KING PHILIP PARKER, FITZROY ROBERT

NARRATIVE OF THE SURVEYING VOYAGES OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS ADVENTURE AND BEAGLE, BETWEEN THE YEARS 1826 AND 1836

Robert Fitzroy
Philip King

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Содержание

Robert Fitzroy
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MY LORD:

I have the honour of dedicating to your lordship, as Head of the Naval Service, this narrative of the Surveying Voyages of the Adventure and Beagle, between the years 1826 and 1836.

Originated by the Board of Admiralty, over which Viscount Melville presided, these voyages have been carried on, since 1830, under his lordship's successors in office.

Captain King has authorized me to lay the results of the Expedition which he commanded, from 1826 to 1830, before your lordship, united to those of the Beagle's subsequent voyages.

I have the honour to be,
MY LORD,
Your lordship's obedient servant,
ROBERT FITZ-ROY.

PREFACE

In this Work, the result of nine years' voyaging, partly on coasts little known, an attempt has been made to combine giving general information with the paramount object – that of fulfilling a duty to the Admiralty, for the benefit of Seamen.

Details, purely technical, have been avoided in the narrative more than I could have wished; but some are added in the Appendix to each volume: and in a nautical memoir, drawn up for the Admiralty, those which are here omitted will be found.

There are a few words used frequently in the following pages, which may not at first sight be familiar to every reader, therefore I need hardly apologize for saying that, although the great Portuguese navigator's name was Magalhaens – it is generally pronounced as if written Magellan: – that the natives of Tierra del Fuego are commonly called Fuegians; – and that Chiloé is thus accented for reasons given in page 384 of the second volume.

In the absence of Captain King, who has entrusted to me the care of publishing his share of this work, I may have overlooked errors which he would have detected. Being hurried, and unwell, while attending to the printing of his volume, I was not able to do it justice.

It may be a subject of regret, that no paper on the Botany of Tierra del Fuego is appended to the first volume. Captain King took great pains in forming and preserving a botanical collection,

aided by a person embarked solely for that purpose. He placed this collection in the British Museum, and was led to expect that a first-rate botanist would have examined and described it; but he has been disappointed.

In conclusion, I beg to remind the reader, that the work is unavoidably of a rambling and very mixed character; that some parts may be wholly uninteresting to most readers, though, perhaps, not devoid of interest to all; and that its publication arises solely from a sense of duty.

ROBERT FITZ-ROY

London, March 1839.

INTRODUCTION

In 1825, the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty directed two ships to be prepared for a Survey of the Southern Coasts of South America; and in May, of the following year, the Adventure and the Beagle were lying in Plymouth Sound, ready to carry the orders of their Lordships into execution.

These vessels were well provided with every necessary, and every comfort, which the liberality and kindness of the Admiralty, Navy Board, and officers of the Dock-yards, could cause to be furnished.

On board the Adventure, a roomy ship, of 330 tons burthen, without guns,[1] lightly though strongly rigged, and very strongly built, were —

Phillip Parker King, Commander and Surveyor, Senior Officer of the Expedition.

[1] Excepting one for signals.

J. Cooke	Lieutenant.
B. Ainsworth	Master.
J. Tarn	Surgeon.
G. Rowlett	Purser.
R. H. Sholl	Mate.
J. C. Wickham	Mate.
J. F. Brand	Mate.
T. Graves	Mate and Assistant Surveyor.
G. Harrison	Mate.
E. Williams	Second Master.
J. Park	Assistant Surgeon.
W. W. Wilson	Midshipman.
A. Millar	Master's Assistant.
A. Mellersh	Volunteer 1st Class.
J. Russell	Volunteer 2d Class.
G. Hodgskin	Clerk.
J. Anderson	Botanical Collector.

Gunner – Boatswain – and Carpenter.

Serjeant and fourteen Marines; and about forty Seamen and Boys.

In the Beagle, a well-built little vessel, of 235 tons, rigged as a barque, and carrying six guns, were —

Pringle Stokes	Commander and Surveyor.
E. Hawes	Lieutenant.
W. G. Skyring	Lieut. and Assist. Surveyor.
S. S. Flinn	Master.
E. Bowen	Surgeon.
J. Atrill	Purser.
J. Kirke	Mate.
B. Bynoe	Assistant Surgeon.
J. L. Stokes	Midshipman.
R. F. Lunie	Volunteer 1st Class.
W. Jones	Volunteer 2d Class.
J. Macdouall	Clerk.

Carpenter.

Serjeant and nine Marines; and about forty Seamen and Boys.

In the course of the voyage, several changes occurred among the officers, which it may be well to mention here.

In September, 1826, Lieutenant Hawes invalided: and was succeeded by Mr. R. H. Sholl, the senior mate in the Expedition.

In February, 1827, Mr. Ainsworth was unfortunately drowned; and, in his place, Mr. Williams acted, until superseded by Mr. S. S. Flinn, of the Beagle.

Lieutenant Cooke invalided in June, 1827; and was succeeded by Mr. J. C. Wickham.

In the same month Mr. Graves received information of his promotion to the rank of Lieutenant.

Between May and December, 1827, Mr. Bowen and Mr. Atrill invalided; besides Messrs. Lunie, Jones, and Macdouall: Mr. W.

Mogg joined the Beagle, as acting Purser; and Mr. D. Braily, as volunteer of the second class.

Mr. Bynoe acted as Surgeon of the Beagle, after Mr. Bowen left, until December, 1828.

In August, 1828, Captain Stokes's lamented vacancy was temporarily filled by Lieutenant Skyring; whose place was taken by Mr. Brand.

Mr. Flinn was then removed to the Adventure; and Mr. A. Millar put into his place.

In December, 1828, the Commander-in-chief of the Station (Sir Robert Waller Otway) superseded the temporary arrangements of Captain King, and appointed a commander, lieutenant, master, and surgeon to the Beagle. Mr. Brand then invalided, and the lists of officers stood thus —

Adventure (1828-30).

Phillip Parker King, Commander and Surveyor, Senior Officer of the Expedition.

T. Graves	Lieut. and Assist. Surveyor.
J. C. Wickham	Lieutenant.
S. S. Flinn	Master.
J. Tarn	Surgeon.
G. Rowlett	Purser.
G. Harrison	Mate.
W. W. Wilson	Mate.
E. Williams	Second Master.
J. Park	Assistant Surgeon.
A. Mellersh	Midshipman.
A. Millar	Master's Assistant.
J. Russell	Volunteer 2d Class.
G. Hodgskin	Clerk.
J. Anderson	Botanical Collector.

Gunner – Boatswain – and Carpenter.

Serjeant and fourteen Marines: and about fifty[2] Seamen and Boys.

Beagle (1828-30).

[2] Twelve additional seamen having been ordered, by the Admiralty, for the Adelaide schooner.

Robert Fitz-Roy	Commander and Surveyor.
W. G. Skyring	Lieut. and Assist. Surveyor.
J. Kempe	Lieutenant.
M. Murray	Master.
J. Wilson	Surgeon.
W. Mogg	(Acting) Purser.
J. Kirke	Mate.
B. Bynoe	Assistant Surgeon.
J. L. Stokes	Midshipman.
J. May	Carpenter.
D. Braily	Volunteer 2d Class.
J. Megget	Clerk.

Serjeant and nine Marines: and about forty Seamen and Boys.

In June, 1829, Lieutenant Mitchell joined the Adventure; and in February, 1830, Mr. A. Millar died very suddenly: – and very much regretted.

The following Instructions were given to the Senior Officer of the Expedition.

"By the Commissioners for executing the Office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, &c.

"Whereas we think fit that an accurate Survey should be made of the Southern Coasts of the Peninsula of South America, from the southern entrance of the River Plata, round to Chiloé; and of Tierra del Fuego; and whereas we have been induced to repose confidence in you, from your conduct of the Surveys in New Holland; we have placed you in the command of His Majesty's

Surveying Vessel the Adventure; and we have directed Captain Stokes, of His Majesty's Surveying Vessel the Beagle, to follow your orders.

"Both these vessels are provided with all the means which are necessary for the complete execution of the object above-mentioned, and for the health and comfort of their Ships' Companies. You are also furnished with all the information, we at present possess, of the ports which you are to survey; and nine Government Chronometers have been embarked in the Adventure, and three in the Beagle, for the better determination of the Longitudes.

"You are therefore hereby required and directed, as soon as both vessels shall be in all respects ready, to put to sea with them; and on your way to your ulterior destination, you are to make, or call at, the following places, successively; namely; Madeira: Teneriffe: the northern point of St. Antonio, and the anchorage at St. Jago; both in the Cape Verd Islands: the Island of Trinidad, in the Southern Atlantic: and Rio de Janeiro: for the purpose of ascertaining the differences of the longitudes of those several places.

"At Rio de Janeiro, you will receive any supplies you may require; and make with the Commander-in-chief, on that Station, such arrangements as may tend to facilitate your receiving further supplies, in the course of your Expedition.

"After which, you are to proceed to the entrance of the River Plata, to ascertain the longitudes of the Cape Santa Maria, and

Monte Video: you are then to proceed to survey the Coasts, Islands, and Straits; from Cape St. Antonio, at the south side of the River Plata, to Chiloé; on the west coast of America; in such manner and order, as the state of the season, the information you may have received, or other circumstances, may induce you to adopt.

"You are to continue on this service until it shall be completed; taking every opportunity to communicate to our Secretary, and the Commander-in-Chief, your proceedings: and also, whenever you may be able to form any judgment of it, where the Commander-in-Chief, or our Secretary, may be able to communicate with you.

"In addition to any arrangements made with the Admiral, for recruiting your stores, and provisions; you are, of course, at liberty to take all other means, which may be within your reach, for that essential purpose.

"You are to avail yourself of every opportunity of collecting and preserving Specimens of such objects of Natural History as may be new, rare, or interesting; and you are to instruct Captain Stokes, and all the other Officers, to use their best diligence in increasing the Collections in each ship: the whole of which must be understood to belong to the Public.

"In the event of any irreparable accident happening to either of the two vessels, you are to cause the officers and crew of the disabled vessel to be removed into the other, and with her, singly, to proceed in prosecution of the service, or return to

England, according as circumstances shall appear to require; understanding that the officers and crews of both vessels are hereby authorized, and required, to continue to perform their duties, according to their respective ranks and stations, on board either vessel to which they may be so removed. Should, unfortunately, your own vessel be the one disabled, you are in that case to take the command of the Beagle: and, in the event of any fatal accident happening to yourself; Captain Stokes is hereby authorized to take the command of the Expedition; either on board the Adventure, or Beagle, as he may prefer; placing the officer of the Expedition who may then be next in seniority to him, in command of the second vessel: also, in the event of your inability, by sickness or otherwise, at any period of this service, to continue to carry the Instructions into execution, you are to transfer them to Captain Stokes, or to the surviving officer then next in command to you, who is hereby required to execute them, in the best manner he can, for the attainment of the object in view.

"When you shall have completed the service, or shall, from any cause, be induced to give it up; you will return to Spithead with all convenient expedition; and report your arrival, and proceedings, to our Secretary, for our information.

"Whilst on the South American Station, you are to consider yourself under the command of the Admiral of that Station; to whom we have expressed our desire that he should not interfere with these orders, except under peculiar necessity.

"Given under our hands the 16th of May 1826.
(Signed) "Melville.
"G. Cockburn.
"To Phillip P. King, Esq., Commander
of His Majesty's Surveying Vessel
Adventure, at Plymouth.
"By command of their Lordships.
(Signed) "J. W. Croker."

On the 22d of May, 1826, the Adventure and Beagle sailed from Plymouth; and, in their way to Rio de Janeiro, called successively at Madeira, Teneriffe, and St. Jago.

Unfavourable weather prevented a boat being sent ashore at the northern part of San Antonio; but observations were made in Terrafal Bay, on the south-west side of the island: and, after crossing the Equator, the Trade-wind hung so much to the southward, that Trinidad could not be approached without a sacrifice of time, which, it was considered, might be prejudicial to more important objects of the Expedition.

Both ships anchored at Rio de Janeiro on the 10th of August, and remained there until the 2d of October, when they sailed to the River Plata.

In Maldonado,[3] their anchors were dropped on the 13th of the same month; and, till the 12th of November, each vessel was employed on the north side of the river, between Cape St. Mary and Monte Video.

[3] On the north side of the river Plata.

CHAPTER I

Departure from Monte Video – Port Santa Elena – Geological remarks – Cape Fairweather – Non-existence of Chalk – Natural History – Approach to Cape Virgins, and the Strait of Magalhaens (or Magellan)

We sailed from Monte Video on the 19th of November 1826; and, in company with the Beagle, quitted the river Plata.

According to my Instructions, the Survey was to commence at Cape San Antonio, the southern limit of the entrance of the Plata; but, for the following urgent reasons, I decided to begin with the southern coasts of Patagonia, and Tierra del Fuego, including the Straits of Magalhaens.[4] In the first place, they presented a field of great interest and novelty; and secondly, the climate of the higher southern latitudes being so severe and tempestuous, it appeared important to encounter its rigours while the ships were in good condition – while the crews were healthy – and while the charms of a new and difficult enterprize had full force.

Our course was therefore southerly, and in latitude 45° south, a few leagues northward of Port Santa Elena, we first saw the coast of Patagonia. I intended to visit that port; and, on the 28th, anchored, and landed there.

Seamen should remember that a knowledge of the tide is of

[4] Commonly called Magellan. See p. 11.

especial consequence in and near Port Santa Elena. During a calm we were carried by it towards reefs which line the shore, and were obliged to anchor until a breeze sprung up.

The coast along which we had passed, from Point Lobos to the north-east point of Port Santa Elena, appeared to be dry and bare of vegetation. There were no trees; the land seemed to be one long extent of undulating plain, beyond which were high, flat-topped hills of a rocky, precipitous character. The shore was fronted by rocky reefs extending two or three miles from high-water mark, which, as the tide fell, were left dry, and in many places were covered with seals.

As soon as we had secured the ships, Captain Stokes accompanied me on shore to select a place for our observations. We found the spot which the Spanish astronomers of Malaspina's Voyage (in 1798) used for their observatory, the most convenient for our purpose. It is near a very steep shingle (stony) beach at the back of a conspicuous red-coloured, rocky projection which terminates a small bay, on the western side, at the head of the port. The remains of a wreck, which proved to be that of an American whaler, the Decatur of New York, were found upon the extremity of the same point; she had been driven on shore from her anchors during a gale.

The sight of the wreck, and the steepness of the shingle beach just described, evidently caused by the frequent action of a heavy sea, did not produce a favourable opinion of the safety of the port: but as it was not the season for easterly gales, to which

only the anchorage is exposed, and as appearances indicated a westerly wind, we did not anticipate danger.

While we were returning on board, the wind blew so strongly that we had much difficulty in reaching the ships, and the boats were no sooner hoisted up, and every thing made snug, than it blew a hard gale from the S.W. The water however, from the wind being off the land, was perfectly smooth, and the ships rode securely through the night: but the following morning the gale increased, and veered to the southward, which threw a heavy sea into the port, placing us, to say the least, in a very uneasy situation. Happily it ceased at sunset. In consequence of the unfavourable state of the weather, no attempt was made to land in order to observe an eclipse of the sun; to make which observation was one reason for visiting this port.

The day after the gale, while I was employed in making some astronomical observations, a party roamed about in quest of game: but with little success, as they killed only a few wild ducks. The fire which they made for cooking communicated to the dry stubbly grass, and in a few minutes the whole country was in a blaze. The flames continued to spread during our stay, and, in a few days, more than fifteen miles along the coast, and seven or eight miles into the interior were overrun by the fire. The smoke very much impeded our observations, for at times it quite obscured the sun.

The geological structure of this part of the country, and a considerable portion of the coast to the north and south, consists

of a fine-grained porphyritic clay slate. The summits of the hills near the coast are generally of a rounded form, and are paved, as it were, with small, rounded, siliceous pebbles, imbedded in the soil, and in no instance lying loose or in heaps; but those of the interior are flat-topped, and uniform in height, for many miles in extent. The valleys and lower elevations, notwithstanding the poverty and parched state of the soil, were partially covered with grass and shrubby plants, which afford sustenance to numerous herds of guanacoes. Many of these animals were observed feeding near the beach when we were working into the bay, but they took the alarm, so that upon landing we only saw them at a considerable distance. In none of our excursions could we find any water that had not a brackish taste. Several wells have been dug in the valleys, both near the sea and at a considerable distance from it, by the crews of sealing vessels; but, except in the rainy season, they all contain saltish water. This observation is applicable to nearly the whole extent of the porphyritic country. Oyster-shells, three or four inches in diameter, were found, scattered over the hills, to the height of three or four hundred feet above the sea. Sir John Narborough, in 1652, found oyster-shells at Port San Julian; but, from a great many which have been lately collected there, we know that they are of a species different from that found at Port Santa Elena. Both are fossils.

No recent specimen of the genus *Ostrea* was found by us on any part of the Patagonian coast. Narborough, in noticing those at Port San Julian, says, "They are the biggest oyster-shells that I

ever saw, some six, some seven inches broad, yet not one oyster to be found in the harbour: whence I conclude they were here when the world was formed."

The short period of our visit did not enable us to add much to natural history. Of quadrupeds we saw guanacoes, foxes, cavies, and the armadillo; but no traces of the puma (*Felis concolor*), or South American lion, although it is to be met with in the interior.

I mentioned that a herd of guanacoes was feeding near the shore when we arrived. Every exertion was made to obtain some of the animals; but, either from their shyness, or our ignorance of the mode of entrapping them, we tried in vain, until the arrival of a small sealing-vessel, which had hastened to our assistance, upon seeing the fires we had accidentally made, but which her crew thought were intended for signals of distress. They shot two, and sent some of the meat on board the Adventure. The next day, Mr. Tarn succeeded in shooting one, a female, which, when skinned and cleaned, weighed 168 lbs. Narborough mentions having killed one at Port San Julian, that weighed, "cleaned in his quarters, 268 lbs." The watchful and wary character of this animal is very remarkable. Whenever a herd is feeding, one is posted, like a sentinel, on a height; and, at the approach of danger, gives instant alarm by a loud neigh, when away they all go, at a hand-gallop, to the next eminence, where they quietly resume their feeding, until again warned of the approach of danger by their vigilant 'look-out.'

Another peculiarity of the guanaco is, the habit of resorting

to particular spots for natural purposes. This is mentioned in the 'Dictionnaire d'Histoire Naturelle,' in the 'Encyclopédie Méthodique,' as well as other works.

In one place we found the bones of thirty-one guanacoes collected within a space of thirty yards, perhaps the result of an encampment of Indians, as evident traces of them were observed; among which were a human jaw-bone, and a piece of agate ingeniously chipped into the shape of a spear-head.

The fox, which we did not take, appeared to be small, and similar to a new species afterwards found by us in the Strait of Magalhaens.

The cavia[5] (or, as it is called by Narborough, Byron, and Wood, the hare, an animal from which it differs both in appearance and habits, as well as flavour), makes a good dish; and so does the armadillo, which our people called the shell-pig.[6] This little animal is found abundantly about the low land, and lives in burrows underground; several were taken by the seamen, and, when cooked in their shells, were savoury and wholesome.

Teal were abundant upon the marshy grounds. A few

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[5] *Dasyprocta patachonica*: it is the *Patagonian cavy* of Dr. Shaw, and Pennant's Quadr., tab. 39, and the *liévre pampa* of D'Azara. M. Desmarest thinks that if the teeth were examined it would form a new genus, for which he proposes the name of *Dolichotis* (Ency. Meth. Mamm. p. 359). At present he has, from its external character, placed it amongst the genus *Dasyprocta* (agouti). The only one that was taken was not preserved, which prevented me from ascertaining the fact.

[6] *Dasypus minutus*, Desm. *Tatou pichiy*, or *tatou septième* of D'Azara, &c. &c. It has seven bands.

partridges, doves, and snipes, a rail, and some hawks were shot. The few sea-birds that were observed consisted of two species of gulls, a grebe and a penguin (*Aptenodytes Magellanica*).

We found two species of snakes and several kinds of lizards. Fish were scarce, as were also insects; of the last, our collections consisted only of a few species of *Coleoptera*, two or three *Lepidoptera*, and two *Hymenoptera*.

Among the sea-shells, the most abundant was the *Patella deaurata*, Lamk.; this, with three other species of Patella, one *Chiton*, three species of *Mytilus*, three of *Murex*, one of *Crepidula*, and a *Venus*, were all that we collected.

About the country, near the sea-shore, there is a small tree, whose stem and roots are highly esteemed for fuel by the crews of sealing-vessels which frequent this coast. They call it 'piccolo.' The leaf was described to me as having a prickle upon it, and the flower as of a yellow colour. A species of berberis also is found, which when ripe may afford a very palatable fruit.

Our short visit gave us no flattering opinion of the fertility of the country near this port. Of the interior we were ignorant; but, from the absence of Indians and the scarcity of fresh water, it is probably very bare of pasturage. Falkner, the Jesuit missionary, says these parts were used by the Tehuelhet tribes for burying-places: we saw, however, no graves, nor any traces of bodies, excepting the jaw-bone above-mentioned; but subsequently, at Sea Bear Bay, we found many places on the summits of the hills which had evidently been used for such a purpose, although then

containing no remains of bodies. This corresponds with Falkner's account, that after a period of twelve months the sepulchres are formally visited by the tribe, when the bones of their relatives and friends are collected and carried to certain places, where the skeletons are arranged in order, and tricked out with all the finery and ornaments they can collect.

The ships sailed from Port Santa Elena on the 5th December, and proceeded to the southward, coasting the shore as far as Cape Two Bays.

Our object being to proceed with all expedition to the Strait of Magalhaens, the examination of this part of the coast was reserved for a future opportunity. On the 13th, we had reached within fifty miles of Cape Virgins, the headland at the entrance of the strait, but it was directly in the wind's eye of us. The wind veering to S.S.W., we made about a west course. At daylight the land was in sight, terminating in a point to the S.W., so exactly like the description of Cape Virgins and the view of it in Alison's voyage, that without considering our place on the chart, or calculating the previous twenty-four hours' run, it was taken for the Cape itself, and, no one suspecting a mistake, thought of verifying the ship's position. The point, however, proved to be Cape Fairweather. It was not a little singular, that the same mistake should have been made on board the Beagle, where the error was not discovered for three days.[7]

[7] A similar error was made by one of the ships of the fleet under Loyasa in the year 1525. The Nodales also, in their description of the coast, mention the similarity of

From the appearance of the weather I was anxious to approach the land in order to anchor, as there seemed to be every likelihood of a gale; and we were not deceived, for at three o'clock, being within seven miles of the Cape, a strong wind sprung up from the S.W., and the anchor was dropped. Towards evening it blew so hard, that both ships dragged their anchors for a considerable distance.

On the charts of this part of the coast the shore is described to be formed of "chalk hills, like the coast of Kent." To geologists, therefore, especially, as they were not disposed to believe that such was the fact, this was a question of some interest. From our anchorage the appearance of the land favoured our belief of the existence of chalk. The outline was very level and steep; precipitous cliffs of whitish colour, stratified horizontally, with their upper part occasionally worn into hollows, strongly resembled the chalk cliffs of the English coasts.

