

entered Chile and ravaged the neighboring country. This is the same man whose attack on an estancia at the Rio Negro I have described. He was a renegade half-cast Spaniard, who collected a great body of Indians together and established himself by a stream in the Pampas, which place none of the forces sent after him could ever discover. From this point he used to sally forth, and crossing the Cordillera by passes hitherto unattempted, he ravaged the farmhouses and drove the cattle to his secret rendezvous. Pincheira was a capital horseman, and he made all around him equally good, for he invariably shot any one who hesitated to follow him. It was against this man, and other wandering Indian tribes, that Rosas waged the war of extermination.

September 13th.—We left the baths of Cauquenes, and rejoining the main road slept at the Rio Claro. From this place we rode to the town of S. Fernando. Before arriving there, the last land-locked basin had expanded into a great plain, which extended so far to the south that the snowy summits of the more distant Andes were seen as if above the horizon of the sea. S. Fernando is forty leagues from Santiago; and it was my furthest point southward; for we here turned at right angles toward the coast. We slept at the gold-mines of Yaquil, which are worked by Mr. Nixon, an American gentleman, to whose kindness I was much indebted during the four days I stayed at his house. The next morning we rode to the mines, which are situated at the distance of some leagues, near the summit of a lofty hill. On the way we had a glimpse of the lake Tagua-tagua, celebrated for its floating islands, which have been described by M. Gay.¹ They are composed of the stalks of various dead plants intertwined together, and on the surface of which other living ones take root. Their form is generally circular, and their thickness from four to six feet, of which the greater

¹ *Annales des Sciences Naturelles*, March, 1833. M. Gay, a zealous and able naturalist, was then occupied in studying every branch of natural history throughout the kingdom of Chile.