

hausted with protracted thirst, the miserable animals plunged headlong into the Parana, and were drowned. Innumerable carcasses, putrid and swollen by the waters, descended to the estuary of the Plata.

Further to the west and north of Buenos Ayres spread hundreds of miles of beautiful meadows, whose long tufted exuberant grass furnish the flocks with inexhaustible pasture. The banks of the Parana present a series of extensive lawns, enriched with palms and a boundless, countless variety of tropical productions. To this succeeds a zone of swamp and marsh, lying at the very foot of the Andes ; the immense lagoons bloom with aquatic plants, and, when swollen by the rains, frequently inundate the surrounding country.

If floods are the danger of the wet season, in the dry hot months of the year the pampas are liable to an even more frightful peril—the vast conflagrations which rush in flame and fire over scores of leagues, burning up every stem and branch and leaf, and swallowing up hundreds of horses and cattle.

The pampas of South America cover a most extensive superficies. They stretch far away into Upper Peru, where they form the Pampas del Sacramento. The *Punas* of Peru, where the vicuña grazes, and numerous troops of mules and asses feed, are of a very similar character.

M. Paul Marcoy, who has traversed the Pampa of Islay on his way to Arequipa, describes it in the following terms :—

“ A journey across this desert is not unattended by danger. The sea-breezes which trouble its surface are incessantly renewing its aspect. From evening to morning large cavities are opened up, sand-hills erected, banks elevated, which afterwards fill up, fall over, sink, are dispersed, and again re-formed. To guide them in their march across this shifting soil, the peasants of the pampas consult the sun during the day, and during the night the stars.”

#### THE SILVAS.

The region of forests which extends from the Cordillera of Chiquito to the mountains of Parima, including the entire basin of