"Thousands of miles through untrodden lands" The life and writings of Marion Mulhall

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Abstract: Marion Mulhall (née Murphy; Balbriggan, Ireland, 1847 – Surbiton, England, 1922) was the wife of journalist and statistician Michael G. Mulhall. After their marriage, she moved with him to Buenos Aires, and accompanied him in his travels. She wrote several books and articles on the lands they visited, and on history and social issues. The aim of this article is to describe the main events of her life and of her experiences in South America, and to analyse her views on those lands, especially on the Irish immigrants.

Keywords: Marion Mulhall – Irish Diaspora – Argentina – South America – Travel writing

Marion Mulhall was an unusual kind of person. When *The New York Times* gave the news about the death of her husband Michael, it briefly added that "[his] wife, Marion Mulhall, is well known as a writer of books of travel and historical essays" (14 December 1900). But she was more than "a lady ... rushing into a field of literature more suitably reserved for men", as she had described herself (Mulhall, M. 1877: Preface).

She was an Irish woman who married an Irishman, and who went with him to live abroad. She was a constant companion to her husband. She accompanied him in his travels and helped him in the writing of his books. In many ways, she was one of the supporting characters of history.

But at the same time she also played a leading role. She undertook difficult enterprises, from visiting remote lands to starting an orphanage. She was a writer who wrote on history, travel writing and social issues. She travelled extensively and wrote several books about the countries she visited. She was Irish, and was a pioneer in writing about the Irish in South America. She was British, and her books show her deep identification with British civilization. Her personality was well known and remembered. Her books, now almost forgotten, were praised in her lifetime.

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The aim of this article is to try to describe these aspects of her life, and especially to follow her steps from Ireland to Buenos Aires, and around South America and other countries; and to analyse in her writings how she saw those lands and their inhabitants, particularly the Irish immigrants.

Fig. 1. Marion Mulhall "Colecciones Especiales y Archivos" of the Universidad de San Andrés (Argentina)

Family and marriage

On 30 July 1868, *The Standard* of Buenos Ayres carried a short notice on page 3: "MARRIAGE. June 10, at Balbriggan, county Dublin, Ireland, by the Very Rev. Canon Keogh, P. P., Michael G. Mulhall, Esq., Editor of 'The Standard', Buenos Ayres, to Marion, eldest daughter of Edward Murphy, Esq., of Balbriggan". Who was this woman who had married the editor of the newspaper?

Mary Anne, the daughter of Edward Murphy and Mary Jane Butler, was born in 1847, and was baptized in the parish church of Balbriggan on 5

November. In his book on Irish families in Argentina, Coghlan mentions "Edward Murphy, from Balbriggan, who died aged 80 on 24 June 1888, father to Mary Murphy, the wife of Michael Mulhall" (Coghlan 1987: 73).[2] He also mentions a sister of Marion's, Cecilia, who in 1885 married Farifield Magrane in Buenos Aires (1987: 425).