The gale prevented our landing for three days, when (19th) a few minutes sufficed to discover that the cliffs were composed of soft clay, varying in colour and consistence, and disposed in strata running horizontally for many miles without interruption, excepting where water-courses had worn them away. Some of the strata were very fine clay, unmixed with any other substance, whilst others were plentifully strewed with round

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appearance in the two capes, Virgins and Fairweather. "Y venido de mar en fuera à buscar la tierra facilmente podian hacer de Rio de Gallegos el Cabo de Virgenes," (and in making the land Cape Virgins may easily be mistaken for the river Gallegos). – Viage de los Nodales, p. 53.

siliceous gravel,[8] without any vestige of organic remains. The sea beach, from high-water mark to the base of the cliffs, is formed by shingle, with scattered masses of indurated clay of a green colour.[9] Between the high and low tide marks there is a smooth beach of the same green clay as the masses above-mentioned, which appears to have been hardened by the action of the surf to the consistence of stone. Generally this beach extends for about one hundred yards farther into the sea, and is succeeded by a soft green mud, over which the water gradually deepens. The outer edge of the clay forms a ledge, extending parallel with the coast, upon the whole length of which the sea breaks, and over it a boat can with difficulty pass at low water.

The very few shells we found were dead. Strewed about the beach were numbers of fish, some of which had been thrown on shore by the last tide, and were scarcely stiff. They principally belonged to the genus *Ophidium*; the largest that we saw measured four feet seven inches in length, and weighed twenty-four pounds. Many caught alongside the ship were, in truth, coarse and insipid; yet our people, who fed heartily upon them, called them ling, and thought them palatable. The hook,

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[8] Some of the specimens of the clay strata consist, according to Dr. Fitton, who has kindly examined my collection, of a white marl not unlike certain varieties of the lower chalk; and of a clay having many of the properties of fuller's earth. The pebbles on the beach consist of quartz, red jasper, hornstone, and flinty slate, but do not contain any stone resembling chalk flint.

[9] Dr. Fitton considers these masses of clay to bear a resemblance to the upper green sand of England.

however, furnished us with a very wholesome and well-flavoured species of cod (*Gadus*). Attached to the first we found two parasitical animals; one was a *Cymothoa*, the other a species of *Lernæa*, which had so securely attached itself under the skin, as not to be removed without cutting off a piece of the flesh with it. An undescribed species of *Muræna* was also taken.

Whilst we were on shore, the Beagle moved eight or nine miles nearer to the Cape, where Captain Stokes landed to fix positions of remarkable land. One peaked hill, from the circumstance of his seeing a large animal near it, he called Tiger Mount. Mr. Bowen shot a guanaco; and being at a distance in shore, unable to procure assistance, he skinned and quartered it with his pocket-knife, and carried it upon his shoulders to the boat.

Next morning the ships weighed, and proceeded towards Cape Virgins.

When a-breast of Cape Fairweather, the opening of the river Gallegos was very distinctly seen; but the examination of it was deferred to a future opportunity. Passing onward, the water shoaled to four fathoms, until we had passed extensive banks, which front the river.

Our approach to the entrance of the Strait, although attended with anxiety, caused sensations of interest and pleasure not easily to be described. Though dangers were experienced by some navigators who had passed it, the comparative facility with which others had effected the passage showed that, at times, the difficulties were easily surmounted, and we were willing to

suppose that in the former case there might have been some little exaggeration.

The most complete, and, probably, the only good account of the navigation of the Strait of Magalhaens is contained in the narrative of Don Antonio de Cordova, who commanded the Spanish frigate Santa Maria de la Cabeza, on a voyage expressly for the purpose of exploring the strait. It was published under the title of 'Ultimo Viage al Estrecho de Magallanes.' That voyage was, however, concluded with only the examination of the eastern part, and a subsequent expedition was made, under the command of the same officer, the account of which was appended to the Cabeza's voyage; so that Cordova's expedition still retained the appellation of 'Ultimo Viage, &c.' It is written in a plain and simple style, gives a most correct account of every thing seen, and should therefore be in the possession of every person who attempts the navigation of the strait.

Cordova's account of the climate is very uninviting. Speaking of the rigours of the summer months (January, February, and March), he says, "Seldom was the sky clear, and short were the intervals in which we experienced the sun's warmth: no day passed by without some rain having fallen, and the most usual state of the weather was that of constant rain."[10]

The accounts of Wallis and Carteret are still more gloomy. The former concludes that part of his narrative with the following dismal and disheartening description: "Thus we quitted a dreary

[10] Ultimo Viage al Estrecho de Magallanes, part ii. p. 298.

and inhospitable region, where we were in almost continual danger of shipwreck for near four months, having entered the strait on the 17th of December, and quitted it on the 11th of April 1767: a region where, in the midst of summer, the weather was cold, gloomy, and tempestuous, where the prospects had more the appearance of a chaos than of nature; and where for the most part the valleys were without herbage and the hills without wood."

These records of Cordova and Wallis made me feel not a little apprehensive for the health of the crew, which could not be expected to escape uninjured through the rigours of such a climate. Nor were the narratives of Byron or Bougainville calculated to lessen my anxiety. In an account, however, of a voyage to the strait by M. A. Duclos Guyot, the following paragraph tended considerably to relieve my mind upon the subject: – "At length, on Saturday the 23d of March, we sailed out of that famous Strait, so much dreaded, after having experienced that there, as well as in other places, it was very fine, and very warm, and that for three-fourths of the time the sea was perfectly calm."

In every view of the case, our proximity to the principal scene of action occasioned sensations of a peculiar nature, in which, however, those that were most agreeable and hopeful preponderated. The officers and crews of both ships were healthy, and elated with the prospect before them; our vessels were in every respect strong and sea-worthy; and we

were possessed of every comfort and resource necessary for encountering much greater difficulties than we had any reason to anticipate.

> There has existed much difference of opinion as to the correct mode of spelling the name of the celebrated navigator who discovered this Strait. The French and English usually write it Magellan, and the Spaniards Magallanes; but by the Portuguese (and he was a native of Portugal) it is universally written Magalhaens. Admiral Burney and Mr. Dalrymple spell it Magalhanes, which mode I have elsewhere adopted, but I have since convinced myself of the propriety of following the Portuguese orthography for a name which, to this day, is very common both in Portugal and Brazil.

CHAPTER II

Enter the Straits of Magalhaens (or Magellan), and anchor off Cape Possession – First Narrow – Gregory Bay – Patagonian Indians – Second Narrow – Elizabeth Island – Freshwater Bay – Fuegian Indians – Arrival at Port Famine.

A contrary tide and light winds detained us at anchor near Cape Virgins until four o'clock in the afternoon, when, with the turn of the tide, a light air carried us past Dungeness Point, aptly named by Wallis from its resemblance to that in the English Channel. A great number of seals were huddled together upon the bank, above the wash of the tide, whilst others were sporting about in the surf. Cape Possession was in sight, and with the wind and tide in our favour we proceeded until ten o'clock, when the anchor was dropped. At daylight we found ourselves six miles to the eastward of the cape. The anchor was then weighed, and was again dropped at three miles from the cape until the afternoon, when we made another attempt; but lost ground, and anchored a third time. Before night a fourth attempt was made, but the tide prevented our making any advance, and we again anchored.

Mount Aymond[11] and "his four sons," or (according to the old

[11] A hill on the north shore of Possession Bay, having near it, to the westward, four rocky summits, which, from a particular point of view, bear a strong resemblance to the cropped ears of a horse or ass. These are described less briefly in the Sailing Directions.

quaint nomenclature) the Asses' Ears, had been in sight all day, as well as a small hummock of land on the S.W. horizon, which afterwards proved to be the peaked hillock upon Cape Orange, at the south side of the entrance to the First Narrow.

At this anchorage the tide fell thirty feet, but the strength of the current, compared with the rate at which we afterwards found it to run, was inconsiderable. Here we first experienced the peculiar tides of which former navigators have written. During the first half of the flood[12] or westward tide, the depth decreased, and then, after a short interval, increased until three hours after the stream of tide had begun to run to the eastward.

The following morning (21st) we gained a little ground. Our glasses were directed to the shore in search of inhabitants, for it was hereabouts that Byron, and Wallis, and some of the Spanish navigators held communication with the Patagonian Indians; but we saw none. Masses of large sea-weed,[13] drifting with the tide, floated past the ship. A description of this remarkable plant, although it has often been given before, may not be irrelevant here. It is rooted upon rocks or stones at the bottom of the sea, and rises to the surface, even from great depths. We have found it firmly fixed to the ground more than twenty fathoms under water, yet trailing along the surface for forty or fifty feet. When firmly rooted it shows the set of the tide or current. It has also the advantage of indicating rocky ground: for wherever there are

[12] Flowing into the strait from the east towards the west.

[13] Fucus giganteus.

rocks under water, their situation is, as it were, buoyed by a mass of sea-weed[14] on the surface of the sea, of larger extent than that of the danger below. In many instances perhaps it causes unnecessary alarm, since it often grows in deep water; but it should not be entered without its vicinity having been sounded, especially if seen in masses, with the extremities of the stems trailing along the surface. If there be no tide, or if the wind and tide are the same way, the plant lies smoothly upon the water, but if the wind be against the tide, the leaves curl up and are visible at a distance, giving a rough, rippling appearance to the surface of the water.

During the last two days the dredge had furnished us with a few specimens of *Infundibulum* of Sowerby (*Patella trochiformis*, Lin.), and some dead shells (*Murex Magellanicus*) were brought up by the sounding-lead.

We made another attempt next morning, but again lost ground, and the anchor was dropped for the eighth time. The threatening appearances of the clouds, and a considerable fall of the barometer indicating bad weather, Captain Stokes agreed with me in thinking it advisable to await the spring-tides to pass the First Narrow: the ships were therefore made snug for the expected gale, which soon came on, and we remained several days wind-bound, with top-masts struck, in a rapid tide-way, whose stream sometimes ran seven knots. On the 28th, with some appearance of improving weather, we made an attempt

[14] Usually called by seamen 'kelp.'

to pass through the Narrow. The wind blowing strong, directly against us, and strengthening as we advanced, caused a hollow sea, that repeatedly broke over us. The tide set us through the Narrow very rapidly, but the gale was so violent that we could not show more sail than was absolutely necessary to keep the ship under command. Wearing every ten minutes, as we approached either shore, lost us a great deal of ground, and as the anchorage we left was at a considerable distance from the entrance of the Narrows, the tide was not sufficient to carry us through. At slack water the wind fell, and as the weather became fine, I was induced to search for anchorage near the south shore. The sight of kelp, however, fringing the coast, warned me off, and we were obliged to return to an anchorage in Possession Bay. The Beagle had already anchored in a very favourable berth; but the tide was too strong to permit us to reach the place she occupied, and our anchor was dropped a mile astern of her, in nineteen fathoms. The tide was then running five, and soon afterwards six miles an hour. Had the western tide set with equal strength, we should have succeeded in passing the Narrow. Our failure, however, answered the good purpose of making us more acquainted with the extent of a bank that lines the northern side of Possession Bay, and with the time of the turn of tide in the Narrow; which on this day (new moon) took place within a few minutes of noon.

As we passed Cape Orange, some Indians were observed lighting a fire under the lee of the hill to attract our notice; but we were too busily engaged to pay much attention to their

movements. Guanacoes also were seen feeding near the beach, which was the first intimation we had of the existence of that animal southward of the Strait of Magalhaens.

When day broke (29th) it was discovered that the ship had drifted considerably during the night. The anchor was weighed, and with a favourable tide we reached an anchorage a mile in advance of the Beagle. We had shoaled rather suddenly to eight fathoms, upon which the anchor was immediately dropped, and on veering cable the depth was eleven fathoms. We had anchored on the edge of a bank, which soon afterwards, by the tide falling, was left dry within one hundred yards of the ship. Finding ourselves so near a shoal, preparations were made to prevent the ship from touching it. An anchor was dropped under foot, and others were got ready to lay out, for the depth alongside had decreased from eleven to seven fathoms, and was still falling. Fortunately we had brought up to leeward of the bank, and suffered no inconvenience; the flood made, and as soon as possible the ship was shifted to another position, about half a mile to the S.E., in a situation very favourable for our next attempt to pass the Narrow. This night the tide fell thirty-six feet, and the stream ran six knots.

The ensuing morning we made another attempt to get through the Narrow, and, from having anchored so close to its entrance, by which the full benefit of the strength, as well as the whole duration of the tide was obtained, we succeeded in clearing it in two hours, although the distance was more than twenty miles,

and the wind directly against us, the sea, as before, breaking repeatedly over the ship.

After emerging from the Narrow we had to pass through a heavy 'race' before we 'reached' out of the influence of the stream that runs between the First and Second Narrow, but the tide lasted long enough to carry us to a quiet anchorage. In the evening we weighed again, and reached Gregory Bay, where the Beagle joined us the next morning.

Since entering the Strait, we had not had any communication with the Beagle on account of the weather, and the strength of the tide; this opportunity was therefore taken to supply her with water, of which she had only enough left for two days.

The greater part of this day was spent on shore, examining the country and making observations. Large smokes[15] were noticed to the westward. The shore was strewed with traces of men and horses, and other animals. Foxes and ostriches were seen; and bones of guanacoes were lying about the ground.

The country in the vicinity of this anchorage seemed open, low, and covered with good pasturage. It extends five or six miles, with a gradual ascent, to the base of a range of flat-topped land, whose summit is about fifteen hundred feet above the level of the sea. Not a tree was seen; a few bushes[16] alone interrupted the uniformity of the view. The grass appeared to have been cropped by horses or guanacoes, and was much interspersed with

[15] Columns of smoke rising from large fires.

[16] Berberis.

cranberry plants, bearing a ripe and juicy, though very insipid fruit.

Next day the wind was too strong and adverse to permit us to proceed. In the early part of the morning an American sealing vessel, returning from the Madre de Dios Archipelago on her way to the Falkland Islands, anchored near us. Mr. Cutler, her master, came on board the Adventure, passed the day and night with us, and gave me much useful information respecting the nature of the navigation, and anchorages in the Strait. He told me there was an Englishman in his vessel who was a pilot for the strait, and willing to join the ship. I gladly accepted the offer of his services.

In the evening an Indian was observed on horseback riding to and fro upon the beach, but the weather prevented my sending a boat until the next morning, when Lieutenant Cooke went on shore to communicate with him and other Indians who appeared, soon after dawn, upon the beach. On landing, he was received by them without the least distrust. They were eight or ten in number, consisting of an old man and his wife, three young men, and the rest children, all mounted on good horses. The woman, who appeared to be about fifty years of age, was seated astride upon a pile of skins, hung round with joints of fresh guanaco meat and dried horse-flesh. They were all wrapped in mantles, made chiefly of the skins of guanacoes, sewed together with the sinews of the same animal. These mantles were large enough to cover the whole body. Some were made of skins of the 'zorillo,' or skunk, an animal like a pole-cat, but ten times more offensive;

and others, of skins of the puma.

The tallest of the Indians, excepting the old man, who did not dismount, was rather less than six feet in height. All were robust in appearance, and with respect to the head, length of body, and breadth of shoulders, of gigantic size; therefore, when on horseback, or seated in a boat, they appeared to be tall, as well as large men. In proportion to the parts above-mentioned, their extremities were very small and short, so that when standing they seemed but of a moderate size, and their want of proportion was concealed by the mantle, which enveloped the body entirely, the head and feet being the only parts exposed.

When Mr. Cooke landed, he presented some medals[17] to the oldest man, and the woman; and suspended them round their necks. A friendly feeling being established, the natives dismounted, and even permitted our men to ride their horses, without evincing the least displeasure, at the free advantage taken of their good-nature. Mr. Cooke rode to the heights, whence he had a distinct view of the Second Narrow, and Elizabeth Island, whither, he explained to the Indians who accompanied him, we were going.

Mr. Cooke returned to the ship with three natives, whom he had induced to go with us to Elizabeth Island; the others were to meet them, and provide us with guanaco meat, to which

[17] Previous to the expedition quitting England, I had provided myself with medals, to give away to the Indians with whom we might communicate, bearing on one side the figure of Britannia, and on the reverse George IV. "Adventure and Beagle," and "1826."

arrangement the elders of the family had, after much persuasion, assented. At first they objected to their companions embarking with us, unless we left hostages for their safety; but as this was refused, they did not press the point, and the three young men embarked. They went on board singing; in high glee.

While the ship was getting under way, I went ashore to a larger number of Indians who were waiting on the beach. When my boat landed they were mounted, and collected in one place. I was surprised to hear the woman accost me in Spanish, of which, however, she knew but a few words. Having presented medals to each of the party, they dismounted (excepting the elders), and in a few minutes became quite familiar. By this time Captain Stokes had landed, with several of his officers, who increased our party to nearly double the number of theirs: notwithstanding which they evinced neither fear nor uneasiness. The woman, whose name was Maria, wished to be very communicative; she told me that the man was her husband, and that she had five children. One of the young men, whom we afterwards found to be a son of Maria, who was a principal person of the tribe, was mounted upon a very fine horse, well groomed, and equipped with a bridle and saddle that would have done credit to a respectable horseman of Buenos Ayres or Monte Video. The young man wore heavy brass spurs, like those of the Guachos of Buenos Ayres. The juvenile and feminine appearance of this youth made us think he was Maria's daughter, nor was it until a subsequent visit that our mistake was discovered. The absence of whiskers and beard gives

all the younger men a very effeminate look, and many cannot be distinguished, in appearance, from the women, but by the mode in which they wrap their mantles around them, and by their hair, which is turned up and confined by a fillet of worsted yarn. The women cross their mantle over the breast like a shawl, and fasten it together with two iron pins or skewers, round which are twisted strings of beads and other ornaments. They also wear their hair divided, and gathered into long tresses or tails, which hang one before each ear; and those who have short hair, wear false tails made of horse-hair. Under their mantle the women wear a sort of petticoat, and the men a triangular piece of hide instead of breeches. Both sexes sit astride, but the women upon a heap of skins and mantles, when riding. The saddles and stirrups used by the men are similar to those of Buenos Ayres. The bits, also, are generally of steel; but those who cannot procure steel bits have a sort of snaffle, of wood, which must, of course, be frequently renewed. Both sexes wear boots, made of the skins of horses' hind legs, of which the parts about the hock joints serve for the heels. For spurs, they use pieces of wood, pointed with iron, projecting backwards two or three inches on each side of the heel, connected behind by a broad strap of hide, and fastened under the foot and over the instep by another strap.

The only weapons which we observed with these people were the 'bolas,' or balls, precisely similar to those used by the Pampas Indians; but they are fitter for hunting than for offence or defence. Some are furnished with three balls, but in general

there are only two. These balls are made of small bags or purses of hide, moistened, filled with iron pyrites, or some other heavy substance, and then dried. They are about the size of a hen's egg, and attached to the extremities of a thong, three or four yards in length. To use them, one ball is held in the hand, and the other swung several times around the head until both are thrown at the object, which they rarely miss. They wind round it violently, and if it be an animal, throw it down. The bolas, with three balls, similarly connected together, are thrown in the same manner.

As more time could not be spared we went on board, reminding the natives, on leaving them, of their promise to bring us some guanaco meat. Aided by the tide, the ships worked to windward through the Second Narrow, and reached an anchorage out of the strength of tide, but in an exposed situation. The wind having been very strong and against the tide, the ship had much motion, which made our Patagonian passengers very sick, and heartily sorry for trusting themselves afloat. One of them, with tears in his eyes, begged to be landed, but was soon convinced of the difficulty of compliance, and satisfied with our promise of sending him ashore on the morrow.

After we anchored, the wind increased to a gale, in which the ship pitched so violently as to injure our windlass. Its construction was bad originally, and the violent jerks received in Possession Bay had done it much damage. While veering cable, the support at one end gave way, and the axle of the barrel was forced out of the socket, by which some of the pawls were

injured. Fortunately, dangerous consequences were prevented, and a temporary repair was soon applied.

The Beagle, by her better sailing, had reached a more advanced situation, close to the N.E. end of Elizabeth Island, but had anchored disadvantageously in deep water, and in the strength of the tide. Next morning we made an attempt to pass round Elizabeth Island, but found the breeze so strong that we were forced to return, and were fortunate enough to find good anchorage northward of the island, out of the tide.

The Patagonians, during the day, showed much uneasiness at being kept on board so much longer than they expected; but as they seemed to understand the cause of their detention, and as their sickness ceased when we reached smooth water, they gradually recovered their good-humour, and became very communicative. As well as we could understand their pronunciation, their names were 'Coigh,' 'Coichi,' and 'Aighen.' The country behind Cape Negro they called 'Chilpéyo;' the land of Tierra del Fuego, 'Oschērri;' Elizabeth Island, 'Tŭrrĕtterr;' the island of Santa Magdalena, 'Shrēe-ket-tup;' and Cape Negro, 'Oērkrĕckur.' The Indians of Tierra del Fuego, with whom they are not on friendly terms, are designated by them 'Săpāllĭŏs.' This name was applied to them in a contemptuous tone.

Aighen's features were remarkably different from those of his companions. Instead of a flat nose, his was aquiline and prominent, and his countenance was full of expression. He proved to be good-tempered, and easily pleased; and whenever a

shade of melancholy began to appear, our assurance of landing him on the morrow restored his good-humour, which was shown by singing and laughing.

The dimensions of Coichi's head were as follows: —

From the top of the fore part of the head	to the eyes	4 inches.
Dodo	to the tip of the nose	6
Dodo	to the mouth	7
Dodo	to the chin	9
Width of the head across the temples		7½
Breadth of the shoulders		18½

The head was long and flat, at the top; the forehead broad and high, but covered with hair to within an inch and a half of the eyebrow, which had scarcely any hair. The eyes were small, the nose was short, the mouth wide, and the lips thick. Neck short, and shoulders very broad. The arms were short, and wanting in muscle, as were also the thighs and legs. The body was long and large, and the breast broad and expanded. His height was nearly six feet.

The next day we rounded Elizabeth Island, and reached Cape Negro, where we landed the Indians, after making them several useful presents, and sending some trifles by Aighen to Maria, who, with her tribe, had lighted large fires about the country behind Peckett's Harbour, to invite us to land. Our passengers frequently pointed to them, telling us that they were made by Maria, who had brought plenty of guanaco meat for us.

Our anxiety to reach Port Famine prevented delay, and, as soon as the boat returned, we proceeded along the coast towards Freshwater Bay, which we reached early enough in the afternoon to admit of a short visit to the shore.

From Cape Negro the country assumed a very different character. Instead of a low coast and open treeless shore, we saw steep hills, covered with lofty trees, and thick underwood. The distant mountains of Tierra del Fuego, covered with snow, were visible to the southward, some at a distance of sixty or seventy miles.

We had now passed all the difficulties of the entrance, and had reached a quiet and secure anchorage.

The following day was calm, and so warm, that we thought if Wallis and Cordova were correct in describing the weather they met with, Duclos Guyot was equally entitled to credit; and we began to hope we had anticipated worse weather than we should experience. But this was an unusually fine day, and many weeks elapsed, afterwards, without its equal. The temperature of the air, in the shade on the beach, was 67½°, on the sand 87½°; and that of the water 55°. Other observations were made, as well as a plan of the bay, of which there is a description in the Sailing Directions.

Here we first noticed the character of the vegetation in the Strait, as so different from that of Cape Gregory and other parts of the Patagonian coast, which is mainly attributable to the change of soil; the northern part being a very poor

clay, whilst here a schistose sub-soil is covered by a mixture of alluvium, deposited by mountain streams; and decomposed vegetable matter, which, from the thickness of the forests, is in great quantity.

