

acacia, which are stunted in their forms, and stand wide apart from each other, grow in large numbers. These trees are never found near the sea-coast; and this gives another characteristic feature to the scenery of these basins. We crossed a low ridge which separates Guitron from the great plain on which Santiago stands. The view was here pre-eminently striking: the dead level surface, covered in parts by woods of acacia, and with the city in the distance, abutting horizontally against the base of the Andes, whose snowy peaks were bright with the evening sun. At the first glance of this view, it was quite evident that the plain represented the extent of a former inland sea. As soon as we gained the level road we pushed our horses into a gallop, and reached the city before it was dark.

I stayed a week in Santiago and enjoyed myself very much. In the morning I rode to various places on the plain, and in the evening dined with several of the English merchants, whose hospitality at this place is well known. A never-failing source of pleasure was to ascend the little hill-ock of rock (St. Lucia) which projects in the middle of the city. The scenery certainly is most striking, and, as I have said, very peculiar. I am informed that this same character is common to the cities on the great Mexican platform. Of the town I have nothing to say in detail: it is not so fine or so large as Buenos Ayres, but is built after the same model. I arrived here by a circuit to the north; so I resolved to return to Valparaiso by a rather longer excursion to the south of the direct road.

September 5th.—By the middle of the day we arrived at one of the suspension bridges made of hide, which crosses the Maypu, a large turbulent river a few leagues southward of Santiago. These bridges are very poor affairs. The road, following the curvature of the suspending ropes, is made of bundles of sticks placed close together. It was full of holes, and oscillated rather fearfully, even with the weight of a man leading his horse. In the evening we reached a comfortable farmhouse, where there were several very pretty señoritas.