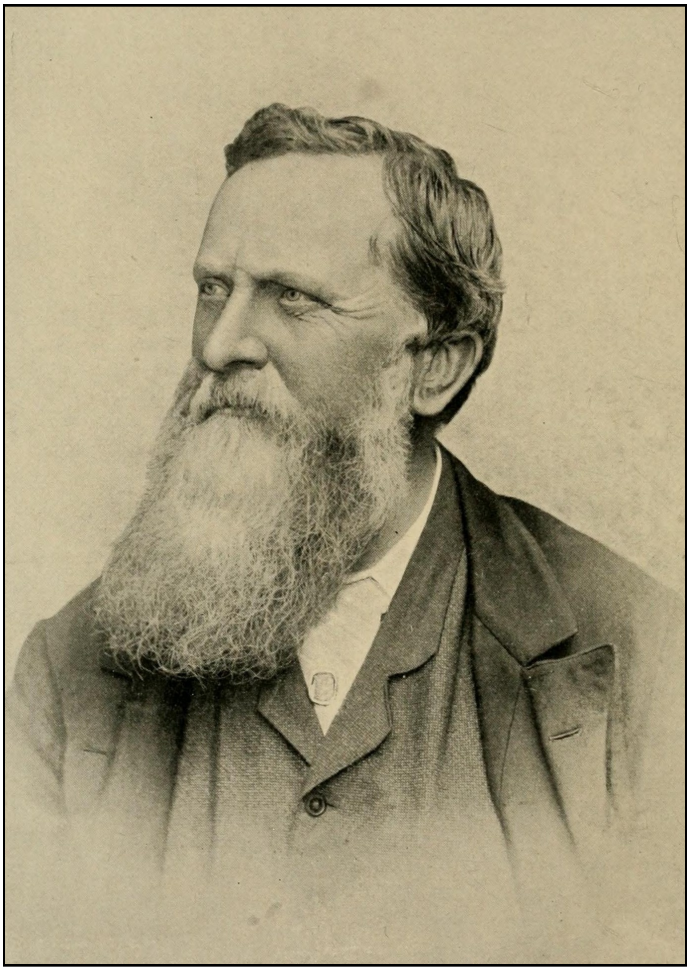

Fig. 2. Michael G. Mulhall. From Explorers in the New World (1909), p. iv. On the opposite page: "Dedication. / To the memory of the best of friends, / my husband."

It is not known how Marion and Michael Mulhall met. In his youth, Michael (1836-1900), the son of a prosperous Dublin family, had started to study to become a priest, but later changed his mind and in 1858 went to Argentina, where his brother Edward had been living for some years trying his luck in agriculture. Michael does not seem to have liked working in the "camp" (as Irish immigrants called the countryside) and started to work as teacher. But later his life adopted a new course: on 1 May 1861 he founded

[2] "Edward Murphy, de Balbriggan, que falleció de 80 años de edad el 24.6.1888, padre de Mary Murphy, señora de Michael Mulhall".

The Standard, a newspaper for the English-speaking population of Buenos Aires. The following February, perhaps as a way of obtaining funds, his brother Edward joined the new journalistic business.[3] The Mulhall brothers fully devoted themselves to their job (Murray, Th. 1919: 306-307). Gradually, *The Standard* consolidated and managed to survive the political and economic ups and downs of Argentina. In 1959, when it ceased publication, it was the doyen of Argentine newspapers.

Apart from editing the newspaper, both brothers also published several books. The best known is *The Handbook of the River Plate*, which was reprinted several times in enlarged editions. Michael also published other books on his own, including *The English in South America* (1878).

When Michael died, *The Southern Cross*, the weekly newspaper of the Hiberno-Argentine community, described him as "a mild Home Ruler of the old-fashioned type; but in political discussion as well as in other matters he was more timid than assertive, more prudent than convincing. Yet he was a very estimable man, and in private life he was most amiable, genial and always interesting" (14 December 1900: 14). Thomas Murray disagreed with his political ideas, but acknowledged that "none of the family, except Michael, seemed to be possessed of any real Irish spirit" (Murray, Th. 1919: 308). Such was Marion's husband, and it is probable that she held similar political views.

An unforgettable woman

After a short honeymoon in Killarney, Marion and Michael arrived in Buenos Aires. The War of the Triple Alliance or Paraguayan War (1864-1870) was in full swing, and two months later Sarmiento would succeed Mitre as president.

"My first impressions of this place [Buenos Aires] were unfavourable, owing to the difficulties that attended our landing" (Mulhall, M. 1881: 1): the ships did not get to the coast, which had to be reached on whale boats; some Italian bearers started to carry off their luggage without asking; the rain made all slippery or muddy; etc. However, she must have felt herself welcomed, for she mentions the great hospitality of the inhabitants (1881: 10).

She also seems to have made a good impression on the local population, and particularly on the English-speaking community. A few weeks after her arrival, Kate A. Murphy, a young Irish-Argentine, described her as "a young Irish lady[;] she is very beautiful and accomplished and naturally has created a great sensation here in B. Aires" (Murray, E. 2006: 106).

[3] It is generally stated that both brothers founded *The Standard*, but the information on the first issues only mention Michael as its owner.

Marion not only caused a sensation on her arrival. Arthur Shaw, an Englishman who lived most of his life in Argentina, met her during the National Exhibition of Córdoba (1871); more than thirty years later, when he published his memoirs in 1907, he still remembered her vividly:

> During the exhibition time I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Michael Mulhall .... Mrs. Mike, who accompanied her husband to our Fair, was the true type of the girl from (or for) Galway, besides being a very beautiful woman. I remember the effect of the hat of the epoch—stiff slouch shape, one side of brim horizontal and the other vertical with a feather. Oh, it was *divino*, as they say in Spanish. Put an e for an o, and it's English (Shaw 1907: 41-42).