Two specimens of beech (*Fagus betuloides* and *antarctica*), the former an evergreen, – and the winter's bark (*Wintera aromatica*), are the only trees of large size that we found here; but the underwood is very thick, and composed of a great variety of plants, of which *Arbutus rigida*, two or three species of *Berberis*, and a wild currant (*Ribes antarctica*, Bankes and Solander MSS.), at this time in flower, and forming long clustering bunches of young fruit, were the most remarkable. The berberis produces a berry of acidulous taste, that promised to be useful to us. A species of wild celery, also, which grows abundantly near the sea-shore, was valuable as an antiscorbutic. The trees in the immediate vicinity of the shore are small, but the beach was strewed with trunks of large trees, which seemed to have been drifted there by gales and high tides. A river falls into the bay, by a very narrow channel, near its south end; but it is small, and so blocked up by trees as not to be navigable even for the smallest boat: indeed, it is merely a mountain torrent, varying in size according to the state of the weather.

Tracks of foxes were numerous about the beach, and the footsteps of a large quadruped, probably a puma, were observed. Some teal and wild ducks were shot; and several geese were seen, but, being very wary, they escaped.

Upon Point St. Mary we noticed, for the first time, three or four huts or wigwams made by the Fuegian Indians, which had been deserted. They were not old, and merely required a slight covering of branches or skins to make them habitable. These wigwams are thus constructed: long slender branches, pointed at the end, are stuck into the ground in a circular or oval figure; their extremities are bent over, so as to form a rounded roof, and secured with ligatures of rush; leaving two apertures, one towards the sea, and the other towards the woods. The fire is made in the middle, and half fills the hut with smoke. There were no Indians in the bay when we arrived, but, on the following evening, Lieutenant Sholl, in walking towards the south end of the bay, suddenly found himself close to a party which had just arrived in two canoes from the southward. Approaching them, he found there were nine individuals – three men, and the remainder women and children. One of the women was very old, and so infirm as to require to be lifted out of the canoe and carried to the fire. They seemed to have no weapons of any consequence; but, from our subsequent knowledge of their habits, and disposition, the probability is they had spears, bows, and arrows concealed close at hand. The only implement found amongst them was a sort of hatchet or knife, made of a crooked piece of wood, with part of an iron hoop tied to the end. The men were very slightly clothed, having only the back protected by a seal's skin; but the females wore large guanaco mantles, like those of the Patagonian Indians, whom our pilot told us they occasionally met

for the purpose of barter. Some of the party were devouring seal's flesh, and drinking the oil extracted from its blubber, which they carried in bladders. The meat they were eating was probably part of a sea lion (*Phoca jubata*); for Mr. Sholl found amongst them a portion of the neck of one of those animals, which is remarkable for the long hair, "like a lion's mane," growing upon it. They appeared to be a most miserable, squalid race, very inferior, in every respect, to the Patagonians. They did not evince the least uneasiness at Mr. Sholl's presence, or at our ships being close to them; neither did they interfere with him, but remained squatting round their fire while he staid near. This seeming indifference, and total want of curiosity, gave us no favourable opinion of their character as intellectual beings; indeed, they appeared to be very little removed from brutes; but our subsequent knowledge of them has convinced us that they are not usually deficient in intellect. This party was perhaps stupified by the unusual size of our ships, for the vessels which frequent this Strait are seldom one hundred tons in burthen.

We proceeded next morning at an early hour. The Indians were already paddling across the bay in a northerly direction. Upon coming abreast of them, a thick smoke was perceived to rise suddenly from their canoes; they had probably fed the fire, which they always carry in the middle of their canoe, with green boughs and leaves, for the purpose of attracting our attention, and inviting us to communicate with them.

It was remarked that the country begins to be covered with

trees at Cape Negro; but they are stunted, compared with those at Freshwater Bay. Near this place, also, the country assumes a more verdant aspect, becoming also higher, and more varied in appearance. In the neighbourhood of Rocky Point some conspicuous portions of land were noticed, which, from the regularity of their shape, and the quantity as well as size of the trees growing at the edges, bore the appearance of having been once cleared ground; and our pilot Robinson (possessing a most inventive imagination) informed us that they were fields, formerly cleared and cultivated by the Spaniards, and that ruins of buildings had been lately discovered near them. For some time his story obtained credit, but it proved to be altogether void of foundation. These apparently cleared tracts were afterwards found to be occasioned by unusual poverty of soil, and by being overrun with thick spongy moss, the vivid green colour of which produces, from a distance, an appearance of most luxuriant pasture land. Sir John Narborough noticed, and thus describes them: "The wood shows in many places as if there were plantations: for there were several clear places in the woods, and grass growing like fenced fields in England, the woods being so even by the sides of it."[18]

The wind, after leaving Freshwater Bay, increased, with strong squalls from the S.W., at times blowing so hard as to lay the ship almost on her broadside. It was, however, so much in our favour, that we reached the entrance of Port Famine early, and after

[18] Narborough, p. 67.

some little detention from baffling winds, which always render the approach to that bay somewhat difficult, the ships anchored in the harbour.

CHAPTER III

Prepare the Beagle, and our decked boat (the Hope) for surveying the Strait – Beagle sails westward, and the Hope towards the south-east – Sarmiento's voyage – and description of the colony formed by him at Port Famine – Steamer-duck – Large trees – Parroquets – Mount Tarn – Barometrical observations – Geological character – Report of the Hope's cruize.

In almost every account published of the Strait of Magalhaens, so much notice has been taken of Port Famine, that I had long considered it a suitable place for our purposes; and upon examination I found it offered so many advantages, that I did not hesitate to make it our head-quarters. As soon, therefore, as the ship was moored, tents were pitched, our decked-boat was hoisted out and hauled on shore, to be coppered and equipped for the survey; – and Captain Stokes received orders to prepare the Beagle for examining the western part of the Strait; previous to which she required to be partially refitted, and supplied with fuel and water.

For several days after our arrival, we had much rain and strong south-westerly wind, with thick clouds, which concealed the high land to the southward; allowing us only now and then a partial glimpse. One evening (11th) the air was unusually clear, and many of the mountains in that direction were distinctly

defined. We had assembled to take leave of our friends in the Beagle, and were watching the gradual appearance of snow-capped mountains which had previously been concealed, when, bursting upon our view, as if by magic, a lofty mountain appeared towering among them; whose snowy mantle, strongly contrasted with the dark and threatening aspect of the sky, much enhanced the grandeur of the scene.

This mountain was the "Snowy Volcano" (*Volcan Nevado*) of Sarmiento, with whose striking appearance that celebrated navigator seems to have been particularly impressed, so minute and excellent is his description. It is also mentioned in the account of Cordova's voyage.[19] The peculiar shape of its summit as seen from the north would suggest the probability of its being a volcano, but we never observed any indication of its activity. Its volcanic form is perhaps accidental, for, seen from the westward, its summit no longer resembles a crater. From the geological character of the surrounding rocks its formation would seem to be of slate. It is in a range of mountains rising generally two or three thousand feet above the sea; but at the N.E. end of the range are some, at least four thousand feet high. The height of the "Snowy Volcano," or as we have called it, Mount Sarmiento,[20]

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[19] Ultimo Viage, p. 120.

[20] From an attentive perusal of the voyage of Magalhaens, I have lately been led to think that this is the mountain which Magalhaens called Roldan's Bell. Sarmiento has, however, assigned that name to a mountain at the back of his Bay of Campana, which will be noticed in it's proper place. The name of Mount Sarmiento was too long, and too well established with us, or I should have restored the name bestowed upon

was found, by trigonometrical measurement, to be six thousand eight hundred feet[21] above the level of the sea. It is the highest land that I have seen in Tierra del Fuego; and to us, indeed, it was an object of considerable interest, because its appearance and disappearance were seldom failing weather guides. In our Meteorological Diary, a column was ruled for the insertion of its appearances.[22]

This clear state of the atmosphere was followed by a heavy fall of rain, with northerly and easterly winds, which did not, however, last long.

In the vicinity of our tents erected on the low land, on the S.W. side of the bay, were several ponds of water, perfectly fit for immediate use; but, perhaps, too much impregnated with vegetable matter to keep good for any length of time. Captain Stokes, therefore, filled his tanks from the river; but as that water did not keep well, it was probably taken into the boat too near the

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it by Magalhaens. Herrera, in his Descripcion de las Indias Occidentales, cap. xxiii, notices the "Campana de Roldan" as a great mountain in the midst of the entrance of a channel; they gave it this name (Campana de Roldan) because one of Magalhaens's companions, named Roldan, an artillery officer, went to examine it. "Y la Campana de Roldan una Peña grande en medio al principio de un canal: dieron le este nombre porque la fué a reconocer uno de los compañeros de Magallanes llamado Roldan que era artillero."

[21] but as the last observation, from the angle of elevation being greater, was more likely to be correct, 6,800 feet is considered to be its elevation.

[22] At a subsequent visit, embracing a period of 190 days, it was only seen on twenty-five, and during seven days only was it constantly visible. On the remaining eighteen, portions only were seen, and those but for a few hours at a time.

sea. This, however, was unavoidable, except by risking the boats among a great number of sunken trees in the bed of the river.

The Beagle sailed on the 15th, to survey the western entrance of the Strait, with orders to return to Port Famine by the end of March.

Our decked boat, the Hope, being ready, the command of her was given to Mr. Wickham, who was in every way qualified for the trust. We were, however, much mortified by finding that she leaked so considerably as to oblige us to unload, and again haul her on shore. When ready for sea, she sailed under the direction of my assistant-surveyor, Mr. Graves, to examine the St. Sebastian channel and the deep opening to the S.E. of Cape Valentyn. Her crew consisted of seven men, besides Mr. Wickham, and Mr. Rowlett, the purser.

Having despatched the Beagle and the Hope, I was at leisure to carry on the survey of the coast in the neighbourhood of Port Famine, and to make a plan of the port itself. The Transit, and Altitude circle, were set up; but from the very unfavourable state of the weather, and the interference of other occupations, I was only enabled to procure a series of zenith distances of the sun, and stars, for the latitude.

Port Famine, a name well known to all who have interested themselves about the Strait of Magalhaens, was selected by Sarmiento as the most convenient place for the site of an establishment formed, at his suggestion, by Philip II. King of Spain.

The voyage of Sir Francis Drake through the Strait into the Pacific, and his successes against the Spanish colonies and trade on the western side of the continent of America, induced the Viceroy of Lima to send an Expedition to pursue the "Corsair," with orders to fight and take him, dead or alive.[23] This Expedition, commanded by Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, who had already been engaged twice with Drake, consisted of two ships, containing in all two hundred armed men, sailors and soldiers; a force which was considered sufficient to ensure the capture.[24]

The Strait of Magalhaens being the most likely place to meet with Drake, Sarmiento was ordered to proceed through it, and take the opportunity of exploring its coasts.

All this he performed in a manner highly creditable, as well for the excellent description handed down in his unpretending journal, as for the enterprising zeal, and steady perseverance, shown among difficulties of no trifling nature. To his accounts of various places there will be frequent occasion to refer. Our object, at present, is to give a short account of the Colony.

Sarmiento sailed from Peru (1583), and entered the Strait from the Pacific. After experiencing many serious difficulties, and escaping imminent dangers, in the western part of the Strait, where the climate is so rigorous and the country so desolate, it was not surprising that he should become enraptured with

[23] Sarmiento's Voyage, p. 25.

[24] Id. l.c.

the verdant, and picturesque appearance of the shores to the eastward of Cape Froward, and with the open country in the neighbourhood, and to the northward of Cape Virgins.[25] After much opposition from the Duke of Alva[26] and other powerful people, he succeeded in convincing the King of the expediency of fortifying the shores of the First Narrow, and forming several establishments within the Strait, to prevent the passage of strange ships, to the prejudice of the King's colonies in Chile and Peru; for at that time the passage round Cape Horn was not known. Accordingly, an Expedition was prepared, consisting of twenty-three vessels, under the joint command of Diego Florez de Valdez and Sarmiento; the former being appointed Captain-general of the fleet, and of the coast of Brazil; and the latter, Captain-general of the Strait of Magalhaens, and Governor of all the Establishments that should be formed within it.

Of the twenty-three ships which sailed from Spain, five only reached the entrance of the Strait; and these, after experiencing many difficulties from bad weather and foul winds, returned to Rio de Janeiro to refit, where Sarmiento met four vessels which had been sent from Spain to his succour. His colleague and General in chief, Florez, who had deserted the Expedition, did all in his power to impede Sarmiento, to the latest moment of

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[25] See Burney, ii. p. 45, for a fuller account; also id. 71.

[26] Who made a remark on the occasion, which became proverbial, "that if a ship carried out only anchors and cables, sufficient for her security against the storms in that part of the world, she would go well laden." Burney Coll. vol. ii. 45.

his stay at the Brazils. At last, however, five ships, commanded by Ribera, and manned by five hundred and thirty men,[27] sailed; and, without encountering further loss or detention, arrived off the Strait in December (1584), and soon after reached an anchorage, between the First and Second Narrows.

Ribera would go no further; but landed about three hundred men, under Sarmiento. A city was marked out, and named Jesus,[28] in a valley well provided with water. The ships were blown away to sea, leaving the colonists very destitute; fortunately, however, they were enabled to return, but were four times, afterwards, obliged to put to sea, from stress of weather. On the last return, one of the ships, La Trinidad, was run on shore. The ardour of Ribera being damped by repeated misfortunes, he returned to Spain, without the knowledge or consent of Sarmiento, leaving, for the use of the colony, only one ship, the Maria.

While unloading the Trinidad, the Spaniards were attacked by Indians, whom they dispersed.

Sarmiento, after making the necessary arrangements at Jesus, set out by land with one hundred men, to go to Point St. Anna,[29] the ship Maria being ordered to follow. On the journey, the

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[27] Burney, ii. 51.

[28] The situation of "Jesus" must have been about half-way between the First and Second Narrow, near the point named in the chart N.S. de Valle, where some peaked elevations, dividing vallies near the coast line, are conspicuous. The Beagle anchored there, and found plenty of fresh water.

[29] Close to Port Famine.

sufferings of the party were very great, as well from the fatiguing nature of the march, as from their being harassed by the natives, with whom they had an engagement, in which one was killed, and ten men were wounded. A mutiny among his people then broke out, which was quelled by assistance from the ship. At last they reached their destination, and founded, with the usual solemnities, the city of King Philip (or San Felipe).

At the latter end of March, while preparing habitations, the winter set in so suddenly, that for fifteen days it did not cease to snow. Sarmiento, then, after quelling a mutiny which had broken out afresh among the soldiers, embarked with thirty men to visit the first encampment at Jesus, and to superintend the erection of forts in the Narrow; but upon reaching the anchorage, a gale of wind forced him to sea, and, lasting twenty days, obliged him (with his people blinded and frost-bitten) to bear up for Rio de Janeiro.

Here his ship was stranded; upon which he chartered a vessel to convey flour to the Strait, and went himself to Pernambuco, to procure large boats for carrying supplies to his colony, and assisting in the recovery of his stranded ship; she had, however, drifted off, and sunk near Bahia; and all his boats were destroyed. Still Sarmiento persevered in his zealous efforts to succour his friends in the Strait; and succeeded in procuring a vessel of fifty or sixty tons, which, loaded with arms and whatever he considered useful, sailed, and reached Rio de Janeiro a month after the departure of the first vessel (January 1585). He

followed, but in the latitude of 39° met with a furious gale, which drove him back to Rio de Janeiro, where the vessel that had preceded him had returned in distress.

Disappointed in his attempts to carry succour to the colony, he determined to go to Spain; but on his voyage thither, to complete the catalogue of his misfortunes, his ship was captured by three English vessels, and taken to England, after which the ill-fated colony in the Strait was neglected, if not entirely forgotten.

Two months after Sarmiento's departure from the Strait of Magalhaens, in the month of August, the middle of the winter of that region, the party belonging to the first establishment at Jesus set off by land, and joined that at San Felipe, with the unwelcome tidings of their deserted state. But as the provisions at San Felipe were insufficient to support all the people, Andres de Viedma, who, after Sarmiento's departure, had assumed the command, detached two hundred soldiers, under the command of Juan Iniguez, back to Jesus, for the purpose of communicating with any ship that might make her appearance, and awaiting the expected return of Sarmiento; but the winter and following summer passed by without any relief.

In this unhappy state, the colonists were obliged to think only of providing for their safety, and built two boats; in which fifty people embarked, besides Viedma, Suarez, a Franciscan friar named Antonio, and five Spanish women. They had not proceeded farther than Point Santa Brigida,[30][258] when one of the

[30] From Sarmiento's description of the coast, Point Santa Brigida is the outward

boats struck upon a reef, and was lost, but the people were saved. The loss of this boat caused them to give up every hope of saving themselves in that way; and Viedma, with Suarez, the friar, and twenty soldiers, returned in the remaining boat to San Felipe, leaving the rest of the party, consisting of thirty men and five women, to support themselves through the approaching winter as they could. After that season had passed, Viedma sent to collect the wanderers; but fifteen men, and three women only, could be found; the rest having died of hunger and disease. The survivors then determined upon going to the first establishment at Jesus; on their way to which they passed by the skeletons of the two hundred who had been first detached. Travelling onwards, they observed three ships entering the strait, which anchored at a distance to the southward.

During the night, Viedma and his companions kept up large fires, supposing that the ships belonged to their own nation. Next morning a boat was despatched from them; and three of Viedma's party obtained permission to go and reconnoitre her. Having approached near enough, a signal was made; upon which, the people in the boat pulled towards the beach, and said they were from England, bound to Peru, and that if the Spaniards wanted a passage, they had better embark. After some hesitation, arising from the fear of trusting themselves in the power of

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point of Nassau Island.([258]) See Sarmiento's Voyage, p. 220.

[258] By Nassau Island is meant the land forming the south shore of the Second Narrow. – R. F.

heretics, they consented; and one was permitted to get in, but the other two were left on the beach. In the boat was the enterprizing Cavendish[31] himself, who, on hearing the particulars of their story, sent the other two soldiers to Viedma, offering to take him and the residue of his people on board. Cavendish returned to his ship; but, without further delay, sailed on to the Isla dos Patos (Santa Magdalena Island), where he leisurely salted down six casks of penguins; and then proceeded to San Felipe, for wood and water; he remained there four days (during which time he destroyed the houses of the Spaniards, and embarked six guns); and thence continued his voyage. The person saved by Cavendish, whose name was Tomé Hernandez, afterwards escaped from him at Quintero, near Valparaiso; and, proceeding to Peru, gave an account of the fate of this cruelly neglected colony.

This was the first, and perhaps will be the last, attempt made to occupy a country, offering no encouragement for a human being; a region, where the soil is swampy, cold, and unfit for cultivation, and whose climate is thoroughly cheerless.

The name, San Felipe, ceased with the colony; for Cavendish called it Port Famine, in allusion to the fate of the colonists, all of whom, except the man he took away, and one saved two years afterwards (in 1589), by Andrew Mericke,[32259] perished

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[31] Formerly spelled 'Candish.'

[32] "Near to Port Famine they took on board a Spaniard, who was the only one then remaining alive of the garrison left in the Strait by Sarmiento. The account given by

from hunger and its attendant diseases; and by this appellation the bay has since been universally known. To commemorate the ill-fated town, a very thickly-wooded mountain at the bottom of the bay, which forms a conspicuous and picturesque object, has been named by us Mount San Felipe.

At this port, Sarmiento, on his first voyage through the Strait, communicated with a large party of Indians, in consequence of which he called it Bahia de la Gente; and the river, which now bears the name of Sedger, he named San Juan. Of this river Sarmiento took formal possession, as well as of the whole Strait, for the 'Mui Poderoso y mui Católico Señor Phelipe Segundo,' &c. &c. It was also here that, in consequence of the miraculous preservation of his vessel on many occasions, he attempted to change the name of the strait to Estrecho de la Madre de Dios; but it had been too long called Magalhaens, for even the influence of Sarmiento, backed by the power of Philip, to persuade the world to countenance so great an injustice.

"Magallanes, Señor, fué el primer hombre
Que abriendo este camino le dió nombre."

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this man, as reported by Magoths, is, that he had lived in those parts six years, and was one of the four hundred men sent thither by the King of Spain in the year 1582, to fortify and inhabit there, to hinder the passage of all strangers that way into the South Sea. But that town (San Felipe) and the other Spanish colony being destroyed by famine, he said he had lived in a house, by himself, a long time, and relieved himself with his caliver([259]) until our coming thither." Burney, ii. p. 96. This man died on the voyage to Europe. Id. p. 97.

[259] A kind of gun. – R. F.

Ercilla Araucana, Cant. I. oct. 8.

During an excursion with Mr. Tarn to Eagle Bay,[33] beyond Cape San Isidro, we found many wigwams. They were then novelties to us, and we were ignorant of their being such certain indications of very sheltered places, as subsequent experience has shown them to be. We often used them, after they had been well cleaned out: a boat's sail, thrown over the hemispherical roof, was a sufficient protection from rain; – and from wind they are always well defended by their situation. Here we saw, for the first time, that most remarkable bird the Steamer-duck. Before steam-boats were in general use, this bird was denominated, from its swiftness in skimming over the surface of the water, the 'race-horse,' a name which occurs frequently in Cook's, Byron's, and other voyages. It is a gigantic duck, the largest I have met with. It has the lobated hind-toe, legs placed far backwards, and other characteristics of the oceanic ducks.[34] The principal peculiarity of this bird is, the shortness and remarkably small size of the wings, which, not having sufficient power to raise the body, serve only to propel it along, rather than through the water, and are

[33] So named by Bougainville.

[34] It belongs to the group which M. Temminck has lately named *Hylobates*, without attending to the name long since conferred upon it by Dr. Fleming. I designated it *Oidemia Patachonica*, from its large dimensions, in my communication upon the Ornithology of the Straits. Zoological Journal, vol. iv. p. 100. On my return to England, I found that M. de Freycinet had figured this bird, in the account of his last voyage in l'Uranie, where it is described by Messrs. Quoy and Gaimard under the name of *Micropterus brachypterus*.

used like the paddles of a steam-vessel. Aided by these and its strong, broad-webbed feet, it moves with astonishing velocity. It would not be an exaggeration to state its speed at from twelve to fifteen miles an hour. The peculiar form of the wing, and the short rigid feathers which cover it, together with the power this bird possesses of remaining a considerable length of time under water, constitute it a striking link between the genera *Anas* and *Aptenodytes*. It has been noticed by many former navigators. The largest we found measured forty inches, from the extremity of the bill, to that of the tail, and weighed thirteen pounds; but Captain Cook mentions, in his second voyage, that the weight of one was twenty-nine pounds.[35] It is very difficult to kill them, on account of their wariness and thick coat of feathers, which is impenetrable by any thing smaller than swan shot. The flavour of their flesh is so strong and fishy, that at first we killed them solely for specimens. Five or six months, however, on salt provisions, taught many to think such food palatable, and the seamen never lost an opportunity of eating them. I have preferred these ducks to salt-beef, but more as a preventive against scurvy, than from liking their taste.

I am averse to altering names, particularly in natural history, without very good reason, but in this case I do think the name of 'steamer' much more appropriate, and descriptive of the swift paddling motion of these birds, than that of 'race-horse.' I believe, too, the name of 'steamer' is now generally given to it by

[35] Cook's Second Voyage, 4to. p. 570.

those who have visited these regions.

Many shells[36] were taken from the bottom by means of a fizgig which Mr. Tarn found in one of the wigwams: it was a rough pole, eight or ten feet long, split crosswise at one end, and opened so as to form four prongs, kept apart by two small pieces of wood. Although rudely made, it was excellently adapted for a shell-gatherer, and is used by the Indians for collecting sea-eggs, which are found in the Strait of very large size, and are doubtless, to them, a great delicacy.

