

forty-eight, and sold the children at the rate of three or four pounds apiece.

October 5th.—We crossed the Parana to St. Fé Bajada, a town on the opposite shore. The passage took some hours, as the river here consisted of a labyrinth of small streams separated by low wooded islands. I had a letter of introduction to an old Catalonian Spaniard, who treated me with the most uncommon hospitality. The Bajada is the capital of Entre Rios. In 1825 the town contained 6,000 inhabitants, and the province 30,000; yet, few as the inhabitants are, no province has suffered more from bloody and desperate revolutions. They boast here of representatives, ministers, a standing army, and governors: so it is no wonder that they have their revolutions. At some future day this must be one of the richest countries of La Plata. The soil is varied and productive; and its almost insular form gives it two grand lines of communication by the rivers Parana and Uruguay.

I was delayed here five days, and employed myself in examining the geology of the surrounding country, which was very interesting. We here see at the bottom of the cliffs beds containing sharks' teeth and sea-shells of extinct species, passing above into an indurated marl, and from that into the red clayey earth of the Pampas, with its calcareous concretions and the bones of terrestrial quadrupeds. This vertical section clearly tells us of a large bay of pure salt-water, gradually encroached on, and at last converted into the bed of a muddy estuary, into which floating carcasses were swept. At Punta Gorda, in Banda Oriental, I found an alternation of the Pampean estuary deposit, with a limestone containing some of the same extinct sea-shells; and this shows either a change in the former currents, or more probably an oscillation of level in the bottom of the ancient estuary. Until lately my reasons for considering the Pampean formation to be an estuary deposit were, its general appearance, its position at the mouth of the existing great river the Plata, and the presence of so many bones of terrestrial quadrupeds: but