

Falconer<sup>1</sup> gives a curious account of the Indians driving troops of wild horses into it, and then, by guarding the entrance, keeping them secure. I have never heard of any other instance of tableland in a formation of quartz, and which, in the hill I examined, had neither cleavage nor stratification. I was told that the rock of the "Corral" was white, and would strike fire.

We did not reach the *posta* on the Rio Tapalguen till after it was dark. At supper, from something which was said, I was suddenly struck with horror at thinking that I was eating one of the favorite dishes of the country, namely, a half-formed calf, long before its proper time of birth. It turned out to be Puma; the meat is very white, and remarkably like veal in taste. Dr. Shaw was laughed at for stating that "the flesh of the lion is in great esteem, having no small affinity with veal, both in color, taste, and flavor." Such certainly is the case with the Puma. The Gauchos differ in their opinion whether the Jaguar is good eating, but are unanimous in saying that cat is excellent.

September 17th.—We followed the course of the Rio Tapalguen, through a very fertile country, to the ninth *posta*. Tapalguen itself, or the town of Tapalguen, if it may be so called, consists of a perfectly level plain, studded over, as far as the eye can reach, with the *toldos*, or oven-shaped huts of the Indians. The families of the friendly Indians, who were fighting on the side of Rosas, resided here. We met and passed many young Indian women, riding by two or three together on the same horse: they, as well as many of the young men, were strikingly handsome—their fine ruddy complexions being the picture of health. Besides the *toldos*, there were three ranchos; one inhabited by the Commandant, and the two others by Spaniards with small shops.

We were here able to buy some biscuit. I had now been several days without tasting anything besides meat: I did

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<sup>1</sup> Falconer's Patagonia, p. 70.