During our excursion we ascertained the best place to ascend the snowy mountain, since named 'Tarn;' and the surgeon, whose name it bears, set off with a party of officers to make the attempt, in which he succeeded, and obtained such an extensive view as induced me to decide upon ascending it, a few days afterwards, to procure bearings from the summit, and for the purpose of measuring its height with a barometer.

In the meantime I visited the Sedger river (Sarmiento's 'Rio de San Juan de Posesion'), and found some difficulty in entering it, because of several banks which are dry at low water. Between

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[36] On the shores of Eagle Bay we procured a large collection of shells, among which were *Margarita violacea* (Nob. in Zool. Journ. v. 346, No. 53), a beautiful *Modiola* (*M. trapesina*, Lam.[k]), a new *Pecten* (P. vitreus Nob. in Zool. Jour. v. 337, No. 17), and a delicate transparent-shelled *Patella*, answering the description of *P. cymbularia*. These four species were found attached to floating leaves of the kelp (*Fucus giganteus*), and afford food to the steamer-duck. We also collected good specimens of *Murex Magellanicus*, Lam.[k], of *Fissurella picta*, Lam.[k], and a great number of the common patella of the Strait, which forms a considerable article of food for the Natives.

them, however, the stream keeps a small channel open, by which we effected our purpose. Every gale of wind causes the banks to shift, and between the times of our first, and last, visit to Port Famine, the river's mouth underwent many changes. The bed of the river is so full of fallen trees, that we could not go, with the boat, more than three miles and a half above the entrance; there it was about fifteen yards wide, bounded on each side by thickly wooded banks, of moderate height. The trees on these banks are large, chiefly the two species of Beech before-mentioned, and Winter's-bark; there are besides many shrubs, and an impenetrable underwood of Arbutus, Berberis, and currant bushes. The largest Beech-tree that we saw could not have been more than thirty or forty inches in diameter, which was insignificant compared with those noticed by Commodore Byron. In describing his excursion up this river, he mentions "trees that would supply the British navy with the best masts in the world."[37] "Some of them are of a great height, and more than eight feet in diameter, which is proportionally more than eight yards in circumference."[38] The Commodore may have been pleased by the appearance of these trees, but must have fancied their quality and dimensions such as he describes. The largest are generally rotten at the heart, and all are more or less defective. Their wood is heavy, and far too brittle for masts: we could not use it even for boat-hook staves. It makes, however, tolerable

[37] Byron's Voyage round the World, 4to. p. 38.

[38] l. c.

plank for boat-building, and, when seasoned, might be used in ships. For common purposes, such as houses, or fences, it is very serviceable.

We wandered about to examine the country; but, excepting the track of some quadruped, whose foot was small and cloven, rather like a pig's, we saw nothing new. The traces of foxes were numerous every where. We found no fish of any description in the river. Geese and wild ducks were numerous, whose young were at this time scarcely fledged, and an easy prey. We also observed here, for the first time, the parroquet, which Bougainville described to be common in the Strait. He carried specimens home with him; but some naturalists of those days decided that there must have been a mistake, because, as they averred, parroquets did not exist in so high a latitude. Bougainville, however, made no mistake, for the species[39] is very abundant in the neighbourhood of Port Famine, and has been seen by us in all parts of the Strait. It feeds principally upon the seeds of the Winter's-bark. The existence of this bird in Tierra del Fuego is also mentioned by Cook and Narborough.[40]

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[39] *Psittacus smaragdinus*, Gmel. I have no doubt that the bird we saw is the same as Bougainville procured, and from which a description has been given in the Ency. Méth., art. Ornith. 139; although a material error is made, for they are not *splendidé viridis*, nor is the *uropygium* red, in other points, however, the description is correct. See Buffon's Hist. Nat. des Oiseaux, vi. 262. Pl. enl. n. 85, Perruche des Terres Magellaniques.

[40] Bougainville says, "we have likewise perceived some perrokeets: the latter are not afraid of the cold." To which the English translator, T. R. Forster, who is incredulous of the correctness of Bougainville's assertion, appends the following note: "Perruches,

All accounts of Port Famine informed us of its abounding in fish, but as yet we had taken none excepting with hook and line, although the seine had been frequently shot. At last, however, in the first week of February, we had a successful haul of mullet and smelts, many of the former weighing eight pounds, and the latter measuring fifteen inches in length. After this we were often very fortunate, and on one occasion caught, at one haul of the seine, sixteen hundred-weight of smelts, some weighing two pounds, and measuring twenty inches in length. A few days previously we had a draught of mullet, which served the crews of both Adventure and Beagle for three days. Geese, wild ducks and teal, snipe, and now and then woodcocks, were to be found by taking a short walk; there were, however, no quadrupeds fit for food which we could take. Foxes and wild cats were occasionally seen, and a foot-mark of some large animal of the feline race, probably a puma, was once observed upon the beach. We found many traces of horses, which showed that the Patagonian Indians sometimes come thus far south. Had we been so fortunate as to meet them here, we might have procured, perhaps, a regular supply of guanaco meat.

On the 9th of February, as the weather seemed favourable for ascending Mount Tarn,[41] Lieutenant Cooke, the Surgeon, and

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probably sea-parrots, or auks." Buffon also doubted the fact, and the author of Histoire Naturelle, art. Oiseaux, tom. ii. p. 322, suggests the possibility of a specimen having been obtained in some other part of the world, and put, by mistake, amongst those collected in the Strait.

[41] So named because Mr. Tarn, the surgeon of the Adventure, was the first person

Anderson, the botanical collector, set off in advance to select a convenient place for passing the night, carrying with them a tent and provisions. I followed later in the day, and, while the boat's crew were arranging their loads, made some observations with a barometer on the beach.

Our way led through thick underwood, and then, with a gradual ascent, among fallen trees, covered with so thick a coating of moss, that at every step we sunk up to the knees before firm footing could be found. It was very laborious work, and the ground being saturated, and each tree dripping with moisture, we were soon wet through. We proceeded along the same sort of road up a steep ascent; some one of the party constantly falling into deep holes covered by moss, or stumbling over fallen trunks of trees. As I carried a barometer I was obliged to proceed with caution, and succeeded in emerging from this jungle without accident. After about three quarters of an hour spent in this way, we reached an open space, where we rested, and I set up the barometer. Here we found a cypress of very stunted growth.

Our road hence was rather more varied: always steep, but sometimes free from impediment. Here and there we observed the boggy soil was faced with a small plant (*Chamitis sp.*) of a harsh character, growing so thick and close as to form large tufts, over which we walked as on hard ground. We struggled through several thickets of stunted beech-trees, with a thick jungle of Berberis underneath, whose strong and sharp thorns

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who reached its summit.

penetrated our clothes at every step; and began to find the fatigue very oppressive: some of my boat's crew suffered much, being unused to such exercise. At last we approached the place where Mr. Cooke and his party had established themselves, and upon hailing, were invigorated by a cheer in reply. We reached the bivouac in a very way-worn condition, and found, to our great comfort, the tent pitched, and a good fire burning.[42]

The ground was so exceedingly wet, that although we slept upon branches, forming a layer at least a foot thick, we found ourselves, in the night, lying as if in a morass, and suffering from cold, even with a large fire blazing at our feet. At daylight next morning, just as we were starting, a boat was seen sailing round Cape San Isidro, which, by the aid of a telescope, I made out to be the Hope.

We resumed the ascent, and passed over, rather than through, thickets of the crumply-leaved beech, which, from their exposure to the prevailing winds, rose no higher than twelve or fourteen inches from the ground, with widely-spreading branches, so closely interwoven, as to form a platform that bore our weight in walking. We next traversed an extent of table-land,[43] much intersected by ponds of water. Mr. Tarn shot two plovers of a new species (*Charadrius rubecola*, Zool. Jour. vol. iv. p. 96),

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[42] The height of this place, as shown by the barometer, on the ascent, was 941 feet, and, on the descent, 973 feet.

[43] On this table-land the barometer stood at 27,767. Temperature of the air 46°,5, and of the mercury 47°,5, which gave the elevation 1,327 feet.

and a snipe. We then ascended three or four hundred feet, and crossed a deep ravine. The bottom of the ravine was clay-slate in a decomposing state, but the surface of the ground was strewed with pebbles of granite. Another plain, with many ponds, succeeded; the intervening spaces being covered with tufts of chamitis, and studded here and there with small clusters of dwarf beech; but the ground was so hard, and firm, that we proceeded rapidly, without fatigue, until we attained the height of 1,800 feet, when the ascent became very steep. Near the summit lay a large mass of snow, rapidly melting away. We reached the highest pinnacle of the mount at seven o'clock (having left our resting-place at four), and immediately set up the instruments. I was obliged to avail myself of Mr. Tarn's assistance to hold the barometer, whilst two of my boat's crew held the legs of the theodolite-stand, for the wind was blowing very strongly, and the edge of a precipice was close to us, perpendicular for many hundred feet, and thence downwards so steep, that any body going over would fall at least a thousand feet. The theodolite-stand was unavoidably placed within a very few inches of the edge, and I took a round of angles, suffering, however, intense pain from the piercing coldness of the wind, which, heated as we were by the ascent, was much felt, though the temperature was not lower than 39°. I was lightly clothed, and should have fared badly, had not one of the party lent me his Flushing jacket, while he descended under the lee of the mountain-top to make a fire. The barometer stood at 26,618, the temperature of the air being

40°, and of the mercury 43°.[44] Unfortunately the day was very cloudy, and many squalls of sleet and rain, which obscured the hills, passed whilst I was taking bearings. To the N.E., towards the supposed Sebastian Channel, the horizon was too hazy to allow much view. A deep inlet was seen in that direction; but whether the land closed round, or whether a channel was at the bottom, we could not distinguish. A considerable body of water was observed to the southward of Cape St. Valentyn, behind Lomas Bay, but its extent was screened from our view by the intervention of the Lomas hills. It appeared to be a channel, the opposite or eastern side of it being formed by the high ranges previously seen from Point St. Mary. Cordova's Ports San Antonio and Valdez were distinctly made out; but, to the southward, every thing was enveloped in mist.

The bearings and observations, which occupied me nearly two hours, being completed, we all adjourned to a sheltered cleft in the rock close to our station, where we soon recovered the use of our fingers.[45]

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[44] The result of the barometric observation for the height of Mount Tarn is as follows:By angular measurement from Observation Cove, Port Famine, with theodolite, allowing 1⁄12 of the intercepted arc for terrestrial refraction, the height is 2,850 feet.Another observation, with the sextant, made it 2,855 feet. The mean 2,852 I consider more correct, from the difficulty of obtaining a correct reading of the barometer on the summit.

[45] By Daniell's hygrometer, used in this sheltered spot, I found the temperature of the air to be 48°; dew point 41°: but upon exposing the instrument to the wind, the air was 39½°, and the dew point 36°: the difference in the former being 7°; and the latter 3½°; from which the following results are obtained:The above being the difference in

Having accomplished our object, we began the descent. In a comparatively mild and agreeable spot, I again set up the theodolite and barometer, while some of the party employed themselves in fruitless attempts to kindle a fire. The height, by the barometer, proved to be 1,845 feet above the sea; and the bearings from this station were much better than those I had taken from the exposed summit.

We reached our tent at noon, having been absent seven hours. At three we reached the beach, where the barometer stood at 29,312 (air 61.°3,[46] and mercury 62,°5).

Excepting near the sea, where clay-slate (very similar to that of Point St. Anna, but with an opposite dip) showed itself, the side of the hill is clothed with trees and underwood, and no rock is visible until one arrives at the ravine. Around the summit of Mount Tarn the ground is bare, but so covered with small decomposed fragments, that the solid rock only appears occasionally: it is very hard, and breaks with a conchoidal fracture: some of the specimens which we detached bore indistinct impressions of organic remains. We also found,

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the short space of three feet apart; the instrument, in the first case, being just under the lee of the rocky summit of the mountain, and in the last, above it, exposed to the wind.

[46] The air was so dry this afternoon that I failed to procure a deposit of dew upon Daniell's hygrometer, although the internal temperature was lowered from 61° to 37°. One of Jones's portable hygrometers was also tried, and the temperature was lowered to 31°½ without a deposit; so that, the difference being more than thirty degrees, the expansive force of the air must have been less than 212, the dryness, on the thermometric scale, less than 367, and the weight of vapour, in a cubic foot of air, less than 2,355 grains.

projecting from the rock in which they were embedded, nodules, or small rounded masses of stone, in an advanced state of decomposition, mouldering away in laminar forms somewhat resembling the inner leaves of a cabbage. Several were brought away carefully, but before we arrived on board they had crumbled to pieces: the nucleus was quite hard, but was surrounded by concentric laminæ, more brittle the nearer they approached to the outer surface. It seemed as if the face of the summit above-mentioned was covered with the decomposing fragments of these nodules.

The highest parts of the Mount form a ridge extending S.E. and N.W., being a succession of strata of slaty rock, dipping to the eastward, at an angle of 15° or 20° from the horizon. The strata are very narrow, and separated from each other by a vein of quartz, much of which is in a crystallized state. We reached the ship about seven o'clock, and found that the Hope and her party had done well. Her cruize proved interesting, with regard to the geography of the Strait, and a summary of it is subjoined.

Mr. Graves's orders were to survey the Sebastian Channel; but in the event of his seeing any thing more interesting to the S.E., he was allowed to defer that service to another opportunity. The Hope crossed the Strait, and anchored in a small bay, formed between the two projecting points of Cape Valentyn, where some few defects in the vessel were remedied, and a good round of angles obtained from the summit of the Cape, whence there was a fine view. The country was low, undulating, and destitute of

trees. From a station about two miles overland, to the eastward, a large body of water was observed to the southward, forming a channel, or deep sound, and it was determined to follow up its examination, rather than risk the crew in the deep bay that was supposed to communicate with the San Sebastian Channel, on board a vessel whose capabilities were unknown. Several fire-places and remains of wigwams were seen; the latter were, however, very different, both in shape and material, from those at Port Famine, for the country being destitute of trees, they were built of driftwood, piled up in a conical form.

Passing round Cape Valentyn, the Hope hauled to the southward, keeping the land on board. At night she anchored in Philip Gidley Cove, at the bottom of Willes Bay, where she was weather-bound until the 29th of January. The shores of Willes Bay are thickly clothed with wood, growing to the water's edge, except at the S.W. side. The great abundance of muscles and limpets attracts the Indians, whose wigwams were found standing, and from the green appearance of the branches with which they were formed, seemed to have been lately erected. After leaving Willes Bay, the Hope visited Fox Bay, and Sir Edward Owen's Sound, which, it was thought, would lead into Lomas Bay, opposite to Port Famine; but, after running ten miles up, they got into shoal water, and as there was no current, or stream of tide, they landed, and found that a mile and a half farther on, the sound was terminated by low land. Another day, while proceeding along the south side of Brenton Sound, the

smoke of Indians' fires was noticed near the beach. As this was the first time the Natives of this part had been seen, the course was shaped towards them, until the Hope anchored. Three Indians then approached, holding up the skins of some animal, and inviting them to land. The small boat was hoisted out, and Messrs. Wickham and Rowlett, with Robinson the pilot, went on shore. The Fuegians presented a fox skin to each of the party, who in return gave them some trifles. After a short interview the boat left them, and no further communication was held that night. The following morning a canoe came off to the vessel, containing three young men, two women, and three children, the youngest not more than four months old. They were no sooner alongside than the men went on board, and commenced an active traffic with all the valuables they possessed; and for a few buttons, a glass bottle, or an empty preserved-meat canister, many of their goods were bartered. They had several fox-skins with them, but no other kind of peltry, except their clothing, obtained from the seal or guanaco: and though many of them wore a penguin skin suspended from their girdle, some were without even that covering. This canoe was followed by another, containing an old man, sixty or seventy years of age, with a grey beard; an elderly woman, and two children. Before they came alongside they put their dogs on shore.

Although the visit from these Indians did not last very long, they had time enough to pilfer. One of the young men, who was seen going into a canoe, excited, by his manner, a suspicion of

his having stolen something, and a tin pot was found concealed under his mantle. As there was every probability of their soon separating, and Mr. Graves feared that punishment would cause a rupture, he only turned him out of the vessel: the rest soon followed him, and landed. Having made a fire, the men squatted round it; while the women were despatched to collect shell-fish.

As soon as the Natives had finished their meal, they embarked, and proceeded eastward. Next day they again visited the Hope, but in consequence, perhaps, of the occurrence the day before, did not venture alongside, until invited by the words, 'ho-say, ho-say,' which mean, 'come, come.' In a few minutes confidence was restored, and they began to barter. The trade was opened by one of the women making a peace-offering of a shell necklace, in return for which, red caps and medals were given to each of the women and children. The Hope went thence to Soapsuds Cove, where the crew washed their clothes, and replaced a broken spar.

In a S.E. direction from this cove there appeared to be a considerable channel leading to the S.E., and to the southward was a deep sound, towards which they were proceeding the next morning; but having advanced about two miles, the land of Cape Expectation trended suddenly round to the eastward, and a long narrow channel presented itself, which seemed likely to communicate with the Strait, to the southward of Port San Antonio. They proceeded through this channel, which takes a very straight course, and gradually narrows from Port Waterfall,

where it is two miles and a half wide, to Passage Cove, where it is scarcely three quarters of a mile; and there they anchored.

Between Port Waterfall and Passage Cove, a party of Natives was seen; but, being probably the same who were met at Indian Cove, no attention was paid to their hallooings and fires of invitation.[47] The Hope came into the Strait, eastward of an opening then called Magdalen Sound; her passage must therefore have been through Sarmiento's 'San Gabriel' Channel.

At night, when between Cape Froward and Port San Antonio, a heavy squall from S.W. carried the little vessel rapidly towards Cape San Isidro, and, at daylight the next morning, she was in the position observed by us, while ascending Mount Tarn.

[47] Fires made to attract attention, and invite strangers to land.

CHAPTER IV

Deer seen – Hope sails again – Eagle Bay – Gabriel Channel – 'Williwaws' – Port Waterfall – Natives – Admiralty Sound – Gabriel Channel – Magdalen Channel – Hope returns to Port Famine – San Antonio – Lomas Bay – Loss of boat – Master and two seamen drowned.

From Mr. Graves's report of the appearance of the channel to the S.E. of Dawson Island, I decided to proceed there as soon as the Hope was ready, for she required some alteration, and repairs.

A deer having been seen on Point St. Anna, Mr. Tarn landed, very early in the morning, eager for the prize, but could only get an ineffectual shot. At another time a few deer were seen by our party, near the river; but instead of returning with the information, they fired their guns, loaded with small shot only, which served but to scare them away. As the animal was new to us, and we had evidence of its being equally new to Science, I was anxious to procure a specimen, but never afterwards had an opportunity. Here Sarmiento saw the only deer which he mentions in his journal.

The morning of the 16th seeming more favourable, I set out in the Hope. The heights were covered with snow which had fallen the preceding night, the thermometer had been at freezing point, and much ice had formed; but the appearance of the weather deceived us: we had scarcely left the ship, when it began to

rain, and by the time we reached Cape San Isidro the wind had freshened to a gale, which obliged me to anchor in Eagle Bay.

Having landed, a tent was pitched, and a blazing fire made to dry our clothes. In the evening the gale blew with great violence from S.W., and the Hope, at her anchor, sheered about by the squalls, was occasionally laid over so as to dip her gunwale under water.

The following day (17th), although the rain had ceased, the wind was still strong. Towards evening it fell, and early on the 18th we left Eagle Bay with a fresh breeze from E.N.E., and passed close to Port San Antonio; but were then delayed by calms and squalls. At noon a westerly wind sprung up, and we proceeded down the Gabriel Channel, with the wind aft, and the tide in our favour. Port Waterfall sheltered us for the night.

The apparently artificial formation of this channel is very striking. It seems to have been formerly a valley between two ridges of the range, in the direction of the strata (of which there are frequent instances, such as the valley in the Lomas Range, opposite Cape San Isidro, the valley of Valdez Bay, and one immediately to the north of the channel itself, besides many others), and that at some remote period the sea had forced its way through, effecting a communication between the Strait and the waters behind Dawson Island: as if one of those great 'northern waves,' of which we once heard so much, had rolled down the wide reach of the Strait (the parallelism of whose shores is also remarkable) from the north-west, towards Cape Froward; and

finding itself opposed by the Lomas Range, had forced a passage through the valley until stopped by the mountains at Fitton Bay. Having imagined such a wave in motion, the reader may fancy it uniting with another northern roller from Cape San Valentyn, attacking the hills and carrying all before it, until Mount Hope, at the bottom of Admiralty Sound, arrested its course. I have already noticed the remarkably straight direction in which this curious channel trends. At both extremities the width may be from two to three miles; but the shores gradually approach each other midway, and the coast on each side rises abruptly to the height of fifteen hundred feet. The south shore, sheltered from the prevailing and strongest winds, is thickly covered with trees and luxuriant underwood, which, being chiefly evergreen, improve the scenery greatly, particularly in the winter season: the north shore is also well wooded for about two-thirds up; but the summit is barren and the outline very much serrated, as is usual in slate formations.

On the north shore we noticed some extraordinary effects of the whirlwinds which so frequently occur in Tierra del Fuego. The crews of sealing vessels call them 'williwaws,' or 'hurricane-squalls,' and they are most violent. The south-west gales, which blow upon the coast with extreme fury, are pent up and impeded in passing over the high lands; when, increasing in power, they rush violently over the edges of precipices, expand, as it were, and descending perpendicularly, destroy every thing moveable. The surface of the water, when struck by these gusts, is so

agitated, as to be covered with foam, which is taken up by them, and flies before their fury until dispersed in vapour. Ships at anchor under high land are sometimes suddenly thrown over on their beam-ends, and the next moment recover their equilibrium, as if nothing had occurred. Again a squall strikes them, perhaps on the other side, and over they heel before its rage: the cable becomes strained, and checks the ship with a jerk, that causes her to start a-head through the water, until again stopped by the cable, or driven astern by another gust of wind.

At all these anchorages, under high land, there are some parts more exposed than others; and by watching for those places which are least troubled by these squalls, a more secure, or rather a more quiet, spot may be selected. I do not consider ships so anchored to be in danger if their ground tackle be good; but every thing that offers a stiff resistance must suffer from the fury of these blasts. In many parts of this country trees are torn up by the roots, or rent asunder by the wind; and in the Gabriel Channel the 'williwaws' bursting over the mountainous ridge, which forms the south side of the channel, descend, and striking against the base of the opposite shore, rush up the steep, and carry all before them. I know of nothing to which I can better compare the bared track left by one of these squalls than to a bad broad road. After having made such an opening, the wind frequently sweeping through prevents the growth of vegetation. Confused masses of up-rooted trees lie at the lower ends of these bared tracks, and show plainly what power has been exerted.

The southern shore of the channel is formed by the base of that range of hills, which extends, from the eastern side of the Magdalen Channel, towards the E.S.E. It is the highest part of Tierra del Fuego, and on it are several remarkable mountains, besides Sarmiento, towering over all.

