

But the rising of that part of the coast of Patagonia is perhaps nowise connected with the Cordillera, but rather with a line of old volcanic rocks in Banda Oriental, so that it may have been infinitely slower than on the shores of Peru. All these speculations, however, must be vague; for who will pretend to say that there may not have been several periods of subsidence intercalated between the movements of elevation; for we know that along the whole coast of Patagonia there have certainly been many and long pauses in the upward action of the elevatory forces.

CHAPTER XVII

The whole Group Volcanic—Number of Craters—Leafless Bushes—Colony at Charles Island—James Island—Salt Lake in Crater—Natural History of the Group—Ornithology, curious Finches—Reptiles—Great Tortoises, habits of—Marine Lizard, feeds on Sea-weed—Terrestrial Lizard, burrowing Habits, herbivorous—Importance of Reptiles in the Archipelago—Fish, Shells, Insects—Botany—American Type of Organization—Differences in the Species or Races on different Islands—Tameness of the Birds—Fear of Man, an acquired Instinct

GALAPAGOS ARCHIPELAGO

SEPTEMBER 15TH.—This archipelago consists of ten principal islands, of which five exceed the others in size. They are situated under the equator, and between five and six hundred miles westward of the coast of America. They are all formed of volcanic rocks; a few fragments of granite curiously glazed and altered by the heat can hardly be considered as an exception. Some of the craters surmounting the larger islands are of immense size, and they rise to a height of between three and four thousand feet. Their flanks are studded by innumerable smaller orifices. I scarcely hesitate to affirm that there must be in the whole archipelago at least two thousand craters. These consist either of lava and scorïæ, or of finely-stratified,