

from this point, owe the greater part of their beauty to the atmosphere through which they are seen. When the sun was setting in the Pacific, it was admirable to watch how clearly their rugged outlines could be distinguished, yet how varied and how delicate were the shades of their color.

I had the good fortune to find living here Mr. Richard Corfield, an old schoolfellow and friend, to whose hospitality and kindness I was greatly indebted, in having afforded me a most pleasant residence during the "Beagle's" stay in Chile. The immediate neighborhood of Valparaiso is not very productive to the naturalist. During the long summer the wind blows steadily from the southward, and a little off shore, so that rain never falls; during the three winter months, however, it is sufficiently abundant. The vegetation in consequence is very scanty; except in some deep valleys, there are no trees, and only a little grass and a few low bushes are scattered over the less steep parts of the hills. When we reflect that at the distance of 350 miles to the south, this side of the Andes is completely hidden by one impenetrable forest, the contrast is very remarkable. I took several long walks while collecting objects of natural history. The country is pleasant for exercise. There are many very beautiful flowers; and, as in most other dry climates, the plants and shrubs possess strong and peculiar odors—even one's clothes by brushing through them became scented. I did not cease from wonder at finding each succeeding day as fine as the foregoing. What a difference does climate make in the enjoyment of life! How opposite are the sensations when viewing black mountains half-enveloped in clouds, and seeing another range through the light blue haze of a fine day! The one for a time may be very sublime; the other is all gayety and happy life.

August 14th.—I set out on a riding excursion, for the purpose of geologizing the basal parts of the Andes, which alone at this time of the year are not shut up by the winter snow. Our first day's ride was northward along the sea-coast. After dark we reached the Hacienda of Quintero, the