Close to the east end of the Gabriel Channel is Mount Buckland, a tall obelisk-like hill, terminating in a sharp needle-point, and lifting its head above a chaotic mass of 'reliquiæ diluvianæ,' covered with perpetual snow, by the melting of which an enormous glacier on the leeward, or north-eastern side, has been gradually formed. This icy domain is twelve or fourteen miles long, and extends from near the end of the channel to Port Waterfall, feeding, in the intermediate space, many magnificent cascades, which, for number and height, are not perhaps to be exceeded in an equal space of any part of the world. Within an extent of nine or ten miles, there are upwards of a hundred and fifty waterfalls, dashing into the channel from a height of fifteen hundred, or two thousand feet. The course of many is concealed, at first, by intervening trees, and, when half-way down the descent, they burst upon the view, leaping, as it were, out of the wood. Some unite as they fall, and together are precipitated into the sea, in a cloud of foam; so varied, indeed, are the forms of these cascades, and so great their contrast with the dark foliage of the trees, which thickly cover the sides of the mountain, that it is impossible adequately to describe the scene. I have met with nothing exceeding the picturesque grandeur of this part of the

Strait.

There are several coves on the south shore, but opposite to them there is no shelter until you reach a deep bay in which are several islets; and where, I think, there is a communication with Brenton Sound, but we did not enter it.

Port Waterfall may easily be known by a large flat-topped bare rock, lying across the summit of the eastern head, and by a magnificent cascade formed by the union of two torrents.

All the plants of the Strait grow here: a sweet-scented Callixene (*C. marginata*, Lam[k].) filled the air with its odour; and a beautiful flower we had not previously seen, was found by Mr. Graves: it was pendulous, tubular, about two inches long (Class. Hexand. Monog. Cal. 2 Pet. 3. pointed), and of a rich carnation colour.

The trees are small and stunted; they are of the usual species, Beech and Winter's-bark. Here we first noticed a large fern,[48] having a stem two or three feet long, and five or six inches in diameter, very similar to the Zamia of New Holland. We saw very few birds, and no quadrupeds. Among the former was a king-fisher, which at the time was new to us; but it is distributed over a large tract of South America, and I have since seen a specimen said to have been shot at Rio de Janeiro.

Fitton Harbour is a deep inlet, surrounded on all sides by precipitous land, rising to the height of three, or four thousand feet, and terminated by peaks, of most fantastic shape, covered

[48] This fern we found at the island of Juan Fernandez also.

with ice and snow.

Between Fitton Harbour and Cape Rowlett are high mountains, two of which, more conspicuous than the rest, we called 'Mount Sherrard,' and 'Curious Peak.'

Card Point proved to be clay-slate, and I think the projection of Cape Rowlett, and the mountains, are also of this rock.

While crossing over towards Cape Rowlett, (the south head of a deep sound, trending to the S.E., which it was my intention to examine), we were met by three canoes, containing, together, about twenty-four people, and ten or twelve dogs. Mr. Wickham recognised them to be the same party who had visited the Hope on her last cruize; the thief, however, was not amongst them, fearing probably he might be known.

These natives conducted themselves very quietly, and, except one of the women, who wished to keep a tin-pot in which some water had been given her, made no attempt to pilfer. One of the party, who seemed more than half an idiot, spit in my face; but as it was not apparently done angrily, and he was reproved by his companions, his uncourteous conduct was forgiven.

If possessed of any furs, they had left them, perhaps concealed, near their wigwams: only a few arrows, a necklace of shells, and a fillet for the head, made of ostrich feathers, were obtained by barter. Their canoes were paddled by the women, occasionally helped by the men. One or two of the former were young, and well-featured, but the rest were hideous; and all were filthy and most disagreeable, from the quantity of seal-oil and

blubber, with which they had covered their bodies. After we had obtained, by barter, all the articles they had to dispose of, I presented them with red caps and medals, of which they were very proud: the latter they requested might have a hole drilled through them, that they might be suspended by a string round their necks. Their astonishment was much excited, and they were pleased by hearing a watch tick; but I believe I had very nearly, though unintentionally; given great offence, by cutting off a lock of hair, from the head of one of the men. Assuming a grave look, he very carefully wrapped the hair up, and handed it to a woman in the canoe, who, as carefully, stowed it away in a basket, in which she kept her beads and paint: the man then turned round, requesting me, very seriously, to put away the scissors, and my compliance restored him to good-humour.

The features of these people bore a great resemblance to those of the Patagonian Indians, but in person they were considerably shorter and smaller. The elderly people of both sexes had hideous figures; the children, however, and young men, were well-formed; particularly one of the boys, whom they called 'Yāl-lă-bă,' which, I believe, meant a youth, or a young warrior. The word 'Shērrōo' was used to denote a canoe, or vessel.

They were ill-clothed, with mantles made of guanaco, or otter skins, but not so neatly as those of the Patagonians. Their bodies were smeared over with a mixture of earth, charcoal, or red-ocre, and seal-oil; which, combined with the filth of their persons, produced a most offensive smell. Some were partially

painted with a white argillaceous earth; others were blackened with charcoal; one of the men was daubed all over with a white pigment. Their hair was bound by a fillet of plaited twine, made perhaps with strips of bark, and a few of them had it turned up; but to none did it appear to be an object of attention, except one of the young women, who repeatedly combed and arranged her's with the well-toothed jaw of a porpoise.

During a remarkably calm night, we were frequently startled by the loud blowing of whales, between us and the shore. We had noticed several of those monsters on the previous day, but had never heard them blow in so still a place.

At dawn, a light air carried us towards some broken land to the S.E. of Cape Rowlett, between the eastern trend of which, and the projecting point of an island, we found a secure and land-locked harbour, with two entrances, one to the north and the other to the south of High Islet. The south side of the port, which I called Port Cooke,[49] is a narrow strip of land, forming the head of a deep inlet or sound, called[50] Brook Harbour. It seemed to extend to the base of the high mountainous range, and to be separated only by a narrow isthmus from Fitton Harbour.

We had scarcely been at anchor half an hour when the same party of Fuegians was seen arriving. The men hastened to us in their canoes, as soon as the women had landed, to cover or thatch the wigwams, which they found standing, and to light fires.

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[49] After the lieutenant of the Adventure.

[50] At Mr. Tarn's request.

We afterwards went ashore, and, sitting down near them, commenced a brisk trade for arrows, skins, necklaces, and other commodities. The furs which covered their backs they parted with, for a few beads, and went quite naked the whole evening.

Among them was a young man, who appeared to be treated with some deference by the others; he was one of the best-looking of the party; and there was a good-natured smile on his countenance during our communication, while the rest frequently manifested displeasure, even about trifles. He was, at least, the master of one of the two families; his wigwam contained his wife, and two children, his, or his wife's father, and mother, as well as the idiot, and his wife, who, from her appearance, must have been a Patagonian, or else a woman of unusual size among these people. The old woman was very inquisitive, and the man, in a long speech, described to her all the wonders I had shown him, applying to me, from time to time, to point out to her the articles he was trying to describe.

Their dexterity with the sling is extraordinary; and, I should think, when used as a weapon of offence, it must be very formidable. Upon asking the same man to show us its use, he picked up a pebble, about the size of a pigeon's egg, and placed it in the sling; then intimating that he was going to strike a canoe, he turned his back to the mark, and threw the stone in an opposite direction, against the trunk of a tree, whence it rebounded over his head, and fell close to the canoe.

I have seen them strike a cap, placed upon the stump of a

tree, fifty or sixty yards off, with a stone from a sling. In using the bow and arrow, also, with which they kill birds, they are very dexterous. The spear is principally for striking porpoises and seals, but is also used in war; and from the nature of the barb, must be an efficient weapon. For close quarters, they use clubs, stones held in the hand, and short wooden daggers, pointed with very sharp-edged quartz, pitch-stone, or flint.

The next morning, seeing us underweigh, they came alongside and tried to induce us to anchor again. The young man, of whom I have spoken, was very importunate, and at last offered us his wife, as a bribe, who used all her fancied allurements to second his proposal.

So highly did they esteem beads and buttons, that a few of each would have purchased the canoe, the wife, and children, their dogs, and all the furniture. Seeing us proceed to the southward, with the apparent intention of sailing down the inlet, they motioned to us to go to the north, repeatedly calling out 'Sherroo, sherroo,' and pointing to the northward; which we thought intimated that there was no passage in the direction we were taking.

At noon, I landed to observe the latitude, and take bearings down the Sound to the S.E., at the bottom of which was a hill, standing by itself, as it were, in mid-channel. The view certainly excited hopes of its being a channel; and as we had begun to calculate upon reaching Nassau Bay in a few days, we named this hill, Mount Hope.

The point on which we landed was at the foot of a high snow-capped hill, called by us Mount Seymour; whence, had not the Indians been near, I should have taken bearings.

We sailed south-eastward, close to the south shore, until the evening; when from the summit of some hills, about three hundred feet above the sea, we had a view down the Sound, which almost convinced us it would prove to be a channel. The rock at this place differed from any we had seen in the Strait. The mountains are high, and evidently of clay-slate; but the point, near which we anchored, is a mass of hard, and very quartzose sand-stone, much resembling the old red sand-stone formation of Europe, and precisely like the rock of Goulburn Island, on the north coast of New Holland.[51]

The following morning (23d), we proceeded towards Mount Hope, while running down to which some squalls passed over, clouding the south shore, and as we passed Parry Harbour it bore so much the appearance of a channel, that we stood into it; but the clouds clearing away soon exposed the bottom to our view, where there seemed to be two arms or inlets. In the south-eastern arm, the shores were covered with thick ice (like the bottom of Ainsworth Harbour, to the west of Parry Harbour, where an immense glacier slopes down to the water's edge). The south-west arm appeared to be well sheltered, and if it affords a moderate depth of water, would be an excellent harbour.

After satisfying ourselves that there was no channel here, we

[51] King's 'Australia,' vol. i. p. 70; also vol. ii. pp. 573, 582, and 613.

bore up on our original course; but, before long, found ourselves within two miles of the bottom of the Sound; which is shallow, and appears to receive two rivers. The great quantity of ice water, which mingles here with the sea, changed its colour to so pale a blue, that we thought ourselves in fresh water.

Mount Hope proved to be an isolated mass of hills, lying like the rest N.W. and S.E., having low land to the southward, over which nothing was visible except one hill, thirty or forty miles distant, covered with snow, to which the rays of the sun gave the appearance of a sheet of gold. Finding ourselves embayed, we hastened out of the scrape, and, after beating for some hours, anchored in Parry Harbour.

Our entrance into a little cove in Parry Harbour disturbed a quantity of ducks, steamers, shags, and geese. Their numbers showed that Indians had not lately visited it.

Next day we reached Ainsworth Harbour, which is of the same character as Parry Harbour, and affords perfect security for small vessels: by dint of sweeping, we reached a secure anchorage in a cove at the south-east corner.

The bottom of the port is formed, as I before said, by an immense glacier, from which, during the night, large masses broke off and fell into the sea with a loud crash,[52] thus explaining the nocturnal noises we had often heard at Port Famine, and

[52] At high tide the sea-water undermines, by thawing, large masses of ice, which, when the tide falls, want support, and, consequently, break off, bringing after them huge fragments of the glacier, and falling into the still basin with a noise like thunder.

which at the time were thought to arise from the eruption of volcanoes. Such were also, probably, the sounds heard by the Spanish officers during their exploration of the Straits, whilst in the port of Santa Monica, where they had taken refuge from a violent gale of wind.[53]

The harbour was full of fragments of ice, the succeeding morning, drifting into the Sound, where the sea-water, being at a higher temperature than the air, rapidly melted them.

Since our departure from Port Waterfall, the weather had been mild, clear, and settled; but as it wanted only three days of the change of the moon, at which period, as well as at the full, it always blew a gale, I wished to reach a place of security in the Gabriel Channel or Magdalen Sound.

Near the islands of Ainsworth Harbour, three canoes passed us, steering across the Sound, each with a seal-skin fixed up in the bow for a sail; and we recognised in them the party left at Port Cooke, among whom was the Indian who had been detected in stealing a tin pot. They did not come along-side; but as we went by, pointed to the north, apparently urging us to go in that

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[53] "En los dias 24, y 25, oimos un ruido sordo, y de corta duracion, que, por el pronto, nos pareció trueno; pero habiendo reflexîonado, nos inclinamos à creer que fué efecto de alguna explosion subterranea, formado en el seno de alguna de las montañas inmediatas, en que parece haber algunos minerales, y aun volcanes, que están del todo ó casi apagados, movièndonos a hacer este juicio, el haberse encontrado, en la cima de una de ellas, porcion de materia compuesta de tierra y metal, que en su peso, color, y demas caracteres, tenia impreso el sello del fuego activo en que habia tomado aquel estado, pues era una perfecta imagèn de las escorias del hierro que se ven en nuestras ferrerías. —*Apendice al Viage de Cordova al Magallanes*, p. 65.

direction.

We had noticed several wigwams at Parry and Ainsworth Harbours, which shows that they are much frequented by Indians, perhaps on their way to the open low country east of Mount Hope, where numerous herds of guanacoes may be found.

Porpoises and seal were not scarce in this inlet, and in the entrance there were many whales. The presence of seal and whales made me think it probable there was a channel; but I believe every person with me was satisfied of its being a sound, terminating under Mount Hope. Since my later experience of the deceptive character of some passages in Tierra del Fuego (the Barbara Channel, for example), I have felt less certain that there may not be a communication with the low land, behind Mount Hope, round its northern base. The improbability was, however, so great, – from the bottom of the sound being shoal, – from the very slight tide-stream, – and from the information of the Natives; who evidently intended to tell us we could not get out to sea, – that we did not consider it worth while to make another examination.

I have before observed that the strata of the slate rocks, in the Strait, dip to the S.E.; and I found that they dip similarly all the way to the bottom of this inlet, which I named Admiralty Sound.

The north side, like that of the Gabriel Channel, is steep, without indentations, excepting where there is a break in the hills; but on the south shore there are many coves, and bights, the cause of which is shown in the accompanying imaginary section of

the Gabriel Channel. The same cause operates on the outline of the north shore of the reach of Cape Froward, westward as far as Cape Holland, where the rock assumes a still more primitive form. Its general character, however, is micaceous slate, with broad veins of quartz; the latter being particularly conspicuous at Port Gallant.

The following slight sketch, intended to represent an imaginary section of such an opening as the Gabriel Channel, may also serve to give a general idea of many Fuegian anchorages; – of deep water passages existing between the almost innumerable islands of Tierra del Fuego; – and of the effects of those sudden, and violent gusts of wind, – so frequent and dangerous, – commonly called hurricane-squalls,[54] or williwaws.

The rock, of course, decomposes equally on both sides; but on that exposed to the south wind, it breaks off in flakes parallel to the direction of the strata, and therefore does not make the course of the beach more irregular; while on the other side it moulders away transversely to the direction of the dip, leaving holes,

[54] No canvas could withstand some of these squalls, which carry spray, leaves, and dirt before them, in a dense cloud, reaching from the water to the height of a ship's lower yards, or even lower mast-heads. Happily their duration is so short, that the cable of a vessel, at anchor, is scarcely strained to the utmost, before the furious blast is over. Persons who have been some time in Tierra del Fuego, but fortunate enough not to have experienced the extreme violence of such squalls, may incline to think their force exaggerated in this description: but it ought to be considered, that their utmost fury is only felt during unusually heavy gales, and in particular situations; so that a ship might pass through the Strait of Magalhaens many times, without encountering one such blast as has occasionally been witnessed there. – R. F.

in which water lodges, and hastens decomposition by entering deeply into the interstices. Water, air, and frost decompose the rock, and form a soil, which, if not too much exposed to the wind, is soon occupied by vegetation.

The rugged faces of the cliffs, on the southern shore, caused by the rock decomposing across the grain, collect sand and mud; and hence it happens that anchorages are frequently found on one side, whilst, on the other, the anchor will not hold, from the steepness of the ground; there being nothing upon the smooth declivity to retain mud and sand before it gets to the bottom; which, in most cases known to me, lies far beyond the reach of the anchor.

After a tedious and difficult passage through the Gabriel Channel, we anchored in a snug harbour within the entrance of Magdalen Channel, on the west side, under a peaked hill called by Sarmiento 'El Vernal,' – in our plan, the 'Sugar-loaf.' The entrance is about a quarter of a mile wide; but after a few hundred yards the harbour opens, extending in for nearly a mile. It is of easy depth; seven fathoms in the entrance, and four, five, and six fathoms within; so that it is very convenient for a small vessel: to us, indeed, it was a most welcome discovery. The land rises, around this cove, to the height of two or three thousand feet. It is covered with Beech, and Winter's-bark, and near the water is adorned with large groves of Fuchsia, Berberis, and the common shrubs of Port Famine, growing so thickly as to form an almost impenetrable jungle; but, notwithstanding the

picturesque character of its scenery, the towering height of the hills, which exclude the sun's rays for the whole day, during the greater portion of the year, renders it a gloomy and melancholy spot.[55]

We found a family of Fuegians in the inner harbour. Three canoes were hauled up on the beach, but their owners were not at first visible. At last, after our repeatedly calling out 'Ho-say, ho-say,' they appeared, and, rather reluctantly, invited us, by signs, to land. There seemed to be fourteen or fifteen people, and seven or eight dogs. Mr. Wickham and Mr. Tarn went on shore to these natives, who exhibited some timidity, until a hideous old woman began to chatter, and soon made them understand that the young men (Lā-ā-pas) were absent on a hunting excursion, but were every moment expected to return. There were only three men with the women and children. To inspire them with confidence in our good intentions, Mr. Wickham gave each man a red cap, and some other trifles. One of them complained of being sick, but I rather imagine his illness was feigned, and the others did not at all seem to like our visit. By degrees their fears subsided, and, restraint being laid aside, an active trade began; in which several otter skins, shell-necklaces, spears, and other trifles, were obtained from them in exchange for beads, buttons, medals, &c. The otters are caught by the help of dogs, on which account, principally, the latter are so valuable.

These people were slightly clothed with skins of the seal

[55] "sub rupe cavatâ Arboribus clausam circum atque horrentibus umbria."

and otter, but some had pieces of guanaco mantles over their shoulders, whence we supposed that they were either of the same tribe, or at peace, with the Indians of Admiralty Sound: unless, indeed, they trade with the Patagonian Indians; but such is the poverty of the Fuegians, they can scarcely possess any thing of value sufficient to exchange with the goods of their northern neighbours, unless it be iron pyrites, which I think is not found in the open country inhabited by the Patagonian Indians, and, from the facility with which it yields sparks of fire, must be an object of importance.

We were not a little amused by the surprise which these natives showed at the things in our possession, and by the effect produced in their countenances when they saw any thing extraordinary: the expression was not that of joy or surprise, but a sort of vacant, stupified, stare at each other. They must have been very suspicious of our intentions, or very much excited by what they had seen during the day, as throughout the night an incessant chattering of voices was heard on shore, interrupted only by the barking of their dogs.

Looking down the Magdalen Inlet, we saw two openings, which, while the hills were enveloped in mist, had the appearance of being channels. We proceeded for some distance into the more westerly of the two, but found that it was merely a sound, terminated by high land. The boat was then steered under a steep mass of black mountainous land,[56] the summit of which

[56] Mount Boqueron.

is divided into three peaks, which Sarmiento called 'El Pan de Azucar de los Boquerones' (the Sugar-loaf of the Openings). We ran southward, fifteen miles down this sound, and reached the Labyrinth Islands; but finding there no suitable anchorage, resumed our course towards the bottom of what we thought another sound, terminated by mountains. At noon, the furthest point, on the west shore, which we called Cape Turn, was within three miles of us, and we should soon have discovered the continuation of the channel (as it has since been proved); but a breeze set in from the S.W., and in a short time it blew so strong as to oblige us to turn back. 'Williwaws' and baffling eddy winds kept us seven hours under Mount Boqueron. These squalls were at first alarming, but by taking in all sail, before they passed, we sustained no injury. At sunset we were abreast of Hope Harbour, in which we purposed taking shelter from the gale. Our late neighbours, the Indians, had lighted a fire at the entrance to invite our return; but wind and tide were against us, and as we knew of no port to leeward, our only resource was to run out of the sound. Furious squalls carried us into the true, or steady, wind, which we found very strong; and as Port San Antonio was on the lee-bow, we had to carry such a press of sail, that our excellent boat had nearly half the lee side of her deck under water. By daylight we got into smooth water, and, with less wind and better weather, steered for Port Famine. The smoother water enabled us to light a fire and cook a meal, not an unimportant affair, as we had eaten nothing since six o'clock on the preceding morning.

In our absence Mr. Graves had surveyed Lomas Bay, and, after his return, Mr. Ainsworth had crossed the Strait with the gig and cutter to survey Port San Antonio. They were victualled for five days; the gig was manned by my own boat's crew, and the cutter by volunteers: but although they had not come back, we felt no anxiety about their safety, being assured that Mr. Ainsworth would not run the risk of crossing the Strait during bad weather. The tempestuous state of the two following days, however, made us uneasy, and on the third morning, when the wind moderated much, we looked out anxiously for their arrival. In the evening the cutter returned; but, alas! with the melancholy information of the loss of Mr. Ainsworth, and two seamen, drowned by the upsetting of the gig. One of the latter was my excellent coxswain, John Corkhill. The remainder of the gig's crew were only rescued from drowning by the strenuous exertions of those in the cutter.

Mr. Ainsworth, anxious to return to the ship, thought too little of the difficulty and danger of crossing the Strait during unsettled weather. He set out from Port San Antonio under sail, and, while sheltered by the land, did very well; but as soon as they got into the offing, both wind and sea increased so much that the gig was in great danger, although under only a small close-reefed sail.

The people in the cutter were anxiously watching her labouring movements, when she disappeared! They hastened to the spot – saved three men; but the other two had gone down. Poor Ainsworth was still clinging to the gig's gunwale when his shipmates eagerly approached; but letting go his hold from

extreme exhaustion, and being heavily clothed, he sunk from their sight to rise no more.

He had been cheering the drowning crew, and trying to save his companions, till the moment his grasp relaxed. Just before Ainsworth himself let go, Mr. Hodgskin lost his hold, exclaiming, Ainsworth, save me! when, exhausted as he was, with one hand he rescued his friend, and, directly afterwards, his strength failing, sunk.

This addition of three people to the already loaded cutter, made her cargo more than was safe, therefore Mr. Williams, who commanded her, very prudently bore up for the first convenient landing-place, and happily succeeded in reaching the only part of the beach, between Lomas Bay and Cape Valentyn, where a boat could land.

The following morning, the weather being more favourable, they crossed under sail to Freshwater Bay, and thence pulled to Port Famine.

This melancholy disaster was much felt by every one. Ainsworth was a deserving officer, and highly esteemed. Corkhill was captain of the forecastle, and had served in the Polar voyages under Sir Edward Parry. On the Sunday following, the colours were hoisted half-mast high, and the funeral service was read after morning prayers: for although to recover the bodies was impossible, their watery grave was before our eyes; and the performance of this last sad duty was a melancholy satisfaction.

"Ours are the tears, tho' few, sincerely shed,
When ocean shrouds and sepulchres our dead."

A tablet was subsequently erected, on Point St. Anna, to record this fatal accident.

CHAPTER V

Lieutenant Sholl arrives – Beagle returns – Loss of the Saxe Cobourg sealer – Captain Stokes goes to Fury Harbour to save her crew – Beagle's proceedings – Bougainville's memorial – Cordova's memorial – Beagle's danger – Difficulties – Captain Stokes's boat-cruize – Passages – Natives – Dangerous service – Western entrance of the Strait of Magalhaens – Hope's cruize – Prepare to return to Monte Video.

