

observing how slowly the waters of the sea and river mixed. The latter, muddy and discolored, from its less specific gravity, floated on the surface of the salt water. This was curiously exhibited in the wake of the vessel, where a line of blue water was seen mingling in little eddies with the adjoining fluid.

July 26th.—We anchored at Monte Video. The "Beagle" was employed in surveying the extreme southern and eastern coasts of America, south of the Plata, during the two succeeding years. To prevent useless repetitions, I will extract those parts of my journal which refer to the same districts, without always attending to the order in which we visited them.

MALDONADO is situated on the northern bank of the Plata, and not very far from the mouth of the estuary. It is a most quiet, forlorn little town; built, as is universally the case in these countries, with the streets running at right angles to each other, and having in the middle a large plaza or square, which, from its size, renders the scantiness of the population more evident. It possesses scarcely any trade; the exports being confined to a few hides and living cattle. The inhabitants are chiefly landowners, together with a few shopkeepers and the necessary tradesmen, such as blacksmiths and carpenters, who do nearly all the business for a circuit of fifty miles round. The town is separated from the river by a band of sand-hillocks, about a mile broad: it is surrounded, on all other sides, by an open slightly-undulating country, covered by one uniform layer of fine green turf, on which countless herds of cattle, sheep, and horses graze. There is very little land cultivated even close to the town. A few hedges, made of cacti and agave, mark out where some wheat or Indian corn has been planted. The features of the country are very similar along the whole northern bank of the Plata. The only difference is, that here the granitic hills are a little bolder. The scenery is very uninteresting; there is scarcely a house, an inclosed piece of ground, or even a tree, to give it an air of cheerfulness. Yet, after being im-