

flat rock, and parts of the beach, were covered with them. They appeared to be of a loving disposition, and lay huddled together, fast asleep, like so many pigs; but even pigs would have been ashamed of their dirt, and of the foul smell which came from them. Each herd was watched by the patient but inauspicious eyes of the turkey-buzzard. This disgusting bird, with its bald scarlet head, formed to wallow in putridity, is very common on the west coast, and their attendance on the seals shows on what they rely for their food. We found the water (probably only that of the surface) nearly fresh: this was caused by the number of torrents which, in the form of cascades, came tumbling over the bold granite mountains into the sea. The fresh water attracts the fish, and these bring many terns, gulls, and two kinds of cormorant. We saw also a pair of the beautiful black-necked swans, and several small sea-otters, the fur of which is held in such high estimation. In returning we were again amused by the impetuous manner in which the heap of seals, old and young, tumbled into the water as the boat passed. They did not remain long under water, but, rising, followed us with outstretched necks, expressing great wonder and curiosity.

7th.—Having run up the coast, we anchored near the northern end of the Chonos Archipelago, in Low's Harbor, where we remained a week. The islands were here, as in Chiloe, composed of a stratified, soft, littoral deposit; and the vegetation in consequence was beautifully luxuriant. The woods came down to the sea-beach, just in the manner of an evergreen shrubbery over a gravel walk. We also enjoyed from the anchorage a splendid view of four great snowy cones of the Cordillera, including "el famoso Corcovado": the range itself had in this latitude so little height that few parts of it appeared above the tops of the neighboring islets. We found here a party of five men from Caylen, "el fin del Cristiandad," who had most adventurously crossed in their miserable boat-canoe, for the purpose of fishing, the open space of sea which separates Chonos from Chiloe. These