The Beagle's time of absence had expired on the 1st of April, and our anxiety, more excited by our recent loss, was becoming painful. I detained the Hope from going upon a service for which she was prepared, in case she might be required to search for our consort: but on the 6th a strange whale-boat was descried pulling towards us from the southward, in which we soon distinguished Lieut. Sholl. His appearance, under such circumstances, of course raised fears for the Beagle's safety; but, on approaching, his gratifying shout, "all's well!" at once removed anxiety.

Mr. Sholl informed me, that the Beagle had picked up a boat, belonging to the schooner 'Prince of Saxe Cobourg,' wrecked in Fury Harbour, at the south entrance of the Barbara Channel; and that she had put into Port Gallant, whence Captain Stokes had gone with the boats to assist the Sealers, leaving Lieut. Skyring

on board.

The safety of the Beagle being established, I despatched Mr. Graves, in the Hope, to examine some openings between the Magdalen Channel and the Dos Hermanos of Bougainville.

Several days earlier than I expected, the Beagle made her appearance, and Captain Stokes soon gave me the agreeable intelligence of having succeeded in saving the Prince of Saxe Cobourg's crew. Favoured by the weather, though delayed by his guide having forgotten the way, Captain Stokes reached Fury Harbour in two days, and embarked the master and crew of the wrecked vessel, with all their personal property, and the greater part of the seal-skins which they had cured. He reached Port Gallant again on the fourth day; sailed immediately in the Beagle, and two days afterwards anchored in Port Famine.

The Prince of Saxe Cobourg, belonging to Mr. Weddel (whose voyage towards the South Pole is so well known), and commanded by Mr. Matthew Brisbane, who accompanied Weddel on that occasion, sailed from England in the summer of 1826, on a sealing voyage. At South Shetland she encountered a continuance of bad weather, was beset by a large body of ice for several days, and received so much damage as to oblige her to run for the Fuegian coast, and anchor in Fury Harbour, at the entrance of the Barbara Channel. There (December 16th, 1826) she was driven on shore by the furious strength of the williwaws, and wrecked. The crew were, however, enabled to save most of the provisions and stores, as well as their three boats. Having

made tents, and established themselves on shore, they remained in anxious expectation of the arrival of some vessel which might relieve them; day after day however passed, without succour.

Two boats were despatched to look for any sealing vessel that might be in the vicinity, but after fifteen days' absence they returned unsuccessful. In this interval one of the crew, who had long been sickly, died; and another, in carelessly discharging a musket, exploded twenty pounds of gunpowder, by which he was very much burned. Three of the people being mutinous, were punished by being sent, each to a different island, with only a week's provisions.

Soon afterwards another boat was sent away, which reached Hope Harbour, but found no vessel there. Seven of the people then obtained permission from the master (who kept up a very proper state of discipline), to take the largest whale-boat, and go towards the River Negro. Previous to their departure they drew up articles of agreement for their general conduct, a breach of which was to be punished by the offender being left upon the coast, wherever they might happen to be. The boat eventually arrived safely at the place of her destination, and the crew entered as volunteers on board of the Buenos Ayrean squadron, at that time engaged in the war with Brazil.

Again a boat was despatched, directed to go westward through the Strait in search of vessels. She had only reached as far as Playa Parda, when the Beagle fell in with her (March 3d, 1827). While passing through the small channels, before entering the

Strait, she met several canoes, with Indians, who endeavoured to stop her, and shot arrows at the crew; but, happily, without doing any mischief.

After the last boat's departure, Mr. Brisbane began to build a small vessel, and, while so employed, was visited by a party of natives, who conducted themselves very peaceably, and went away. Their visit, however, gave the shipwrecked people, now much reduced in number,[57] reason to apprehend the return of a larger body, who might try to possess themselves of the property which was lying about on the shore; they therefore buried a great deal, and took means to preserve the rest by making preparations to repel attack. When Captain Stokes appeared with his two boats, the Sealers flew to their arms, calling out "the Indians, the Indians!" but in a very few minutes excess of joy succeeded to their sudden alarm.

Captain Stokes found the vessel lying on the rocks, bilged, and an utter wreck. The master and crew were extremely anxious to get away, he therefore embarked them, with as much of the property as could be carried, and succeeded (after another night in the boats, and a long pull of eighty miles,) in conveying them safely to the Beagle.

The following is an abstract of Captain Stokes's journal of his cruise to the western entrance of the Strait.

The Beagle sailed from Port Famine on the 15th of January, to explore the Strait westward of Cape Froward, and to

[57] Including the master, there were on board, when cast away, twenty-two persons.

fix particularly the positions of Cape Pillar, the rock called Westminster Hall, and the Islands of Direction, at the western entrance of the Strait.

For the first night Captain Stokes anchored in San Nicolas Bay, and in the evening examined a harbour[58] behind Nassau Island, which Bougainville, in the year 1765, visited for the purpose of procuring wood for the French settlement at the Falkland Islands.

On the second night, after a day nearly calm, the Beagle was anchored in a cove to the eastward of Cape Froward, and the next day (17th) passed round the Cape, carrying a heavy press of sail against a dead foul wind. Captain Stokes's account of this day's beat to windward will give the reader an idea of the sort of navigation.

"Our little bay had screened us so completely from the wind, that though, when (at five A.M.) we weighed, the breeze was so light as scarcely to enable us, with all sail set, to clear its entrance; no sooner were we outside, than we were obliged to treble reef the topsails. We continued to beat to windward under a heavy press of sail; our object being to double Cape Froward, and secure, if possible, an anchorage ere night-fall under Cape Holland, six leagues further to the westward. At first we made 'boards' right across the Straits to within a third of a mile of each shore, gaining, however, but little. We then tried whether, by confining our tacks to either coast, we could discover a tide

[58] Bougainville Harbour, better known to Sealers by the name of 'Jack's Harbour.'

by which we might profit; and for that purpose I began with the north shore, for though we were there more exposed to violent squalls which came down the valleys, I thought it advisable to avoid the indraught of various channels intersecting the Fuegian coast; but having made several boards without any perceptible advantage, we tried the south shore, with such success that I was induced to keep on that side during the remainder of the day.

"And here let me remark, that in consequence of the westerly winds which blow through the western parts of the Straits of Magalhaens, with almost the constancy (as regards direction, not force) of a trade-wind; a current setting to the eastward, commonly at the rate of a knot and three quarters an hour, will be found in mid-channel. The tides exert scarcely any influence, except near either shore; and sometimes appear to set, up one side of the Straits, and down the other: the weather tide is generally shown by a rippling.([59])

"Heavy squalls off Cape Froward repeatedly obliged us to clew all up. By day their approach is announced, in time for the necessary precautions, by their curling up and covering with foam the surface of the water, and driving the spray in clouds before them.

"At last we doubled Cape Froward. This Cape (called by the Spaniards El Morro de Santa Agueda), the southernmost point of

[59] While the 'current' runs eastward for many days in mid-channel, or along one shore, it often happens that the 'stream of tide' either sets in a contrary direction, along each side of the Strait, or that it follows only the shore opposite to that washed by the 'current.' – R. F.

all America, is a bold promontory, composed of dark coloured slaty rock; its outer face is nearly perpendicular, and whether coming from the eastward or westward, it 'makes' as a high round-topped bluff hill ('Morro').

"Bougainville observes, that 'Cape Froward has always been much dreaded by navigators.'[60] To double it, and gain an anchorage under Cape Holland, certainly cost the Beagle as tough a sixteen hours' beat as I have ever witnessed: we made thirty-one tacks, which, with the squalls, kept us constantly on the alert, and scarcely allowed the crew to have the ropes out of their hands throughout the day. But what there is to inspire a navigator with 'dread' I cannot tell, for the coast on both sides is perfectly clear, and a vessel may work from shore to shore."

From Cape Holland, the Beagle proceeded to Port Gallant, and during her stay there, Mr. Bowen ascended the Mountain de la Cruz. Upon the summit he found some remains of a glass bottle, and a roll of papers, which proved to be the memorials stated to have been left by Don Antonio de Cordova, and a copy of a document that had previously been deposited there by M. de Bougainville. With these papers was found a Spanish two-rial piece of Carlos III., which had been bent to admit of its being put into the bottle. It was with considerable difficulty that any of the writing could be decyphered, for the papers, having been doubled up, were torn, and the words defaced at the foldings, and edges.

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[60] "Voyage autour du Monde." 1767.

Bougainville's memorial was in Latin. Cordova's, besides a document in Latin, was accompanied by an account of his voyage, written in four languages, Spanish, French, Italian, and English. The legible part of the former was as follows: —

Viatori Benevolo salus…
… que a periculose admodum naviga…
… Brasilie Bonarve et insularum…
.....
… incertis freti Magellanici portubus..
… historia astronomia..
… Boug....
… Boug.. Duclos et de la Giranda 2 navium.
… Primaris
… Comerson.. Doct med naturalista Regio accu.. m. Veron astronomo de Romainville hidrographio
… a rege Christianissimo demandans
… Landais Lavan Fontaine navium
Loco tenentibus et Vexillariis…
… itineris locus DD Dervi Lemoyne..
… Riouffe voluntariis.
… vives… scriba

Anno MDCCLXVI

The Latin inscription of Cordova was as follows: —

Benevolo Navigatori

Salutem

Anno Domini MDCCLXXXVIII Vir celeberrimus

DD Antonius de Cordova Laso de Vega navibus duabus (*quarum* nomina SS Casilda et Eulalia *erant ad scrutamen* Magellanici freti subsequendum *unâque* littorum, portuum aliorumque notabilium

… iter iterum fecit.

… e Gadibus classis tertio nonas Octobris habenas *immittit* quarto idus *ejusdem Nova*… vidit

A Boreali ad Austra… *miserium* postridie Kalendæ

Novembris emigravit.

Decimo quarto Kalendas Januarii Patagonicis recognitis litoribus ad ostium appulit freti.

Tandem ingentibus periculis et horroribus tam in mari quam

in freto magnanime et constanter super*atis* et omnibus portubus atque navium *fundamentis* utriusque litoris correctissime cognitis ad hunc portum Divini Jose vel

Galante septimo idu Januarii pervenit ubi ad perpetuam rei memoriam in monte sanctissimæ crucis hoc monumentum reliquit.

Tertio et excelso Carolo regnante potente

Regali jussu facta fuere suo.

Colocatum fuit nono Kalendæ Februarii Anno MDCCLXXXIX.

together with a list of the officers of both vessels, and enclosing a memorial of Cordova's former voyage in the Santa Maria de la Cabeza. The originals are placed in the British Museum; but before we finally left the Strait, copies were made on vellum, and deposited on the same spot.

The Beagle left Port Gallant[61] with a fair wind, which carried her to Swallow Harbour.

The next stopping place was Marian's Cove, a very snug anchorage on the north shore, a few miles beyond Playa Parda. Proceeding thence to the westward, with the wind 'in their teeth,' and such bad weather, that they could only see the land of either coast at intervals, and failing in an attempt to find anchorage under Cape Upright, the Beagle was kept under weigh during a squally dark night.

In that very place, Commodore Byron, with the Dolphin and Tamar, passed the anxious night, which he thus describes: —

"Our situation was now very alarming; the storm increased every minute, the weather was extremely thick, and the rain seemed to threaten another deluge; we had a long dark night before us, we were in a narrow channel, and surrounded on every

[61] One of the feathered tribe, which a naturalist would not expect to find here, a 'humming bird,' was shot near the beach by a young midshipman. – Stokes MS.

side by rocks and breakers."[62] The Beagle was under similar circumstances, but the land being known to be high and bold, her danger was not considered so imminent.

Eastward of Cape Upright the water was smooth; but between it and Cape Providence a heavy breaking sea was caused by the deep swell of the Pacific. Captain Stokes found an anchorage the next night in a bay under Cape Tamar; and the following evening very nearly reached another under Cape Phillip; but the darkness of a rainy night, and strong squalls, prevented their attempting to anchor in an unknown place, and the only resource was to bear up for shelter under Cape Tamar, where the previous night had been passed. Even this was a dangerous attempt; they could hardly discern any part of the high land, and when before the wind could not avoid the ship's going much too fast. While running about eight knots, a violent shock – a lift forward – heel over – and downward plunge – electrified every one; but before they could look round, she was scudding along, as before, having fairly leaped over the rock.

It was afterwards found that a great part of the gripe and false keel were knocked away. Captain Stokes's account of this day's beat will give an idea of the difficulties which the Beagle's crew encountered, in working out of the Strait.

January 31st. "The hands were turned up at daylight up anchor; but the heavy squalls that came off the high land of the harbour, rendered it too hazardous to weigh, until a temporary

[62] Hawkesworth's Coll. of Voyages, vol. i. p. 76.

lull enabled us to make sail, and re-commence beating to the westward against a dead foul wind, much rain, hard squalls, and a turbulent cross sea.

"The squalls became more frequent and more violent after noon; but they gave, in daylight, sufficient warning, being preceded by dark clouds gradually expanding upwards, until their upper line attained the altitude of about fifty degrees: then came heavy rain, and perhaps hail; immediately after followed the squall in all its fury, and generally lasted fifteen or twenty minutes.

"In working to windward we frequently extended our 'boards' to the south shore (not without risk considering the state of the weather), with the hope of making out Tuesday Bay, or some anchorage thereabout; but the coast was covered with so thick a mist, that not a single point, mentioned by preceding navigators, could be recognised.

"About seven in the evening we were assailed by a squall, which burst upon the ship with fury far surpassing all that preceded it; had not sail been shortened in time, not a stick would have been left standing, or she must have capsized. As it was, the squall hove her so much over on her broadside, that the boat which was hanging at the starboard quarter was washed away. I then stood over to the north shore, to look for anchorage under the lee of a cape, about three leagues to the north-west of Cape Tamar. On closing it, the weather became so thick that at times we could scarcely see two ships' lengths a-head.

"These circumstances were not in favour of exploring unknown bays, and to think of passing such a night as was in prospect, under sail in the Straits, would have been a desperate risk; I was obliged therefore to yield the hard-gained advantage of this day's beat, and run for the anchorage whence we had started in the morning.

"It was nearly dark ere we reached it; and in entering, desirous to keep well up to windward, in order to gain the best anchorage, I went too close to the outer islet, and the ship struck violently on a rocky ledge. However, she did not hang a moment, and was soon anchored in safety."

Finding so much danger and difficulty, in proceeding with the ship, without first knowing where to run for anchorages, Captain Stokes left her in Tamar Bay, under the charge of Lieutenant Skyring; and, accompanied by Mr. Flinn, set out in the cutter, with a week's provisions, to examine the south coast.

In a very arduous and dangerous cruize he discovered several well-sheltered anchorages, but experienced a "constant heavy gale from W.N.W., with thick weather and incessant drenching rain."

Captain Stokes says, "Our discomfort in an open boat was very great, since we were all constantly wet to the skin. In trying to double the various headlands, we were repeatedly obliged (after hours of ineffectual struggle against sea and wind) to desist from useless labour, and take refuge in the nearest cove which lay to leeward."

From the Harbour of Mercy, Captain Stokes attempted to cross the Strait, on his return to the Beagle; but the sea ran too high, and obliged him to defer his daring purpose until the weather was more favourable.

During his absence, Lieutenant Skyring surveyed Tamar Bay and its vicinity.

Again the Beagle weighed, and tried hard to make some progress to the westward, but was obliged a third time to return to Tamar Bay. After another delay she just reached Sholl Bay, under Cape Phillip, and remained there one day, to make a plan of the anchorage, and take observations to fix its position.

The Beagle reached the Harbour of Mercy (Separation Harbour of Wallis and Carteret),[63] after a thirty days' passage from Port Famine, on the 15th, having visited several anchorages on the south shore in her way. But tedious and harassing as her progress had been, the accounts of Byron, Wallis, Carteret, and Bougainville show that they found more difficulty, and took more time, in their passages from Port Famine to the western entrance of the Strait. Byron, in 1764, was forty-two days; Wallis, in 1766, eighty-two; Carteret, in the same year, eighty-four; and Bougainville, in 1768, forty days, in going that short distance.

Five days were passed at this place, during which they communicated with a few natives, of whom Captain Stokes

[63] It was here that Commodore Wallis and Captain Carteret separated, the Dolphin going round the world; the Swallow returning to England. Sarmiento's name of Puerto de la Misericordia, or 'Harbour of Mercy,' being of prior date, ought doubtless to be retained.

remarks; "As might be expected from the unkindly climate in which they dwell, the personal appearance of these Indians does not exhibit, either in male or female, any indications of activity or strength. Their average height is five feet five inches; their habit of body is spare; the limbs are badly turned, and deficient in muscle; the hair of their head is black, straight, and coarse; their beards, whiskers, and eyebrows, naturally exceedingly scanty, are carefully plucked out; their forehead is low; the nose rather prominent, with dilated nostrils; their eyes are dark, and of a moderate size; the mouth is large, and the under-lip thick; their teeth are small and regular, but of bad colour. They are of a dirty copper colour; their countenance is dull, and devoid of expression. For protection against the rigours of these inclement regions, their clothing is miserably suited; being only the skin of a seal, or sea-otter, thrown over the shoulders, with the hairy side outward.

"The two upper corners of this skin are tied together across the breast with a strip of sinew or skin, and a similar thong secures it round the waist; the skirts are brought forward so as to be a partial covering. Their comb is a portion of the jaw of a porpoise, and they anoint their hair with seal or whale blubber; for removing the beard and eyebrows they employ a very primitive kind of tweezers, namely, two muscle shells. They daub their bodies with a red earth, like the ruddle used in England for marking sheep. The women, and children, wear necklaces, formed of small shells, neatly attached by a plaiting of the fine fibres of

seal's intestines.

"The tracts they inhabit are altogether destitute of four-footed animals; they have not domesticated the geese or ducks which abound here; of tillage they are utterly ignorant; and the only vegetable productions they eat are a few wild berries and a kind of sea-weed. Their principal food consists of muscles, limpets, and sea-eggs, and, as often as possible, seal, sea-otter, porpoise, and whale: we often found in their deserted dwellings bones of these animals, which had undergone the action of fire.

"Former voyagers have noticed the avidity with which they swallowed the most offensive offal, such as decaying seal-skins, rancid seal, and whale blubber, &c. When on board my ship, they ate or drank greedily whatever was offered to them, salt-beef, salt-pork, preserved meat, pudding, pea-soup, tea, coffee, wine, or brandy – nothing came amiss. One little instance, however, happened, which showed what they preferred. As they were going ashore, a lump of the tallow used for arming the lead was given to them, and received with particular delight. It was scrupulously divided, and placed in the little baskets which they form of rushes, to be reserved for eating last, as the richest treat.

"To their dwellings have been given, in various books of voyages, the names of huts, wigwams, &c.; but, with reference to their structure, I think old Sir John Narborough's term for them will convey the best idea to an English reader; he calls them 'arbours.' They are formed of about a couple of dozen branches, pointed at the larger ends, and stuck into the ground round a

circular or elliptical space, about ten feet by six; the upper ends are brought together, and secured by tyers of grass, over which is thrown a thatching of grass and seal-skins, a hole being left at the side as a door, and another at the top as a vent for the smoke. A fire is kept burning within, over which the natives are constantly cowering; hence, when seen abroad, instead of appearing to be hardy savages, inured to wet and cold, you see wretched creatures shivering at every breeze. I never met people so sensible of cold as these Fuegian Indians.

"The nature of their domestic ties we had no opportunity of discovering; their manner towards their children is affectionate and caressing. I often witnessed the tenderness with which they tried to quiet the alarms our presence at first occasioned, and the pleasure which they showed when we bestowed upon the little ones any trifling trinkets. It appeared that they allow their children to possess property, and consult their little whims and wishes, with respect to its disposal; for being in a boat, alongside one of the canoes, bargaining for various articles, spears, arrows, baskets, &c., I took a fancy to a dog lying near one of the women, and offered a price for it; one of my seamen, supposing the bargain concluded, laid hands on the dog, at which the woman set up a dismal yell; so bidding him desist, I increased my offers. She declined to part with it, but would give two others. At last, my offers became so considerable, that she called a little boy out of the thick jungle (into which he had fled at our approach), who was the owner of the dog. The goods were shown to him, and

all his party urged him to sell it, but the little urchin would not consent. He offered to let me have his necklace, and what he received in exchange was put away in his own little basket.

"These people never evinced any thankfulness for our presents. Whatever was offered they 'clutched at,' doubtful of getting it, although held out to them; and when in their own hand, it was instantly stowed away, as if they feared it would be recalled.

"I sometimes tried to discover whether they preferred any particular colour, and for that purpose held out three strings of beads, black, white, and red; they clutched at all three, in their usual manner, without showing any preference.

"Their pronunciation is exceedingly harsh and guttural; not more than two words, whose signification was at all ascertained, could be made out, 'sherroo,' a ship, boat, or canoe, and 'peteet,' a child. They have a wonderful aptitude for imitating the sounds of strange languages: let a sentence, of even a dozen words, be distinctly pronounced, and they will repeat it with the utmost precision.

"Their only articles of traffic, besides such implements and weapons as they use, are seal and otter skins; and I should say that the quantity of peltry to be procured from them would be insignificant towards completing the cargo of a sealing vessel."

During the next few days the Beagle was employed in the most exposed, the least known, and the most dangerous part of the Strait. Fortunately, she was favoured by weather, and effected her

purpose without injury or loss; but I never reflect upon this piece of service without an inward tribute of admiration to the daring, skill, and seamanship of Captain Stokes, Lieutenant Skyring, and Mr. Flinn.

In his journal Captain Stokes says:

"Incessant rain and thick clouds prevented my completing, until this day (19th), the observations necessary for making an island, just outside the Harbour of Mercy, the southern end of my base, for the trigonometrical connection of the coasts and islands near the western entrance of this weather-beaten Strait.

"On the 20th, I weighed and beat to windward, intending to search for anchorage on the north shore, where I might land and fix the northern end of our base line. In the evening we anchored in an archipelago of islands, the real danger of whose vicinity was much increased to the eye by rocks, scattered in every direction, and high breakers, occasioned doubtless by reefs under water. We observed that most of the larger islands have small banks of sand at their eastern sides, on which anchorage may be found; but for ordinary purposes of navigation, this cluster of islands[64] need only be pointed out to be avoided. The number and contiguity of the rocks, below as well as above water, render it a most hazardous place for any square-rigged vessel: nothing but the particular duty on which I was ordered would have induced me to venture among them. Fore-and-aft vessels might work with far less risk; and as the rocks are frequented by vast numbers of fur

[64] Called the Scilly Isles.

seal, a season or two might be profitably passed here by a sealing vessel so rigged.

"This morning (21st) I landed on one of the larger islands, with Lieutenant Skyring, and having ascended an eminence (Observation Mount) with the necessary instruments, fixed its position, and made it the northern end of our base.

"It was a beautiful, and clear day; the Isles of Direction (or Evangelists), as well as every point of importance on the adjacent coast, were seen distinctly during several hours.

"My next object was to fix the position of Cape Victory, and ascertain whether anchorage could be found in its neighbourhood. Accordingly, we weighed early next morning (22d,) and after extricating ourselves from this labyrinth (not without much difficulty and danger), we beat to the westward. Violent squalls, a heavy sea, and thick weather, which came on about noon, obliged me to choose the least evil, and run for the Harbour of Mercy.

"On the 23d, we went out again, and beat towards the Isles of Direction, off which we passed a night under sail.

"The morning of the 24th was very fine, and the wind moderate. Leaving the Beagle to sound about the Isles of Direction, I set out in my boat, with two days' provisions, towards Cape Victory. As we rowed along these rocky shores, threading the mazes of the labyrinth of islets which fringe them, we saw vast numbers of black whales, and the rocks were quite covered with fur seal and brant geese.

