

of the fleas. I am sure, in the morning, there was not a space on my legs of the size of a shilling which had not its little red mark where the flea had feasted.

12th.—We continued to ride through the uncleared forest; only occasionally meeting an Indian on horseback, or a troop of fine mules bringing alerce-planks and corn from the southern plains. In the afternoon one of the horses knocked up: we were then on a brow of a hill which commanded a fine view of the Llanos. The view of these open plains was very refreshing, after being hemmed in and buried in the wilderness of trees. The uniformity of a forest soon becomes very wearisome. This west coast makes me remember with pleasure the free, unbounded plains of Patagonia; yet, with the true spirit of contradiction, I cannot forget how sublime is the silence of the forest. The Llanos are the most fertile and thickly peopled parts of the country; as they possess the immense advantage of being nearly free from trees. Before leaving the forest we crossed some flat little lawns, around which single trees stood, as in an English park: I have often noticed with surprise, in wooded undulatory districts, that the quite level parts have been destitute of trees. On account of the tired horse, I determined to stop at the Mission of Cudico, to the friar of which I had a letter of introduction. Cudico is an intermediate district between the forest and the Llanos. There are a good many cottages, with patches of corn and potatoes, nearly all belonging to Indians. The tribes dependent on Valdivia are "reducidos y cristianos." The Indians further northward, about Arauco and Imperial, are still very wild, and not converted; but they have all much intercourse with the Spaniards. The padre said that the Christian Indians did not much like coming to mass, but that otherwise they showed respect for religion. The greatest difficulty is in making them observe the ceremonies of marriage. The wild Indians take as many wives as they can support, and a cacique will sometimes have more than ten: on entering his house the number may be told by that of the separate fires. Each wife lives a week in turn with the