

In a similar manner a man can hold the wildest horse, if caught with the lazo, just behind the ears. When the bullock has been dragged to the spot where it is to be slaughtered, the *matador* with great caution cuts the hamstrings. Then is given the death bellow; a noise more expressive of fierce agony than any I know: I have often distinguished it from a long distance, and have always known that the struggle was then drawing to a close. The whole sight is horrible and revolting: the ground is almost made of bones; and the horses and riders are drenched with gore.

CHAPTER VII

Excursion to St. Fé—Thistle Beds—Habits of the Bizcacha—Little Owl—Saline Streams—Level Plains—Mastodon—St. Fé—Change in Landscape—Geology—Tooth of extinct Horse—Relation of the Fossil and Recent Quadrupeds of North and South America—Effects of a great Drought—Parana—Habits of the Jaguar—Scissor-beak—Kingfisher, Parrot, and Scissor-tail—Revolution—Buenos Ayres—State of Government

BUENOS AYRES TO ST. FÉ

SEPTEMBER 27th.—In the evening I set out on an excursion to St. Fé, which is situated nearly three hundred English miles from Buenos Ayres, on the banks of the Parana. The roads in the neighborhood of the city, after the rainy weather, were extraordinarily bad. I should never have thought it possible for a bullock-wagon to have crawled along: as it was, they scarcely went at the rate of a mile an hour, and a man was kept ahead, to survey the best line for making the attempt. The bullocks were terribly jaded: it is a great mistake to suppose that with improved roads, and an accelerated rate of travelling, the sufferings of the animals increase in the same proportion. We passed a train of wagons and a troop of beasts on their road to Mendoza. The distance is about 580 geographical miles, and the journey is generally performed in fifty days. These