"After pulling, in earnest, for six hours, we landed upon Cape Victory, the north-western limit of the Strait of Magalhaens, and there, with a sextant, artificial horizon, and chronometer, ascertained the position of this remarkable promontory. From an eminence, eight hundred feet above the sea, we had a commanding view of the adjacent coasts, as well as of the vast Pacific, which enabled us to rectify former material errors. Late in the evening we were fortunate enough to get safely on board again, which, considering the usual weather here and the heavy sea, was unexpected success. This night was passed under sail in the Pacific, and next morning we commenced our return to Port Famine.

"When within four or five miles of Cape Pillar, and to the westward of it, a current was found to set southward, at about two knots an hour. As we neared the Cape the wind fell, and the Beagle was set rapidly towards those dangerous rocks, called the Apostles. Fortunately, a commanding breeze sprung up, and we extricated ourselves from the difficulty. While passing Cape Pillar, I landed in a cove near it, and determined its position. By sunset we had arrived near the Harbour of Mercy; and being becalmed, towed the ship in, with her boats, until an anchor was dropped at the proper place.

"On the 26th, we went to Tuesday Bay, and on the 27th crossed the Strait, and anchored under Cape Parker. I have rarely witnessed such a high, cross, and irregular sea as we this day passed through, near the strange mass of rock, called

by Narborough, 'Westminster Hall.' The coast about our unsafe anchorage was as barren and dismal-looking as any part of this country, which, as the old navigator above-mentioned said, is 'so desolate land to behold.'

"Next day (March 1st) we ran down to Cape Upright, and there remained until the 3d, collecting the required data for our survey.

"While standing towards the bay called Playa Parda (on the 3d), a boat under sail was seen making towards us from the southern coast. I fired several guns, to show our position, before we became shut in by the land, and soon after anchoring a whale-boat came alongside, with the second mate and five men belonging to the sealing-vessel Prince of Saxe Cobourg.

"Anxious not to lose a moment in hastening to the relief of our shipwrecked countrymen, I ran down next day to Port Gallant, and thence proceeded with two ten-oared boats (on the 5th) through the Barbara Channel, and the following evening reached Fury Harbour."

Having already given a short account of the Saxe Cobourg's loss, and the rescue of her crew by Captain Stokes, I will not repeat the story by extracting more from his journal.

Mr. Graves returned from his cruize in the Hope on the 17th, after suffering much from stormy weather and incessant rain; but having made a survey of the openings in the land to the west of Magdalen Channel as far as the Sugar Loaf Point, at the west head of Lyell Sound, which he found to be deep inlets, affording

no anchorages of value to navigation.

The time having arrived for our return to Monte Video, preparations were made for sailing, and in the mean time I went to the northward, in the Hope, to survey the coast between Port Famine and Elizabeth Island, including Shoal Haven.

At the bottom of Shoal Haven we were stopped by the water shoaling to five feet, so that we were obliged to haul out till we could anchor in more than two fathoms. During the night the wind shifted to N.E., and blew right in, obliging us to weigh, and work under the S.W. end of Elizabeth Island into a bay close to that shore. From the summit of the S.W. point I afterwards took angles, among which the most important gave Mount Sarmiento bearing S. 1½° W. (true). Its distance must have been (by recent observations) ninety-four miles.

Elizabeth Island is a long, low strip of land, lying parallel to the shores of the Strait, which here take a N.N.E. direction. Compared with the land to the southward it is very low, no part being more than two or three hundred feet high. It is composed of narrow ranges of hills, extending in ridges in the direction of its length, over which are strewed boulders of the various rocks, which have been noticed before as forming the shingle beaches of Point St. Mary and Point St. Anna; two kinds of rock, greenstone and hornblende, being the most common. The vallies which divide the hilly ridges were well clothed with grass, and in many places were seen hollows, that had contained fresh water, but now were entirely dried up. These spots were marked by a

white crust, apparently caused by the saline quality of the soil.

Geese and wild ducks, and the red-bill (*Hæmatopus*), seem to be the only inhabitants of this island. The Indians sometimes visit it, for at the S.W. end we found remains of wigwams and shell-fish. Perhaps it is a place whence they communicate with the Patagonian natives, or they may in the season frequent it for eggs.

We anchored in Laredo Bay, and visited a lake about a mile from the beach, distinguished on the chart by the name of Duck Lagoon: it is very extensive, and covered with large flights of gulls, ducks, and widgeons. We shot one widgeon, which was a most beautiful bird, and of a species we had not before seen.[65]

Here the country begins to be clothed with the deciduous leaved Beech tree (*Fagus Antarctica*), which is stunted in growth, but very convenient for fuel. Though the hardiest tree of this region, it is never found of large size, the larger trees being the evergreen Beech (*Fagus betuloides*). We also met with several small plants common to Cape Gregory. One may consider Cape Negro to be the boundary of two countries, as entirely different from each other in geological structure and appearance, as they are in climate, to which last difference may be attributed the dissimilarity of their botanical productions.

Hence we returned to Port Famine. In our absence, a boat from the Beagle had crossed the Strait to Lomas Bay, where a party of natives had kindled fires of invitation.

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[65] 'Anas Rafflesii,' Zool. Journ., vol. iv., and Tab. Supp., xxix.

The weather, since the sun crossed the equator, had been unusually fine; and, with the exception of one day's heavy rain, the sky was so clear (the wind being moderate from the N.E.) that all the heights were exposed to our view, and amongst them Mount Sarmiento stood pre-eminent.

Our preparations for sailing being nearly completed, the Hope was unrigged and hoisted in, and our temporary settlement on shore abandoned. It consisted of a marquee and a large bell tent. In the former was Mr. Harrison (mate), who had charge of the party, and of the meteorological instruments: the bell tent held the crew. Near them were the observatory, a sawpit, and a cooking place, where a cheerful fire was always blazing. The carpenter's shop, cooper's bench, and armourer's forge had each its place, as well as a rope-walk, close to which our rigging was refitted, and the sails were repaired. After working-hours the shore party roamed about the woods with guns, or at low water picked up shell fish,[66] by which they usually procured a fresh meal twice, but always once, a week. Meanwhile the ship was kept carefully clean and in order. The officers not immediately employed in active duty made excursions with their guns; and although the immediate vicinity of our tents was pretty well thinned of game, yet a walk of a few miles was always rewarded by ample sport. When opportunities offered, some of the men were permitted to amuse themselves on shore with their guns, for which many had provided themselves with powder and

[66] Of these a species of mactra (*M. edulis Nob.*) was most abundant.

shot. Every Sunday, after divine service, which was performed as regularly as possible under our circumstances, such of the ship's company as desired permission to land obtained it. On one occasion, however, we had nearly suffered for this indulgence, which was conducive to the men's health, and seldom abused: for one of them having made a fire at a little distance from the tents, the flames spread, and the exertions of all hands, for three hours, only just prevented it from communicating to the tents. On another occasion, two men set out on a shooting excursion, intending to cross the river Sedger, against doing which there had been no particular orders, as such a proceeding was scarcely contemplated. Having reached the bank near its mouth, and searched for a fordable place unsuccessfully, they launched a log of wood, and sitting astride, without providing themselves with a pole or paddle, pushed off from the shore, supposing it would go across; but, on reaching the middle of the stream, it was soon carried, by the current, out of the river, into the bay. One man, Gilly, seeing that the log was still floating away with the ebb tide, plunged in, and just reached the shore south of the river, in a very exhausted state; the other, Rix, unable to swim, kept his place, and was carried out to sea on a voyage that might have been fatal, had he not been seen from the ship, and saved by a boat.

Before leaving Port Famine we hauled one of our boats ashore, and left her (as we thought) securely hidden among the trees.

Being now ready to sail, and only waiting for wind, the officers of both ships, twenty-seven in number, dined together on shore.

CHAPTER VI

Trees – Leave Port Famine – Patagonians – Gregory Bay – Bysante – Maria – Falkner's account of the Natives – Indians seen on the borders of the Otway Water, in 1829 – Maria visits the Adventure – Religious Ceremony – Patagonian Encampment – Tomb of a Child – Women's employment – Children – Gratitude of a Native – Size of Patagonians – Former accounts of their gigantic height – Character – Articles for barter – Fuegians living with Patagonians – Ships sail – Arrive at Monte Video and Rio de Janeiro.

While detained by northerly winds, the carpenter and a party of people were employed in the woods selecting and cutting down trees to be ready for our next visit. After felling thirteen trees, from twenty-four to thirty-six inches in diameter, eight were found to be rotten at the heart; but by afterwards taking the precaution of boring the trees with an augur, while standing, much trouble was saved, and fifteen sound sticks of considerable diameter were cut down. We found one tree, an evergreen beech, too large for any of our saws: it measured twenty-one feet in girth at the base, and from the height of six feet to twenty it was seventeen feet in circumference; above this height, three large arms (each from thirty to forty inches in diameter), branched off from the trunk. It is, perhaps, the very tree described by Byron

in his account of this place. We only once saw it equalled in size, and that was by a prostrate trunk, very much decayed.

In this interval of fine weather and northerly wind, we had the thermometer as high as 58°, and the barometer ranging between 29.80 and 30.00; but for two days before the wind shifted, the alteration was predicted by a gradual descent of the mercurial column, and a considerable increase of cold. On the 7th May, as there was some appearance of a change, we got under weigh; but were hardly outside the port, when a northerly wind again set in, and prevented our going farther than Freshwater Bay, where we passed the night. At last, on the 8th, accompanied by the Beagle, we proceeded on our course with a strong south-westerly breeze, which carried us quickly up to Cape Negro, when it blew so hard that I anchored off Laredo Bay. At this anchorage we certainly felt the air much colder and sharper than at Port Famine, arising from our being in a more exposed situation, and from the approach of winter, as well as from the severe south-west gale which was blowing.

After the gale had abated, we proceeded with fair weather and a light breeze to the Second Narrow, when the wind fell; but the tide being in our favour, we passed rapidly through. On a hill near us we observed three or four Patagonian Indians standing together, and their horses feeding close to them. A fire was soon kindled, to attract our notice, to which signal we replied by showing our colours; and had we not already communicated with these people, we should certainly have thought them giants,

for they "loomed very large" as they stood on the summit of the hill. This optical deception must doubtless have been caused by mirage: the haze has always been observed to be very great during fine weather and a hot day arising from rapid evaporation of the moisture so abundantly deposited, on the surface of the ground, in all parts of the Strait.

As soon as the Patagonians found they were noticed, they mounted and rode along the shore abreast of us, being joined by other parties, until the whole number could not have been less than forty. Several foals and dogs were with them. Having anchored in Gregory Bay, where I intended remaining for two days to communicate with them, I sent up a rocket, burnt a blue-light, and despatched Lieutenant Cooke on shore to ask for a large supply of guanaco meat, for which we would pay in knives and beads. The boat returned on board immediately, bringing off four natives, three men and 'Maria.' This rather remarkable woman must have been, judging by her appearance, about forty years old: she is said to have been born at Assuncion, in Paraguay, but I think the place of her birth was nearer Buenos Ayres. She spoke broken, but intelligible, Spanish, and stated herself to be sister of Bysante, the cacique of a tribe near the Santa Cruz River, who is an important personage, on account of his size (which Maria described to be immense), and his riches. In speaking of him, she said he was *very* rich; he had many mantles, and also many hides ("*muy* rico, tiene muchas mantas y tambien muchos cueros"). One of Maria's companions, a brother of

Bysante, was the tallest and largest man of this tribe; and though he only measured six feet in height, his body was large enough for a much taller man. He was in great affliction: his daughter had died only two days before our arrival; but, notwithstanding his sad story, which soon found him friends, it was not long before he became quite intoxicated, and began to sing and roar on the subject of his misfortunes, with a sound more like the bellowing of a bull than the voice of a human being. Upon applying to Maria, who was not quite so tipsy as her brother, to prevent him from making such hideous noises, she laughed and said, "Oh, never mind, he's drunk; poor fellow, his daughter is dead" (Es boracho, povrecito, muriò su hija); and then, assuming a serious tone, she looked towards the sky, and muttered in her own language a sort of prayer or invocation to their chief demon, or ruling spirit, whom Pigafetta, the companion and historian of Magalhaens, called *Setebos*, which Admiral Burney supposes to have been the original of one of Shakspeare's names in the "Tempest" —

> " – his art is of such power
> He would controul my dam's god Setebos.[67]"

Maria's dress was similar to that of other females of the tribe; but she wore ear-rings, made of medals stamped with a figure of the Virgin Mary, which, with the brass-pin that secured her mantle across her breast, were given to her by one Lewis,

[67] Burney, i. 35 and 37.

who had passed by in an American sealing-vessel, and who, we understood from her, had made them "Christians." The Jesuit Falkner, who lived among them for many years, has written a long and, apparently, a very authentic account of the inhabitants of the countries south of the River Plata, and he describes those who inhabit the borders of the Strait and sea-coast to be, "Yacana-cunnees, which signifies foot-people, for they have no horses in their country; to the north they border on the Sehuau-cunnees, to the west on the Key-yus, or Key-yuhues, from whom they are divided by a ridge of mountains; to the east they are bounded by the ocean; and to the south by the islands of Tierra del Fuego, or the South Sea. These Indians live near the sea on both sides of the Strait, and often make war with one another. They make use of light floats, like those of Chiloé, in order to pass the Straits, and are sometimes attacked by the Huilliches and other Tehuelhets, who carry them away for slaves, as they have nothing to lose but their liberty and their lives. They subsist chiefly on fish, which they catch either by diving, or striking them with their darts. They are very nimble afoot, and catch guanacoes and ostriches with their bowls. Their stature is much the same as that of the other Tehuelhets, rarely exceeding seven feet, and oftentimes not six feet. They are an innocent, harmless people."[68]

To the north of this race, Falkner describes "the Sehuau-cunnees, the most southern Indians who travel on horseback;

[68] Falkner's Patagonia, pp. 110, 111.

Sehuau signifies in the Tehuel dialect a species of black rabbit, about the size of a field rat; and as their country abounds in these animals, their name may be derived from thence: cunnee signifying 'people.'"

With the exception of their mode of killing the guanaco by bowls, or balls, the description of the Key-yus would apply better to the Fuegian Indians; and if so, they have been driven across the Strait, and confined to the Fuegian shores by the Sehuau-cunnees, who must be no other than Maria's tribe. The Key-yus, who are described to inhabit the northern shore of the Strait, between Peckett's Harbour and Madre de Dios, are probably the tribe found about the south-western islands, and now called Alikhoolip; whilst the eastern Fuegians, or Yacana-cunnees, who have also been turned off the continent by their powerful neighbours, are now called Tekeenikas. Our knowledge of the names of these two tribes, Alikhoolip and Tekeenika, results from Captain Fitz-Roy's subsequent examination of the outer coast of Tierra del Fuego in the Beagle (1830). A Cacique, belonging to the nation of the Key-yus, told Falkner that he had been in a house made of wood, that travelled on the water. A party of the Indians, in four canoes, were met on the borders of the Otway Water by Captain Fitz-Roy in 1829, whose arms, implements, and every thing they had, were precisely like the Fuegian Indians, excepting that they had a quiver made from the skin of a deer, and were in form a superior race, being both stronger and stouter.

For want of better information upon the subject, we must be content to separate the natives into Patagonians and Fuegians. The sealing vessels' crews distinguish them as Horse Indians, and Canoe Indians.

These people have had considerable communication with the sealers who frequent this neighbourhood, bartering their guanaco skins and meat, their mantles, and furs, for beads, knives, brass ornaments, and other articles; but they are equally anxious to get sugar, flour, and, more than all, "aqua ardiente," or spirits. Upon the arrival of a boat from any vessel, Maria, with as many as she can persuade the boat's crew to take, goes on board, and, if permitted, passes the night. As soon as our boat landed, Maria and her friends took their seats as if it had been sent purposely for them. Not expecting such a visit, I had given no order to the contrary, and the novelty of such companions overcame the scruples of the officer, who was sent on shore to communicate with them. Their noisy behaviour becoming disagreeable, they were soon conducted from below to the deck, where they passed the night. Maria slept with her head on the windlass; and was so intoxicated, that the noise and concussion produced by veering eighty fathoms of cable round it did not awake her. The following morning, whilst I was at breakfast, she very unceremoniously introduced herself, with one of her companions, and seating herself at table, asked for tea and bread, and made a hearty meal. I took the precaution of having all the knives, and articles that I thought likely to be stolen, removed from the table; but

neither then, nor at any time, did I detect Maria in trying to steal, although her companions never lost an opportunity of pilfering.

After breakfast the Indians were landed, and as many of the officers as could be spared went on shore, and passed the whole day with the tribe, during which a very active trade was carried on. There were about one hundred and twenty Indians collected together, with horses and dogs. It is probable that, with the exception of five or six individuals left to take care of the encampment, and such as were absent on hunting excursions, the whole of the tribe was mustered on the beach, each family in a separate knot, with all their riches displayed to the best advantage for sale.

I accompanied Maria to the shore. On landing, she conducted me to the place where her family were seated round their property. They consisted of Manuel, her husband, and three children, the eldest being known by the appellation of Capitan Chico, or "little chief." A skin being spread out for me to sit on, the family and the greater part of the tribe collected around. Maria then presented me with several mantles and skins, for which I gave in return a sword, remnants of red baize, knives, scissors, looking-glasses, and beads: of the latter I afterwards distributed bunches to all the children, a present which caused evident satisfaction to the mothers, many of whom also obtained a share. The receivers were selected by Maria, who directed me to the youngest children first, then to the elder ones, and lastly to the girls and women. It was curious and amusing, to witness the

order with which this scene was conducted, and the remarkable patience of the children, who, with the greatest anxiety to possess their trinkets, neither opened their lips, nor held out a hand, until she pointed to them in succession.

Having told Maria that I had more things to dispose of for guanaco meat she dismissed the tribe from around me, and, saying she was going for meat (carne), mounted her horse, and rode off at a brisk pace. Upon her departure a most active trade commenced: at first, a mantle was purchased for a string of beads; but as the demand increased, so the Indians increased their price, till it rose to a knife, then to tobacco, then to a sword, at last nothing would satisfy them but 'aqua ardiente,' for which they asked repeatedly, saying "bueno es boracho – bueno es – bueno es boracho;"[69]– but I would not permit spirits to be brought on shore.

At Marians return with a very small quantity of guanaco meat, her husband told her that I had been very inquisitive about a red baize bundle, which he told me contained "Cristo," upon which she said to me "Quiere mirar mi Cristo" (do you wish to see my Christ), and then, upon my nodding assent, called around her a number of the tribe, who immediately obeyed her summons. Many of the women, however, remained to take care of their valuables. A ceremony then took place. Maria, who, by the lead she took in the proceedings, appeared to be high priestess[70] as

[69] It is good to be drunk, it is pleasant to be drunk.

[70] Two Portuguese seamen, however, who had resided some months with them,

well as cacique of the tribe, began by pulverising some whitish earth in the hollow of her hand, and then taking a mouthful of water, spit from time to time upon it, until she had formed a sort of pigment, which she distributed to the rest, reserving only sufficient to mark her face, eyelids, arms, and hair with the figure of the cross. The manner in which this was done was peculiar. After rubbing the paint in her left hand smooth with the palm of the right, she scored marks across the paint, and again others at right angles, leaving the impression of as many crosses, which she stamped upon different parts of her body, rubbing the paint, and marking the crosses afresh, after every stamp was made.

The men, after having marked themselves in a similar manner (to do which some stripped to the waist and covered all their body with impressions), proceeded to do the same to the boys, who were not permitted to perform this part of the ceremony themselves. Manuel, Maria's husband, who seemed to be her chief assistant on the occasion, then took from the folds of the sacred wrapper an awl, and with it pierced either the arms or ears of all the party; each of whom presented in turn, pinched up between the finger and thumb, that portion of flesh which was to be perforated. The object evidently was to lose blood,

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having been left behind by a sealing vessel, and taken off by us at a subsequent period of the voyage at their own request, informed us that Maria is not the leader of religious ceremonies. Each family possesses its own household god, a small wooden image, about three inches in length, the rough imitation of a man's head and shoulders, which they consider as the representative of a superior being, attributing to it all the good or evil that happens to them.

and those from whom the blood flowed freely showed marks of satisfaction, while some whose wounds bled but little underwent the operation a second time.

When Manuel had finished, he gave the awl to Maria, who pierced his arm, and then, with great solemnity and care, muttering and talking to herself in Spanish (not two words of which could I catch, although I knelt down close to her and listened with the greatest attention), she removed two or three wrappers, and exposed to our view a small figure, carved in wood, representing a dead person, stretched out. After exposing the image, to which all paid the greatest attention, and contemplating it for some moments in silence, Maria began to descant upon the virtues of her Christ, telling us it had a good heart ('buen corazon'), and that it was very fond of tobacco. Mucho quiere mi Cristo tabaco, da me mas, (my Christ loves tobacco very much, give me some). Such an appeal, on such an occasion, I could not refuse; and after agreeing with her in praise of the figure, I said I would send on board for some. Having gained her point, she began to talk to herself for some minutes, during which she looked up, after repeating the words "muy bueno es mi Cristo, muy bueno corazon tiene," and slowly and solemnly packed up the figure, depositing it in the place whence it had been taken. This ceremony ended, the traffic, which had been suspended, recommenced with redoubled activity.

According to my promise, I sent on board for some tobacco, and my servant brought a larger quantity than I thought necessary

for the occasion, which he injudiciously exposed to view. Maria, having seen the treasure, made up her mind to have the whole, and upon my selecting three or four pounds of it, and presenting them to her, looked very much disappointed, and grumbled forth her discontent: I taxed her with greediness, and spoke rather sharply, which had a good effect, for she went away and returned with a guanaco mantle, which she presented to me.

During this day's barter we procured guanaco meat, sufficient for two days' supply of all hands, for a few pounds of tobacco. It had been killed in the morning, and was brought on horseback cut up into large pieces, for each of which we had to bargain. Directly an animal is killed, it is skinned and cut up, or torn asunder, for the convenience of carrying. The operation is done in haste, and therefore the meat looks bad; but it is well tasted, excellent food, and although never fat, yields abundance of gravy, which compensates for its leanness. It improves very much by keeping, and proved to be valuable and wholesome meat.

Captain Stokes, and several of the officers, upon our first reaching the beach, had obtained horses, and rode to their 'toldos,' or principal encampment. On their return, I learned that, at a short distance from the dwellings, they had seen the tomb of the child who had lately died. As soon, therefore, as Maria returned, I procured a horse from her, and, accompanied by her husband and brother, the father of the deceased, and herself, visited these toldos, situated in a valley extending north and south between two ridges of hills, through which ran a stream, falling

into the Strait within the Second Narrow, about a mile to the westward of Cape Gregory.

We found eight or ten huts arranged in a row; the sides and backs were covered with skins, but the fronts, which faced the east, were open; even these, however, were very much screened from wind by the ridge of hills eastward of the plain. Near them the ground was rather bare, but a little farther back there was a luxuriant growth of grass, affording rich and plentiful pasture for the horses, among which we observed several mares in foal, and colts feeding and frisking by the side of their dams: the scene was lively and pleasing, and, for the moment, reminded me of distant climes, and days gone by.