Fig. 3. "City of Buenos Ayres" An engraving by E. Jennings, from *Between the Amazon and Andes* (1881), by Marion Mulhall; included also in *Buenos Ayres and Argentine Gleanings* (1865), by Thomas J. Hutchinson

But he was not the only one who did not forget her:

> Amongst them [the Guaycurus] I am still remembered as the 'Mujer Blanca' [White Woman] who came to teach music; for unconsciously I gained this reputation by the Indians hearing me on board ... . I had a guitar, and every evening when the breeze blew the tormenting insects away, we had music on the quarter-deck. It would really seem I made some impression on them, for in the following year two German explorers, coming down from Bolivia, heard the Indians still talking of me (Mulhall, M. 1881, 182).

Exploring South America

At the beginning of 1871, Michael and Marion survived the yellow fever plague that devastated Buenos Aires.[4] Soon afterwards, in the summer of 1871-1872, Michael made a trip to Brazil; his reports were published in *The Standard* and, expanded, in his *Rio Grande do Sul and its German Colonies* (1873). Marion went with her husband and, in *Between the Amazon and Andes*, tells the events on their way back through Uruguay. Shortly afterwards, they accepted the invitation to visit former President Urquiza at his estancia in Entre Rios.

Before, in May 1870, William Wheelwright had invited the couple to the opening of the railway in Cordoba. In November 1875, Michael and Marion also went to the opening of the stretch of the Andes Railway to Villa Mercedes; they went on to Mendoza, where they admired the Andes, particularly Uspallata and the Inca's Bridge (Puente del Inca). It was on this journey when they escaped certain death for some hours: they arrived at an inn whose inhabitants had all been killed by the Indians shortly before (Mulhall, M. 1881: 125). But the most daring journey was still to come.

Fig. 4. "Our canoe ascending the Cuyabà River" From Between the Amazon and Andes (1881)

[4] Marion related her experiences of the plague in chapter III of *Between the Amazon and Andes*: "The Plague at Buenos Aires" (pp. 28-44).

Much of Marion's married life entailed following her husband's steps; in a way that was normal for a woman in her times. But in 1876 it was she who took the initiative to make a journey to Mato Grosso (Mulhall, M. 1881, 152). The journey was very uncomfortable, but Marion was undaunted; one day, for example, when they still had to travel 600 miles that could only be done on a canoe, her husband warned her about the difficulties they would have to face in the remaining journey, "but the interest of exploring this *terra incognita* would not allow me to think of turning back" (Mulhall, M. 1881: 182; see also 1877: 86).

Marion spoke about this journey on several occasions, and she always highlighted the fact that it was a pioneering undertaking.

> I was the first Englishwoman to penetrate the heart of South America, travelling for thousands of miles through untrodden forests, seeing the Indian tribes in their own hunting-grounds, visiting the ruined shrines of the Jesuit Missions, and ultimately reaching that points whence I beheld the waters flowing down in opposite directions to the Amazon and the La Plata... (Mulhall, M. 1881: v-vi; see also 212; 1877: Preface; and 1914: 243-244).[5]

Back in Asunción, Michael left his wife with some friends, and returned to Buenos Aires to attend some business. Marion used the month her husband was away to go round much of Paraguay. It was an important moment in her life, for she went to the Jesuit Missions, a topic on which she wrote several times (Mulhall, M. 1877: 105-111; 1881: 239-340; 1909: 240-313).

First books: civilization and barbarism

Between 1877 and 1881 Marion published her first two books: *From Europe to Paraguay and Matto-Grosso, and Between the Amazon and Andes. She mentions her* visit to Paraguay and Brazil in both prefaces, from which it may be supposed that this trip was one of the main reasons that moved her to publish her experiences. The first book has a logical order, following her trip from Europe to South America (chapters I to VII), and then to Paraguay and the Mato Grosso (XI to XIX); only a small part is devoted to Argentina (VIII to X, and XX).

In her second book, published only four years later, there is a different perspective: her centre is Buenos Aires (chapters I to III), from where she visits Brazil (IV), Uruguay (V), and the Argentine provinces (VI to IX); and it is also from Buenos Aires that she starts her journey along the rivers (X) to Mato Grosso (XI), after which she speaks of Paraguay (XII). The Jesuit

[5] Her husband also pointed it out in several times: Mulhall, M. G. 1876: 59; 1878: 470.

