

eral times when a pair, probably male and female, were chasing each other in an irregular course, they passed within a few yards of me; and I distinctly heard a clicking noise, similar to that produced by a toothed wheel passing under a spring catch. The noise was continued at short intervals, and could be distinguished at about twenty yards' distance: I am certain there is no error in the observation.

I was disappointed in the general aspect of the Coleoptera. The number of minute and obscurely-colored beetles is exceedingly great.¹ The cabinets of Europe can, as yet, boast only of the larger species from tropical climates. It is sufficient to disturb the composure of an entomologist's mind, to look forward to the future dimensions of a complete catalogue. The carnivorous beetles, or Carabidæ, appear in extremely few numbers within the tropics: this is the more remarkable when compared to the case of the carnivorous quadrupeds, which are so abundant in hot countries. I was struck with this observation both on entering Brazil, and when I saw the many elegant and active forms of the Harpalidæ reappearing on the temperate plains of La Plata. Do the very numerous spiders and rapacious Hymenoptera supply the place of the carnivorous beetles? The carrion-feeders and Brachelytera are very uncommon; on the other hand, the Rhyncophora and Chrysomelidæ, all of which depend on the vegetable world for subsistence, are present in astonishing numbers. I do not here refer to the number of different species, but to that of the individual insects; for on this it is that the most striking character in the entomology of different countries depends. The orders Orthoptera and Hemiptera are particularly numerous; as likewise is the stinging division of the Hymenoptera; the bees, perhaps, being excepted. A person, on first entering a tropical forest, is

¹ I may mention, as a common instance of one day's (June 23d) collecting, when I was not attending particularly to the Coleoptera, that I caught sixty-eight species of that order. Among these there were only two of the Carabidæ, four Brachelytra, fifteen Rhyncophora, and fourteen of the Chrysomelidæ. Thirty-seven species of Arachnidæ, which I brought home, will be sufficient to prove that I was not paying overmuch attention to the generally favored order of Coleoptera.