

I have mentioned these circumstances because, although no crystallized body is at present known to assume this form, it may lead some future traveller to investigate the real nature of such stones.

While staying at this estancia, I was amused with what I saw and heard of the shepherd dogs of the country.¹ When riding, it is a common thing to meet a large flock of sheep guarded by one or two dogs, at the distance of some miles from any house or man. I often wondered how so firm a friendship had been established. The method of education consists in separating the puppy, while very young, from the bitch, and in accustoming it to its future companions. A ewe is held three or four times a day for the little thing to suck, and a nest of wool is made for it in the sheep-pen; at no time is it allowed to associate with other dogs, or with the children of the family. The puppy is, moreover, generally castrated; so that, when grown up, it can scarcely have any feelings in common with the rest of its kind. From this education it has no wish to leave the flock, and just as another dog will defend its master, man, so will these the sheep. It is amusing to observe, when approaching a flock, how the dog immediately advances barking, and the sheep all close in his rear, as if round the oldest ram. These dogs are also easily taught to bring home the flock at a certain hour in the evening. Their most troublesome fault, when young, is their desire of playing with the sheep; for in their sport they sometimes gallop their poor subjects most unmercifully.

The shepherd dog comes to the house every day for some meat, and as soon as it is given him he skulks away as if ashamed of himself. On these occasions the house-dogs are very tyrannical, and the least of them will attack and pursue the stranger. The minute, however, the latter has reached the flock, he turns round and begins to bark, and then all the house-dogs take very quickly to their heels. In a simi-

¹ M. A. d'Orbigny has given nearly a similar account of these dogs, tom. i. p. 175.