Missions had received a chapter in her first book; now they are dealt with in an Appendix.

What did she see in South America? What aspects of these lands reflected on her eyes?

Both books were published in London, and seem intended for a British readership. It is not surprising, then, that she spoke of herself as an "Englishwoman" or an "English lady" (1877: Preface, 51 and 103; 1881: v), instead of mentioning that she was Irish.

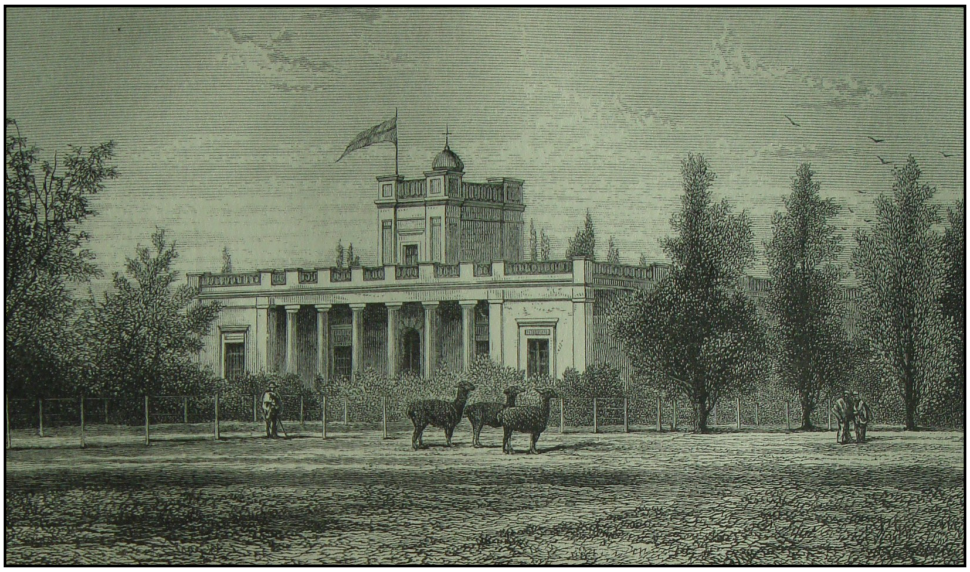

Fig. 5. "Mr. Shennan's estancia near Buenos Ayres" From *Between the Amazon and Andes* (1881). It was later used again in "Erin in South America" (1908) with a different caption: "Mansion of an Irish settler near Buenos Ayres."

In fact, "Englishness" was her usual point of reference, from the urban or rural landscape, to customs or historical events (for example, 1877: 54 and 64; 1881: 6, 98, 103 and 156). England was a synonym of civilization and progress, which are closely related to technique and entrepreneurship (for example, 1877: 50; 1881: 117). And for her even the natural wonders of the continent would be better used if they were in English hands: "I pictured to myself what English genius and enterprise would have made of this splendid watercourse [the Paraná]. I saw visions of vessels laden with the fruits of industry, instead of these great natural resources lying wasted" (1877: 56-57).

Civilization was an important category, and several comments about South America, and particularly about Argentina, may seem to show an uncivilised land where violence and insecurity prevailed. People living far away from cities or towns were at risk of dying violently at the hands of the Indians (1881: 93). But cruelty and violence were often experienced in

camp life too: "Whether owing to the frequent civil wars, or to the danger from Indian raids, the former proprietor [of the estancia], Mr. John Hannah, built the house like a fortress" (1881: 15-16). This violence also appeared in tasks unrelated to times of war or invasion, like when she speaks about cruelty towards animals in the branding of cattle and in the taming of horses (1877: 26).

Violence, however, was not only confined to the camp: "Buenos Ayres would be a much pleasanter place to live in but for one drawback, which no President or Governor has yet been able to remedy, namely the insecurity for life and property, to which, however, one gets accustomed after a time" (1881: 10), and devotes the following pages to stories of robberies and violent deaths in the city (10-13 and 16-17). But danger was not limited to Argentina: she also tells about dangers and deaths in Uruguay (for example, 1881: 66, 69 and 72).

Even the native population had a look that rose uncertainty and fear among foreigners. For Marion Mulhall, gauchos "are a lawless looking set" (1877: 23); they were "rude", "semi-Bedouin semi-Indian" (1881: 21); and the boatmen on the Paraná, "bore some resemblance to Calabrian fishermen, only looking much wilder" (1881: 163).

