

and the trees on which they grow, in distant parts of the world! In Tierra del Fuego the fungus in its tough and mature state is collected in large quantities by the women and children, and is eaten uncooked. It has a mucilaginous, slightly sweet taste, with a faint smell like that of a mushroom. With the exception of a few berries, chiefly of a dwarf arbutus, the natives eat no vegetable food besides this fungus. In New Zealand, before the introduction of the potato, the roots of the fern were largely consumed; at the present time, I believe, Tierra del Fuego is the only country in the world where a cryptogamic plant affords a staple article of food.

The zoology of Tierra del Fuego, as might have been expected from the nature of its climate and vegetation, is very poor. Of mammalia, besides whales and seals, there is one bat, a kind of mouse (*Reithrodon chinchilloides*), two true mice, a ctenomys allied to or identical with the tucu-tuco, two foxes (*Canis Magellanicus* and *C. Azaræ*), a sea-otter, the guanaco, and a deer. Most of these animals inhabit only the drier eastern parts of the country; and the deer has never been seen south of the Strait of Magellan. Observing the general correspondence of the cliffs of soft sandstone, mud, and shingle, on the opposite sides of the strait, and on some intervening islands, one is strongly tempted to believe that the land was once joined, and thus allowed animals so delicate and helpless as the tucu-tuco and *Reithrodon* to pass over. The correspondence of the cliffs is far from proving any junction; because such cliffs generally are formed by the intersection of sloping deposits, which, before the elevation of the land, had been accumulated near the then existing shores. It is, however, a remarkable coincidence that, in the two large islands cut off by the Beagle Channel from the rest of Tierra del Fuego, one has cliffs composed of matter that may be called stratified alluvium, which front similar ones on the opposite side of the channel—while the other is exclusively bordered by old crystalline rocks: in the former, called Navarin Island, both foxes and guanacos occur; but