

CHAPTER IX.

CHILI.

1839.

ON approaching the coast of Chili, every one is anxious to get a sight of the Cordilleras. There are only two periods during the day in which they can be seen to advantage, viz.: in the morning before sunrise, and in the evening at sunset. The first is the most striking view. The outline is at that time of a golden hue, and may be easily traced, in a long line, running north and south. This gradually brightens, and is lost the moment the sun is seen.

The evening view gives rise to disappointment. The mountains are seen at a great distance (eighty miles in a bird's flight) reflecting the setting sun, and, in consequence, appear much lower than is anticipated.

On our arrival at Valparaiso, I lost no time in establishing the observatory. The officers and scientific gentlemen were assigned to such duties as were deemed most desirable to insure the results in the different departments.

The authorities, whom I at once called upon in company with our consul, were exceedingly kind and attentive, and gave every offer of assistance.

The officers of the customs readily gave me permission to land all my instruments. Mr. Cood, an English gentleman, kindly offered our consul to place at my disposition an unoccupied house on the hill. Although it was some distance to mount up, as it was quiet and out of the way, I accepted the kind offer, and occupied it.

As I was desirous of avoiding all unnecessary delay, not only on account of the loss of time we had already met with, but because the season was approaching when the *northers* might be expected, every exertion was made to supply our wants, and through the kindness and attention of our consul, G. G. Hobson, Esq., this was effected in the