Although in a different way, this sense of constant tension and discomfort was also felt at home. She liked how the houses looked like, but comfort was largely absent in the homes in these lands (1881: 3).

Solidarity among foreigners was of great help in order to survive. For example, when writing about her experiences of the epidemic of yellow fever, Marion Mulhall described the provisions that an English grocer and an Italian neighbour gave her and her husband, the available houses they learnt about from the American minister and an English blacksmith, etc. (1881: 34, 37-38). In those circumstances the British Hospital "was unfortunately closed against patients, as its constitution forbade the treatment of any infectious or contagious disease, but the physicians, chaplains, and directors did all they could for our country-people by visiting them" (1881: 40).

In spite of such an adverse context, in her comments Marion Mulhall suggests that the "English" adapted themselves to these lands and had been able to live a more or less comfortable life in the wild pampas, like in *Negretti*, Shennan's estancia, where "within its gates we can forget that we are in the wilds of South America; surrounded by trees and gardens, where every European fruit and flower (as well as tropical) are to be found (...). Having every comfort of civilised life how happy the days pass!" (1877: 114).

And not only had they adapted themselves to the land, but also had become wealthy:

> The Western Camps [of Buenos Aires] are indeed a modern Colchis, where thousands of Irishmen, who were as poor as the Argonauts when they landed, have since become some of the wealthiest men in South America. Besides these, there is a small number of 'younger sons' from England and Scotland who own large estancias or sheep-farms in different parts of the province. The sheep industry is chiefly in the hands of British subjects, and is of such magnitude that the flocks number sixty million head, and the value of wool annually exported ranges from five to six millions sterling, or two-thirds of the total products of the country (Mulhall M. 1881: 13).[6]

The civilized British, ultimately, faced a territory they saw as hostile and conquered the difficulties: they settled and prospered.

Helping friends

As years went by, life in Buenos Aires continued normally. Michael divided his time between his work at *The Standard* and his studies on statistics, frequently contributing to foreign journals. In 1884 Michael published his most important work, the *Dictionary of Statistics*, which saw many editions. He made several trips abroad; it seems more than likely that Marion went with him most of times if not always, like in 1880 when she helped a friend of theirs.

Lionel Sackville-West (1827-1908), British minister plenipotentiary to Argentina (1872-1878) and ambassador to Spain (1878-1881), had had several illegitimate children with Josefa de la Oliva, a Spanish dancer known as *Pepita*. During his years abroad, the children had been left in a convent in France. Probably during a visit to Madrid, Marion and Michael went to pay a call to their old friend.[7] As they were Catholic, he asked them for help with his children, because he wanted to educate them in *Pepita*'s faith. Marion immediately offered her help: "Mrs Mulhall was 'only too happy to do anything for them when she went over to England'" (Sackville-West, R. 2014: 58).

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[6] According to Greek mythology, Jason and the Argonauts made an expedition to Colchis to get the Golden Fleece, the skin of a sacred ram.

[7] Sackville-West knew the Mulhalls from Buenos Aires. They had also met in Paraguay: cfr. Mulhall, M. 1881: 231-238.

Fig. 6. Marion Mulhall. Robert Sackville-West collection

She went to the convent school in Berck-sur-Mer, where three daughters were living, and took them for a time to her house in Sussex before they entered a convent school in London. During the trip to England, Marion spoke with Victoria, the eldest daughter. "She told me she had to say that my father and mother had never been married. It was a great shock and surprise to me" (Sackville-West, V. 1937: 156).[8]

The Mulhalls kept in touch with the Sackville-Wests, and even sent a gift when Victoria married her cousin Lionel Edward Sackville-West (1890).[9]

[8] The following year Marion also took the younger son from Paris to London; although she was asked to tell him about his illegitimate birth, but she refused (Sackville-West, R. 2014: 65 and 76).

[9] Victoria and Lionel were the parents of writer and garden designer Vita Sackville-West (1892-1862).

More children in her life

In London, on 17 November 1885, Marion gave birth to a baby (*The Standard* 18 November 1885: 3). It was named Michael Oliver, after its father and St Oliver Plunkett, the Irish martyr. A few days after their return to Buenos Aires, on 25 March 1886, the baby died at Edward's house in Flores (*The Standard* 27 March 1886: 3).

