

becomes almost dry, and the little remaining water nearly as salt as that of the sea. We slept at one of the great *estancias* of General Rosas. It was fortified, and of such an extent that, arriving in the dark, I thought it was a town and fortress. In the morning we saw immense herds of cattle, the general here having seventy-four square leagues of land. Formerly nearly three hundred men were employed about this estate, and they defied all the attacks of the Indians.

September 19th.—Passed the Guardia del Monte. This is a nice scattered little town, with many gardens full of peach and quince trees. The plain here looked like that around Buenos Ayres; the turf being short and bright green, with beds of clover and thistles, and with *bizcacha* holes. I was very much struck with the marked change in the aspect of the country after having crossed the Salado. From a coarse herbage we passed on to a carpet of fine green verdure. I at first attributed this to some change in the nature of the soil, but the inhabitants assured me that here, as well as in Banda Oriental, where there is as great a difference between the country around Monte Video and the thinly-inhabited savannas of Colonia, the whole was to be attributed to the manuring and grazing of the cattle. Exactly the same fact has been observed in the prairies¹ of North America, where coarse grass, between five and six feet high, when grazed by cattle, changes into common pasture land. I am not botanist enough to say whether the change here is owing to the introduction of new species, to the altered growth of the same, or to a difference in their proportional numbers. Azara has also observed with astonishment this change: he is likewise much perplexed by the immediate appearance of plants not occurring in the neighborhood, on the borders of any track that leads to a newly-constructed hovel. In another part he says,² “*ces chevaux (sauvages) ont la manie de préférer les chemins, et*

¹ See Mr. Atwater's account of the Prairies, in Silliman's N. A. Journal, vol. i. p. 117.

² Azara's Voyage, vol. i. p. 373.