

Editors' Introduction

The publication of this issue of the *ABEI Journal* coincides with the hosting of IASIL 2002, the International Conference for the Study of Irish Literatures, by the University of São Paulo. Our expectations are high because this will be the first time that what must be considered as the heart of Irish Studies has travelled to South America.

A similar path has of course been trodden by many Irish emigrants over the years, and our front cover recalls this fact. The lithograph depicts Marion McMurrugh Mulhall's nineteenth-century travels and adventures in the countries between the Amazon and the Andes. She's seen on an *igarité* (a large Brazilian canoe), which is manned by local Indians who had to pole upstream about thirty miles a day due to the shallowness of the San Lorenzo river. She and her husband, Michael George Mulhall, editor of the *Buenos Ayres Standard* newspaper, lived in Buenos Aires and visited Brazil many times, recording their impressions of the country in various articles, sketches and books. The lithograph below is a view of Porto Alegre, a city in the south of Brazil, which was made by Mrs. Mulhall to illustrate her husband's book *Rio Grande do Sul and its German Colonies* (1873). The section *The Irish in South America* of this issue contains two articles on Irish presence in Argentina and the Amazon.

This volume, partially supported by the FFLCH (Faculty of Philosophy, Language, Literature and Humanities) of the University of São Paulo, has much to offer in the way of fiction, drama and book reviews, the highlight being our regular feature *The Critic and the Author*. In *Voices from Brazil* Telê Ancona Lopez provides an introduction for Conference visitors to the dawn of Modernism in Brazil.

Finally, in *News from Brazil*, we are honoured to be able to report on the visit paid by the Taoiseach to the University of São Paulo in 2001 and on the opening of a resident Irish Embassy in Brasília this year, thus reinforcing formal links between the two countries.



Porto Alegre.
In: Michael G. Mulhall. *Rio Grande do Sul and its German Colonies*.