Fig. 7. "Mrs. Marion Murphy de Mulhall" From A Brief History of the Society of Ladies of St. Joseph (1941), by John S. Gaynor

The death of their only child, born after seventeen years of marriage, must have been a terrible blow for them. But perhaps this sad event accounts for one of Marion's daring projects. After the tragic ending of the failed immigration project with the Irish settlers arrived on the S. S. *Dresden* (1889), the orphan girls were taken in by the Sisters of Mercy; but the boys had nowhere to go. Michael Mulhall rekindled the memory of Father Fahy and his project to found an orphanage for boys. It was

Michael's wife, Marion, who took this task in her hands, and "headed a group of ladies who boldly decided to found a school where the little boy-survivors from Napostá [one of the destinations of the *Dresden* immigrants] might be housed and clothed" (Gaynor 1941: 6).[10] The inaugural meeting of the Society of St Joseph was held on 17 April 1891 at the Irish Convent on Riobamba Street, and Marion was elected President. A house on Cochabamba Street was rented, and the Marist Brothers supplied the tuition. The Government offered money; funds were raised through raffles, benefit performances, etc. Marion kept her post until 1893.

Back to Europe

In 1894 Michael stopped being the chief editor of *The Standard*. In that year, "owing to circumstances which are generally known by this time, he withdrew from the paper and went abroad" (*The Southern Cross* 14 December 1900: 14). Back in the Old World, the Mulhalls lived between Dublin and London, but travelled extensively. Since her husband was appointed chamberlain to the pope in 1896, they also spent several winters in Rome. In that year, Michael also travelled around Europe to collect material for a parliamentary committee that had to study the possibility of creating a department of agriculture for Ireland. It seems that she accompanied him because she mentions her visits to several cities in two articles on children's education she published in that year: "Girl's Technical Schools on the Continent" and "Boarding-out Workhouse Children".

In 1896 she also published an article on the "Celtic Sources of the Divina Commedia", and, two years later, another one on the discovery of America by Irishmen and others before Columbus. Before, in 1889, she had written about St. Patrick and the Monastery of Lerins. These were the results of the research she most likely undertook while accompanying her husband. Over the years, during his stays in different places, Michael worked at the Bodleian Library (Oxford), at the Bibliothèque Nationale (Paris), and at the British Museum Library (London). When he was collecting material for his *Dictionary of Statistics*, he worked twelve hours a day in the British Museum (*The Standard* 13 December 1900: 4): probably his wife went with him on more than one occasion. In Rome, Marion was the first woman who was given papal permission to do research in the Vatican Library (Mulhall, M. 1909: ix).[11] Marion was granted a diploma by the Italian government for her *Between the Amazon and Andes*; she was also

[10] For the history of the orphanage, see also Mulhall, M. G. & E. T. 1892: 288.

[11] Nevertheless, the first registration of women researchers are of 1915, and Marion is not among them; however, it is possible that, being perhaps a special permission by Leo XIII, her visit was not recorded.

a member of the Academy of Arcadia for her book on Dante's Celtic sources (Noailles 1970: 131).

Michael's death

On 2 November 1900, *The Southern Cross* published a letter written by Marion Mulhall in which she said that her husband's prediction of the United States census had been extremely precise. "This shows how very precise and accurate statistical science may prove in skilful hands" (7 December 1900: 15). She had always supported and defended Michael, and she continued to do so at his death-bed.

In September 1900, the doctors had advised Michael to leave Rome. Three months later, on 13 December, he died at his residence in Killiney, near Dublin. According to *The Southern Cross* he "died a most edifying death" (14 December 1900: 14). There were several condolences for the passing of a "thoroughly good man in every sense" (*The Standard* 13 December 1900: 4).

Marion, who had not led a quiet life when married, did not face her widowhood as a period of inactivity. In the following years she published two books: *Explorers in the New World* (1909) and *Beginnings, or Glimpses of Vanished Civilizations* (1911). In this stage of her life she also published two articles on the Irish in South America.

Marion's texts on the Irish in South America

The editors of *The Glories of Ireland* (1914) wanted their book to reflect the importance of Irish culture and heritage in their country and abroad, and they asked Marion to write about the Irish in South America. Marion had written an article on the same subject, entitled "Erin in South America," published in *The Irish Rosary* in 1908.

