare it he had to turn to classical antiquity. "In South America," he wrote early in 1834,

it appears that the civil broil in Buenos Aires is settled for the present. The obnoxious, but constitutional governor, finding that the rebellious army which environed the city was like to capture and plunder it, asked counsel of the legislature, and was virtually, but very gently, advised to resign. He did so—*voluntarily* by *compulsion*. The besieging army then marched through the city, without doing much injury to the inhabitants—their military chief being made governor, in place of the one deposed. But what a state of things is this! It is nothing better than a military government, in which an aspiring commander has only to gain his army to his wishes, in order to be sure of governing a state. It reminds us of the worst period of the Roman empire, when emperors were made and unmade by Roman legions, as often as they pleased. . . .<sup>74</sup>

Small wonder, then, that Green, as he sought some four years later an explanation of the failure of the Presbyterian mission in Buenos Aires, should have concluded that "the causes of disappointment were deeply seated in the state of society and the habits of the people."<sup>75</sup>

Spanish despotism, Green had asserted more than once, was the efficient cause of Spanish-American distresses; and by this term he meant more than Spanish political despotism. He meant also "papal despotism"—a religious tyranny that had helped to support Spanish political power in the Indies. He never mentioned the

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.* (January, 1834), XII, 48.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.* (November, 1830), VIII, 596.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.* (February, 1834), XII, 96.

<sup>75</sup> Ashbel Green, *Presbyterian Missions*, p. 189.

*real patronato*, it is true, but we hardly dare suppose that he was ignorant of its existence.<sup>76</sup> Again and again he had lamented the fact that Spanish Americans, burdened with a heritage of political tyranny and of "Romish superstition"—without knowledge and without virtue—were unready to live as republicans and so to enjoy the blessings of civil liberty. But it had been his hope through the years—a hope implied more often perhaps than actually expressed—that independence would bring to all the people of Spanish America liberty of religion, the only foundation upon which, as he firmly believed, civil liberty could safely rest.<sup>77</sup> The passing years, however, had disclosed the fact that the revolution in Spanish America had not liquidated the Roman Catholic monopoly of Spanish times; had not, indeed, safely established religious toleration. Here, then, in his opinion, was the abiding cause of the heart-breaking turmoils in Spanish America: Spanish Americans as yet were unwilling to be emancipated from "superstition and sin." As late as January, 1834, he wrote:

. . . Popish superstition and tyranny, are really at the bottom of the troubles among our southern neighbours; and while the causes last, there must and will be trouble and confusion. Religious tyranny must either be dominant or extinct—it cannot be the former since the revolution; how long it will be before the latter shall take its place, none can tell.

There now can be little doubt that in the refusal of Latin America to open wide its doors for the entrance of Protestant Christianity lies the explanation of Ashbel Green's disillusionment with respect to his Latin-American neighbors. He had dreamed of the triumph of republicanism everywhere in Latin America, and of a family of American "sister republics" happy and prosperous—free from internal dissensions and secure as against aggression from without. With religious toleration prevailing in Latin America, or better still religious freedom, he was certain that the message of "true" religion would soon be carried everywhere in the New World. With the Bible freely circulating,

<sup>76</sup> On this subject, see the illuminating study by J. Lloyd Mecham, *Church and State in Latin America* . . . (Chapel Hill, 1934), Chapter 1.

<sup>77</sup> *Christian Advocate* (May, 1825), III, 240; *ibid.* (December, 1829), VII, 575.

with Protestant ministers freely preaching the gospel, and with Protestant schools operating without let or hindrance, he was firmly persuaded that in all Latin America the ignorance of the masses would soon give way to a general enlightenment, and that in the presence of enlightenment the "superstition of popery" would quickly disappear. Then, but not until then, could Latin Americans, like their neighbors in the great northern republic, enter into the full enjoyment of liberty. Then in "some future day" a Greater America, mobilized under the "controlling power of pure religion," might "put forth a mighty influence in bringing on that glorious day of light, peace, and religion," which, as he firmly believed, was to "bless this wretched world."<sup>78</sup> For the speedy coming of so happy a day he had hoped, and worked, and prayed. For a little while, during the period of his highest hope, it had seemed to him that his dream might be entering the way of realization. But presently, as if to mock him, the doors of Latin America swung shut in his face. For Brazilians, when well rid of Pedro I, continued to walk in the evil way of empire, and Spanish Americans, when their political independence was assured, sank down into an orgy of caudillism. And over all Latin America, as the decade of the eighteen-thirties opened, hung the dark clouds of "papal superstition." It was sad, and it was disillusioning. But Ashbel Green was not in despair. A man wise with the wisdom of years, he had in the beginning laid down a cushion which, as he knew, in the end might break a fall. The doubt he had expressed in 1823 he had repeated at intervals thereafter: the wars of independence in Spanish America might not at once bring forth fruit like that which the war of independence in Anglo-America had brought forth.<sup>79</sup> Time had confirmed this doubt, and so he could truthfully say that his disappointment had not overwhelmed him. He was persuaded that in the long run

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.* (September, 1827), V, 474-475.

<sup>79</sup> Writing in the summer of 1824, apropos of a report that two disgruntled regiments of "patriot" troops had surrendered Lima and Callao to Spanish royalists, Green drew a sharp contrast between his conception of the war for independence in North America and his conception of the movement for independence in the Spanish parts of Latin America. "Here is the difference between our revolution and that in South America," he declared. "We were true to ourselves, and to the cause of liberty; they were split into parties, unacquainted with the nature of real liberty, and many—we fear the most of them—wretchedly destitute of principle. Yet we have confidence that the conflict will end well at last." *Christian Advocate* (July, 1824), II, 336.

Latin Americans would learn to walk in ways of political freedom and in paths of religious truth, for by his study of his Bible he had come to believe that the cause of Christ would in time prevail throughout the world, and that by the triumph of that cause Latin Americans would be emancipated from the ignorance and the superstition that cursed them. Time was needed—perhaps a generation or more—to put things to rights in Brazil and in the republics of Spanish America. This was the lesson that Ashbel Green was persuaded that he had learned from twelve years of study of his southern neighbors.