sea compared with the land, seems to extend over the greater part of the southern hemisphere; and as a consequence, the vegetation partakes of a semi-tropical character. Tree-ferns thrive luxuriantly in Van Diemen's Land (lat. 45°), and I measured one trunk no less than six feet in circumference. An arborescent fern was found by Forster in New Zealand in 46°, where orchideous plants are parasitical on the trees. In the Auckland Islands, ferns, according to Dr. Dieffenbach,' have trunks so thick and high that they may be almost called tree-ferns; and in these islands, and even as far south as lat. 55° in the Macquarrie Islands, parrots abound.

On the Height of the Snow-line, and on the Descent of the Glaciers, in South America.-For the detailed authorities for the following table, I must refer to the former edition:

Latitude	Height in feet of Snow-line	Observer .
Equatorial region; mean resul	t 15,748	Humboldt.
Bolivia, lat. 16° to 18° S	. 17,000	Pentland. •
Central Chile, lat. 33° S	. 14,500 to 15,000	Gillies, and the Author.
Chiloe, lat. 41° to 43° S	. 6,000	Officers of "Beagle," and Author.
Tierra del Fuego, 54°S	. 3,500 to 4,000	King.

As the height of the plane of perpetual snow seems chiefly to be determined by the extreme heat of the summer, rather than by the mean temperature of the year, we ought not to be surprised at its descent in the Strait of Magellan, where the summer is so cool, to only 3,500 or 4,000 feet above the level of the sea; although in Norway we must travel to between lat. 67° and 70° N., that is, about 14° nearer the pole, to meet with perpetual snow at this low level. The difference in height, namely about 9,000 feet, between the snowline on the Cordillera behind Chiloe (with its highest points ranging from only 5,600 to 7,500 feet) and in central Chile²

¹ See the German Translation of this Journal: and for the other facts Mr.

Brown's Appendix to Flinders' Voyage. ² On the Cordillera of central Chile, I believe the snow line varies exceed-ingly in height in different summers. I was assured that during one very dry and long summer all the snow disappeared from Aconcagua, although it attains the prodigious height of 23,000 feet. It is probable that much of the snow at these great heights is evaporated rather than thawed.