This one had been a short but complete article, illustrated with several photographs and engravings. In it she had used some information already mentioned by her husband in *The English in South America* (1878). But for the second article she used it to an even larger degree, copying paragraphs almost verbatim. To use her husband's book was an intelligent choice. When he published his book, Michael had already a long experience of life in the region and knew many of the British arrived on the shores of the River Plate after independence. Apart from touring widely in Argentina and other countries, his work in *The Standard* had provided him with connections in the native society and kept him very up to date about news. If we add to this his interest in statistics, we can say that *The English in South America* had the special value of having been written by one of the better informed members of the British community.

Marion shared largely this privileged position of her husband. Although she came to the region ten years after her husband, she also met many English-speaking immigrants from previous waves. She does not mention her husband's book as the source for her articles; this is more remarkable in the case of the second one, copied almost word by word in some paragraphs. Apart from the fact that she had inherited the rights on his works, she had had a lot to do with it, as they usually assisted each other with their writings. Marion herself explicitly acknowledges this in her *From Europe to Paraguay and Matto Grosso* (1877), published a year before *The English in South America*, when she refers to her "notes of travel, in which I must confess some assistance from my husband, who gave me his notes to compare with mine" (1877: Preface). Perhaps something similar happened, but the other way about, with Michael's notes on the British in the southern cone.

Marion copied from her husband's book, but with some changes, like making explicit mention of the Irish origin of several characters that her husband had called "English" or whose nationality he had not mentioned. She also made some adaptations: not only the readership was American, instead of British, but also Michael's comments on his contemporaries had to be rephrased to refer to a previous generation.

It is worth noting that much of Marion's text—as had happened before with Michael's on the "English"—mostly refers to what had happened in Argentina, and specifically in Buenos Aires. This is not surprising since the Mulhalls lived there and this country received the largest number of Irish immigrants in South America.

According to "The Irish in South America", the Irish in Argentina had been extremely successful: "The number and wealth of the Irish *estancieros*, or sheep-farmers, in Argentina have never been exactly ascertained, but after the old Spanish families they are the most important" (Mulhall M. 1914: 239). This optimistic view on the prosperity of the Irish immigrants in the River Plate may seem incomplete as Marion Mulhall does not mention the fact that only some of them had become rich, while most had either left the country or become part of a discrete middle class. But she seems to have been aware of this when in her article "Erin in South America" she had given—alongside the heroic lives of Admiral Brown and Father Fahy—a bleaker outlook on life of the shepherds on the pampas: "The life is rough and solitary enough ... and all this for very low wages, for the days of sheep on halves have passed" (Mulhall, M. 1908: 812-813). This first article was written for an Irish publication, and she might have wanted to discourage emigration from that country to Argentina. "The Irish in South America," on the other hand, was for a book entitled *The Glories of Ireland*, which, according to the editors had as one of its purposes

"to give the Irish and their descendants solid reasons for that pride that we feel for their race": there was no place in it for negative views.[12]

It should be kept in mind that, although one of them is, in the end, a revised text of some parts of *The English in South America*, Marion's two articles are the first texts that specifically address the issue of the Irish in Argentina, and were published before *The Story of the Irish in Argentina* (1919), the classic book by Thomas Murray, who in turn also includes several references to Michael's book.

Death and legacy

Marion Mulhall died on 15 November 1922, in Surbiton, in the south-west of London.

The world had changed a lot during her life. World War I had affected the entire globe and the lives of many people. The British Empire, although still large and powerful, was beginning to show some signs of weakness. In her native land, the Irish Free State was giving its first steps and the Civil War was in full swing. Argentina, a place she had first known when it was in its initial steps towards institutional organization and economic development, was one of the richest countries and "the world's breadbasket."

In *Between the Amazon and Andes*, Marion Mulhall had written: "I give these Sketches to the public with the hope that they may call attention of more learned travellers to a quarter of the world that so well repays the trouble of exploring" (1881: vi). In a world that has changed a lot more since her death, her texts remain a testimony of other times, with the personal touch of an author with a great knowledge of the presence of her nationals in that "quarter of the world" in which she spent much of her life.

[12] Perhaps for the same reason she omitted other less "edifying" stories, like the S. S. *Dresden*. It is interesting the fact that in 1957 *The Southern Cross* published "The Irish in South America" serialized between 26 July and 6 September; this could perhaps be interpreted as an acceptance of its contents or approach by part of the Irish community in Argentina more than forty years later.

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