

November 19th.—Passing the valley of Las Vacas, we slept at a house of a North American, who worked a lime-kiln on the Arroyo de las Vivoras. In the morning we rode to a projecting headland on the banks of the river, called Punta Gorda. On the way we tried to find a jaguar. There were plenty of fresh tracks, and we visited the trees, on which they are said to sharpen their claws; but we did not succeed in disturbing one. From this point the Rio Uruguay presented to our view a noble volume of water. From the clearness and rapidity of the stream, its appearance was far superior to that of its neighbor the Parana. On the opposite coast, several branches from the latter river entered the Uruguay. As the sun was shining, the two colors of the waters could be seen quite distinct.

In the evening we proceeded on our road toward Mercedes on the Rio Negro. At night we asked permission to sleep at an estancia at which we happened to arrive. It was a very large estate, being ten leagues square, and the owner is one of the greatest landowners in the country. His nephew had charge of it, and with him there was a captain in the army who the other day ran away from Buenos Ayres. Considering their station, their conversation was rather amusing. They expressed, as was usual, unbounded astonishment at the globe being round, and could scarcely credit that a hole would, if deep enough, come out on the other side. They had, however, heard of a country where there were six months light and six of darkness, and where the inhabitants were very tall and thin! They were curious about the price and condition of horses and cattle in England. Upon finding out we did not catch our animals with the lazo, they cried out, "Ah, then, you use nothing but the bolas": the idea of an inclosed country was quite new to them. The captain at last said he had one question to ask me, which he should be very much obliged if I would answer with all truth. I trembled to think how deeply scientific it would be: it was, "Whether the ladies of Buenos Ayres were not the handsomest in the world." I replied, like a renegade, "Charmingly so." He added, "I