The 'toldos' are all alike. In form they are rectangular, about ten or twelve feet long, ten deep, seven feet high in front, and six feet in the rear. The frame of the building is formed by poles stuck in the ground, having forked tops to hold cross pieces, on which are laid poles for rafters, to support the covering, which is made of skins of animals sewn together so as to be almost impervious to rain or wind. The posts and rafters, which are not easily procured, are carried from place to place in all their travelling excursions. Having reached their bivouac, and marked out a place with due regard to shelter from the wind, they dig holes with an iron bar or piece of pointed hard wood, to receive the posts; and all the frame and cover being ready, it takes but a short time to erect a dwelling. Their goods and furniture are placed on horseback under the charge of the females, who are

mounted aloft upon them. The men carry nothing but the lasso and bolas, to be ready for the capture of animals, or for defence.

Maria's toldo was nearly in the middle, and next to it was her brother's. All the huts seemed well stored with skins and provisions, the former being rolled up and placed at the back, and the latter suspended from the supporters of the roof; the greater part was in that state well known in South America by the name of charque (jerked beef); but this was principally horse-flesh, which these people esteem superior to other food. The fresh meat was almost all guanaco. The only vessels they use for carrying water are bladders, and sufficiently disagreeable substitutes for drinking utensils they make: the Fuegian basket, although sometimes dirty, is less offensive.

About two hundred yards from the village the tomb was erected, to which, while Maria was arranging her skins and mantles for sale, the father of the deceased conducted me and a few other officers.

It was a conical pile of dried twigs and branches of bushes, about ten feet high and twenty-five in circumference at the base, the whole bound round with thongs of hide, and the top covered with a piece of red cloth, ornamented with brass studs, and surmounted by two poles, bearing red flags and a string of bells, which, moved by the wind, kept up a continual tinkling.

A ditch, about two feet wide and one foot deep, was dug round the tomb, except at the entrance, which had been filled up with bushes. In front of this entrance stood the stuffed skins of two

horses, recently killed, each placed upon four poles for legs. The horses' heads were ornamented with brass studs, similar to those on the top of the tomb; and on the outer margin of the ditch were six poles, each carrying two flags, one over the other.

The father, who wept much when he visited the tomb, with the party of officers who first went with him, although now evidently distressed, entered into, what we supposed to be, a long account of the illness of his child, and explained to us that her death was caused by a bad cough. No watch was kept over the tomb; but it was in sight of, and not very far from their toldos, so that the approach of any one could immediately be known. They evidently placed extreme confidence in us, and therefore it would have been as unjust as impolitic to attempt an examination of its contents, or to ascertain what had been done with the body.

The Patagonian women are treated far more kindly by their husbands than the Fuegian; who are little better than slaves, subject to be beaten, and obliged to perform all the laborious offices of the family. The Patagonian females sit at home, grinding paint, drying and stretching skins, making and painting mantles. In travelling, however, they have the baggage and provisions in their charge, and, of course, their children. These women probably have employments of a more laborious nature than what we saw; but they cannot be compared with those of the Fuegians, who, excepting in the fight and chace, do every thing. They paddle the canoes, dive for shells and sea-eggs, build their wigwams, and keep up the fire; and if they neglect any

of these duties, or incur the displeasure of their husbands in any way, they are struck or kicked most severely. Byron, in his narrative of the loss of the Wager, describes the brutal conduct of one of these Indians, who actually killed his child for a most trifling offence. The Patagonians are devotedly attached to their offspring. In infancy they are carried behind the saddle of the mother, within a sort of cradle, in which they are securely fixed. The cradle is made of wicker-work, about four feet long and one foot wide, roofed over with twigs like the frame of a tilted waggon. The child is swaddled up in skins, with the fur inwards or outwards according to the weather. At night, or when it rains, the cradle is covered with a skin that effectually keeps out the cold or rain. Seeing one of these cradles near a woman, I began to make a sketch of it, upon which the mother called the father, who watched me most attentively, and held the cradle in the position which I considered most advantageous for my sketch. The completion of the drawing gave them both great pleasure, and during the afternoon the father reminded me repeatedly of having painted his child ("pintado su hijo.")

One circumstance deserves to be noticed, as a proof of their good feeling towards us. It will be recollected that three Indians, of the party with whom we first communicated, accompanied us as far as Cape Negro, where they landed. Upon our arrival on this occasion, I was met, on landing, by one of them, who asked for my son, to whom they had taken a great fancy; upon my saying he was on board, the native presented me with a bunch of nine

ostrich feathers, and then gave a similar present to every one in the boat. He still carried a large quantity under his arm, tied up in bunches, containing nine feathers in each; and soon afterwards, when a boat from the Beagle landed with Captain Stokes and others, he went to meet them; but finding strangers, he withdrew without making them any present.

In the evening my son landed, when the same Indian came down to meet him, appeared delighted to see him, and presented him with a bunch of feathers, of the same size as those which he had distributed in the morning. At this, our second visit, there were about fifty Patagonian men assembled, not one of whom looked more than fifty-five years of age. They were generally between five feet ten and six feet in height: one man only exceeded six feet – whose dimensions, measured by Captain Stokes, were as follows: —

	ft.	in.
Height	6	1¾
Round the chest	4	1⅛
Do.loins	3	4¾

I had before remarked the disproportionate largeness of head, and length of body of these people, as compared with the diminutive size of their extremities; and, on this visit, my opinion was further confirmed, for such appeared to be the general character of the whole tribe; and to this, perhaps, may be

attributed the mistakes of some former navigators. Magalhaens, or rather Pigafetta, was the first who described the inhabitants of the southern extremity of America as giants. He met some at Port San Julian, of whom one is described to be "so tall, that our heads scarcely came up to his waist, and his voice was like that of a bull." Herrera,[71] however, gives a less extravagant account of them: he says, "the least of the men was larger and taller than the stoutest man of Castile;" and Maxim. Transylvanus says they were "in height ten palms or spans; or seven feet six inches."

In Loyasa's voyage (1526), Herrera mentions an interview with the natives, who came in two canoes, "the sides of which were formed of the ribs of whales." The people in them were of large size "some called them giants; but there is so little conformity between the accounts given concerning them, that I shall be silent on the subject."[72]

As Loyasa's voyage was undertaken immediately after the return of Magalhaens' expedition, it is probable that, from the impressions received from Pigafetta's narrative, many thought the Indians whom they met must be giants, whilst others, not finding them so large as they expected, spoke more cautiously on the subject; but the people seen by them must have been Fuegians, and not those whom we now recognise by the name of Patagonians.

Sir Francis Drake's fleet put into Port San Julian, where they

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[71] Burney, i. p. 33.

[72] Ibid. p. 135.

found natives 'of large stature;' and the author of the 'World Encompassed,' in which the above voyage is detailed, speaking of their size and height, supposes the name given them to have been *Pentagones*, to denote a stature of "five cubits, viz. seven feet and a half," and remarks that it described the full height, if not somewhat more, of the tallest of them.[73] They spoke of the Indians whom they met within the Strait as small in stature.[74]

The next navigator who passed through the Strait was Sarmiento; whose narrative says little in proof of the very superior size of the Patagonians. He merely calls them "Gente Grande,"[75] and "los Gigantes;" but this might have originated from the account of Magalhaens' voyage. He particularises but one Indian, whom they made prisoner, and only says "his limbs are of large size: " ("Es crecido de miembros.") This man was a native of the land near Cape Monmouth, and, therefore, a Fuegian. Sarmiento was afterwards in the neighbourhood of Gregory Bay, and had an encounter with the Indians, in which he and others were wounded; but he does not speak of them as being unusually tall.

After the establishment, called 'Jesus,' was formed by Sarmiento, in the very spot where 'giants' had been seen, no people of large stature are mentioned, in the account of the colony; but Tomé Hernandez, when examined before the Vice-

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[73] Burney, i. 318.

[74] Ibid, i. 324.

[75] Sarmiento, p. 244.

Roy of Peru, stated, "that the Indians of the plains, who are giants, communicate with the natives of Tierra del Fuego, who are like them."[76]

Anthony Knyvet's account[77] of Cavendish's second voyage (which is contained in Purchas), is not considered credible. He describes the Patagonians to be fifteen or sixteen spans in height; and that of these cannibals, there came to them at one time above a thousand! The Indians at Port Famine, in the same narrative, are mentioned as a kind of strange cannibals, short of body, not above five or six spans high, very strong, and thick made.[78]

The natives, who were so inhumanly murdered by Oliver Van Noort, on the Island of Santa Maria (near Elizabeth Island), were described to be nearly of the same stature as the common people in Holland, and were remarked to be broad and high-chested. Some captives were taken on board, and one, a boy, informed the crew that there was a tribe living farther in-land, named 'Tiremenen,' and their territory 'Coin;' that they were "great people, like giants, being from ten to twelve feet high, and that they came to make war against the other tribes,[79] whom they reproached for being eaters of ostriches!"[80]

Spilbergen (1615) says he "saw a man of extraordinary

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[76] Sarmiento's Appendix, xxix.

[77] Purchas, iv. ch. 6 and 7.

[78] Burney, ii. p. 106.

[79] The tribes described by this boy are the

[80] Burney, ii, 215.

stature, who kept on the higher grounds to observe the ships;" and on an island, near the entrance of the Strait, were found the dead bodies of two natives, wrapped in the skins of penguins, and very lightly covered with earth; one of them was of the common human stature, the other, the journal says, was two feet and a half longer.[81] The gigantic appearance of the man on the hills may perhaps be explained by the optical deception we ourselves experienced.

Le Maire and Schouten, whose accounts of the graves of the Patagonians agree precisely with what we noticed at Sea Bear Bay, of the body being laid on the ground covered with a heap of stones, describe the skeletons as measuring ten or eleven feet in length, "the skulls of which we could put on our heads in the manner of helmets!"

The Nodales did not see any people on the northern side of the Strait; those with whom they communicated were natives of Tierra del Fuego, of whose form no particular notice is taken.

Sir John Narborough saw Indians at Port San Julian, and describes them as "people of a middling stature: well-shaped. … Mr. Wood was taller than any of them." He also had an interview with nineteen natives upon Elizabeth Island, but they were Fuegians.

In the year 1741, Patagonian Indians were seen by Bulkley and his companions. They were mounted on horses, or mules, which is the first notice we have of their possessing those animals.

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[81] Ibid. ii. 334.

Duclos de Guyot, in the year 1766, had an interview with seven Patagonian Indians, who were mounted on horses equipped with saddles, bridles, and stirrups. The shortest of the men measured five feet eleven inches and a quarter English. The others were considerably taller. Their chief or leader they called 'Capitan.'

Bougainville, in 1767, landed amongst the Patagonians. Of their size he remarks: "They have a fine shape; among those whom we saw, not one was below five feet ten inches and a quarter (English), nor above six feet two inches and a half in height. Their gigantic appearance arises from their prodigiously broad shoulders, the size of their heads, and the thickness of all their limbs. They are robust and well fed: their nerves are braced and their muscles strong, and sufficiently hard, &c." This is an excellent account; but how different is that of Commodore Byron, who says, "One of them, who afterwards appeared to be chief, came towards me; he was of gigantic stature, and seemed to realise the tales of monsters in a human shape: he had the skin of some wild beast thrown over his shoulders, as a Scotch Highlander wears his plaid, and was painted so as to make the most hideous appearance I ever beheld: round one eye was a large circle of white, a circle of black surrounded the other, and the rest of his body was streaked with paint of different colours. I did not measure him; but if I may judge of his height by the proportion of his stature to my own, it could not be less than seven feet. When this frightful colossus came up, we muttered somewhat to

each other as a salutation, &c."[82] After this he mentions a woman "of most enormous size;" and again, when Mr. Cumming, the lieutenant, joined him, the commodore says, "Before the song was finished, Mr. Cumming came up with the tobacco, and I could not but smile at the astonishment which I saw expressed in his countenance upon perceiving himself, though six feet two inches high, become at once a pigmy among giants, for these people may, indeed, more properly be called giants than tall men: of the few among us who are full six feet high, scarcely any are broad and muscular, in proportion to their stature, but look rather like men of the common bulk grown up accidentally to an unusual height; and a man who should measure only six feet two inches, and equally exceed a stout well-set man of the common stature in breadth and muscle, would strike us rather as being of a gigantic race, than as an individual accidentally anomalous; our sensations, therefore, upon seeing five hundred people, the shortest of whom were at least four inches taller, and bulky in proportion, may be easily imagined."[83]

This account was published only seven years after the voyage, and the exaggeration, if any, might have been exposed by numbers. There can be no doubt, that among five hundred persons several were of a large size; but that all were four inches taller than six feet must have been a mistake. The commodore says, that he "caused them all to be seated," and in that position,

[82] Hawksworth's Coll. i 28.

[83] Ibid.

from the length of their bodies, they would certainly appear to be of very large stature.[84]

Shortly afterwards, Wallis, in the neighbourhood of Cape Virgins, communicated with the same people, and as the story of the Patagonian giants had been spread abroad, and was very much discredited, he carried two measuring rods with him; and says, in his narrative, "We went round and measured those that appeared to be the tallest. One was six feet seven inches high, several more were six feet five, and six feet six inches; but the stature of the greatest part of them was from five feet ten to six feet."

In the voyage of the Santa Maria de la Cabeza,[85] 1786, it is related that the height of one or two Patagonians, with whom the officers had an interview, was six feet eleven inches and a half (of Burgos), which is equal to six feet four inches and a half (English). This man wore a sword, on which was engraved "Por el Rey Carlos III.," and spoke a few words in Spanish, proofs of his having had communication with some of the Spanish settlements. It does not, however, appear from the account that

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[84] See a letter from Mr. Charles Clarke, an officer on board the Dolphin, to Mr. Maly, M.D., secretary of the Royal Society, dated Nov. 3, 1766, read before the Royal Society on 12th April 1767, and published in the fifty-seventh volume of the Phil. Trans., part i. p. 75, in which an exaggerated account is given of this meeting. The men are described to be eight feet high, and the women seven and a half to eight feet. "They are prodigious stout, and as well and proportionably made as ever I saw people in my life." This communication was probably intended to corroborate the commodore's account.

[85] Ultimo Viage, p. 21.

there were many others, if any, of that height.

Of all the above accounts, I think those by Bougainville and Wallis the most accurate. It is true, that of the number we saw, none measured more than six feet two inches; but it is possible that the preceding generation may have been a larger race of people, for none that we saw could have been alive at the time of Wallis's or Byron's voyage. The oldest certainly were the tallest; but, without discrediting the accounts of Byron, or any other of the modern voyagers, I think it probable that, by a different mode of life, or a mixture by marriage with the southern or Fuegian tribes, which we know has taken place, they have degenerated into a smaller race, and have lost all right to the title of giants; yet their bulky, muscular forms, and length of body, in some measure bear out the above accounts; for had the present generation proportionate limbs, they might, without any exaggeration, justify the account of Commodore Byron. The Jesuit Missionary Falkner,[86] who, from an intercourse of forty years with the Indians of South America, must be considered as one of the best authorities, says, speaking of a Patagonian named Cangapol, "This chief, who was called by the Spaniards

[86] Falkner, according to Dean Funes, was originally engaged in the slave trade at Buenos Ayres; but afterwards became a Jesuit, and studied in the college at Cordova, where, to an eminent knowledge of medicine, he added that of theology. He is the author of a description of Patagonia, published in London after the expulsion of the Jesuits. – (*Ensayo de la Historia Civil del Paraguay, Buenos Ayres, y Tucuman, por el Doctor Don Gregorio Funes, iii. p. 23, note. Published at Buenos Ayres. 8vo. 1817.*)

the Cacique Bravo,[87] was tall and well-proportioned; he must have been seven feet and some inches in height, because on tiptoe I could not reach the top of his head: I was very well acquainted with him, and went some journeys in his company: I do not recollect ever to have seen an Indian that was above an inch or two taller than Cangapol. His brother Sausimian was but about six feet high. The Patagonians or Puelches are a large-bodied people; but I never heard of that gigantic race which others have mentioned, though I have seen persons of all the different tribes of the Southern Indians."

This is an account in 1746, only twenty years before that of Bougainville. Taking all the evidence together, it may be considered, that the medium height of the males of these southern tribes is about five feet eleven inches. The women are not so tall, but are in proportion broader and stouter: they are generally plain-featured. The head is long, broad and flat, and the forehead low, with the hair growing within an inch of the eyebrows, which are bare. The eyes are often placed obliquely, and have but little expression, the nose is generally rather flat, and turned up; but we noticed several with that feature straight, and sometimes aquiline: the mouth is wide, with prominent lips, and the chin is rather large; the jaws are broad, and give the face a square appearance; the neck is short and thick; the shoulders are broad; the chest is broad, and very full; but the arm, particularly the fore-arm, is small, as are also the foot and leg; the body long,

[87] See Dean Funes's account of Buenos Ayres, and of the Indian tribes, vol. ii. 394.

large and fat, but not corpulent. Such was the appearance of those who came under my observation.

As to their character, the Patagonians are friendly, without that disposition to quarrel, after the novelty of first acquaintance has worn off, which is so common among savages in general. This probably arises from interested motives, certainly not from fear, unless it be the fear of being avoided instead of visited by the ships which pass by, and from which they procure many useful articles, and many temporary gratifications.

Swords, long knives, tobacco, Paraguay tea, bits, saddles, guns, lead for balls, red cloth, beads (particularly of a sky-blue colour), flour, sugar, and spirits, are much desired in exchange for their peltry and guanaco meat; but they have no idea beyond that of satisfying the wants of the moment.

After a few pounds of tobacco had been distributed amongst them, although they are very fond of smoking, it became quite a drug, and it was necessary to produce something new to excite their attention. From Maria's influence, and the reference so constantly made to her, it would seem that she was considered as cacique of the tribe; but her apparent superiority may arise from her connexion with Bysante, of whom they all spoke as 'El Cacique Grande,' or from the attention paid to her by ships with whom they communicate.

The people of this tribe seemed to live together harmoniously; no bickerings or jealous feelings were observed, and certainly none were expressed by any one of our bulky friends on

witnessing another receiving a valuable present, or a good exchange for his property.

At sunset our people were ordered to embark, upon which the price of Patagonian goods immediately fell, at least, a thousand per cent., though many held back in expectation of the next day. Maria put into the boat, after my refusal to let her go on board to pass the night, two bags, and asked me to send her flour and sugar. She was most importunate for aqua ardiente, which, however, I refused. Her constant cry was "It is very good to be drunk; I like drinking very much; rum is very good. – Give me some?" ('Muy bueno es boracho, mucho mi gusta, mucho mi gusta de beber, muy bueno es aqua ardiente. – Da me no mas?')

Among them was a Fuegian Indian; but it did not appear clearly whether he was living with them permanently, or only on a visit. Some of us thought we understood the account of one of the Patagonians, who seemed to be the most interested about him, to be, that a master of a sealer had left him amongst them. We knew him instantly by his squalid and comparatively diminutive appearance, and were confirmed in our ideas by his recognition of the words 'Hosay' and 'Sherroo.' The Patagonian name for a ship is 'Carro grande,' and for a boat 'Carro chico,' a mixture of their own and the Spanish language. All that I could understand of his history was, that he was Cacique of some Indian tribes at a distance: he was evidently a great favourite, and although Maria spoke generally with much contempt of the Fuegian Indians, she had patronised this stranger, for he lived in her toldo, and shared

all the presents that were made to her.

The following morning it rained hard, and blew so fresh a gale, from the westward, that it would have been dangerous to send a boat on shore: and I was obliged to weigh without landing the things which I had promised. After we were under weigh, the weather cleared partially, when we observed Maria on the beach, mounted on her white horse, with others watching our departure, and when it was evident that we were really gone, she rode slowly back to her toldo, no doubt considerably vexed. I was very sorry to treat them in this way, for their conduct towards us had been open and friendly. All I could hope to do, to make amends, was to give something of value at my return.

We steered across the Bay of St. Philip, accompanied by the Beagle,[88] left the Strait of Magalhaens with a fair wind, and, after a favourable passage, reached Monte Video on the 24th April 1827.

From Monte Video we went to Rio de Janeiro, to procure stores, and prepare for another voyage to the Strait. On our arrival I received the Commander-in-chief's leave to apply to the Lord High Admiral for permission to employ a tender, to facilitate the surveys of the sounds and deep channels, in the neighbourhood of the Strait, and the inner sounds on the west coast; for which, neither the Adventure, nor the Beagle, were adapted; and I thought it best to delay our departure until an

[88] We left Gregory Bay in the morning, and passed Cape Virgins in the evening of the same day.

answer to my application was received.

CHAPTER VII

Leave Rio de Janeiro – Santos – St. Catherine's – Monte Video – Purchase the Adelaide schooner, for a Tender to the Adventure – Leave Monte Video – Beagle goes to Port Desire – Shoals off Cape Blanco – Bellaco Rock – Cape Virgins – Possession Bay – First Narrow – Race – Gregory Bay – View – Tomb – Traffic with Natives – Cordial meeting – Maria goes on board – Natives intoxicated – Laredo Bay – Port Famine.

We were ready to resume our voyage early in September (1827); but not having received any communication by the packet, from the Admiralty, relative to the purchase of a tender, I determined to await the arrival of the next, early in October. I was again disappointed, and very reluctantly left Rio de Janeiro, on the 16th, for Monte Video; but that I might still benefit by the orders which were sure to be in the following packet, I determined upon calling at Santos, and St. Catherine's, for chronometrical observations; leaving the Beagle to wait for letters conveying the decision of his Royal Highness the Lord High Admiral.

We reached Santos on the 18th, and staid there until the 28th. In this interval I paid a short visit to St. Paul's, for the purpose of making barometrical observations.[89] At St. Catherine's we

[89] On our passage from Santos to St. Catherine's, in latitude 28° south, we caught

remained eight days, and during the interval necessary for ascertaining the rates of the chronometers, I obtained magnetic observations.

After a tedious voyage of nineteen days from St. Catherine's, I arrived at Monte Video, and there received intelligence that the long-wished permission from the Lord High Admiral, to procure a tender, had been obtained. I accordingly purchased a schooner, which I named the Adelaide, and appointed Lieutenant Graves to the command. Five months' additional provisions for both vessels were purchased, and put into her; and on the 23d December, after running up the river to complete our water, we sailed out by the southern entrance, passing to the westward of the Archimedes' Shoal, and proceeded without farther detention to the southward.

On the 1st of January (in latitude 43° 17′ and long. 61° 9′), I was informed that we were close to a rock. Upon going on deck, I saw the object; but in a very short time I perceived it

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a 'dolphin' (*Coryphena*), the maw of which I found filled with shells, of *Argonauta tuberculosa*, and all containing the '*Octopus Ocythöe*' that has been always found as its inhabitant. Most of the specimens were crushed by the narrow passage into the stomach, but the smaller ones were quite perfect, and had been so recently swallowed that I was enabled to preserve several of various sizes containing the animal. To some of them was attached a nidus of eggs, which was deposited between the animal and the spire. The shells varied in size from two-thirds of an inch to two and a half inches in length; each contained an octopus, the bulk and shape of which was so completely adapted to that of the shell, that it seemed as if the shell increased with the animal's growth. When so many learned naturalists have differed so materially as to the character of the inhabitants of the argonauta, it would be presumption in me to express even an opinion; I therefore merely mention the fact, and state that in no one specimen did there appear to be any connexion between the animal and the shell.

was a dead whale, upon whose half-putrid body large flocks of birds were feeding. Many on board were, however, sceptical, until, on passing to leeward, the strong odour testified the fact. Its appearance certainly was very like the summit of a dark brown rock, covered with weeds and barnacles, and the myriads of birds which surrounded it added to the deception. It could, however, be distinguished by its buoyancy; for the water did not break over it, as of course it would have done had it been a fixed body. Such is probably the origin of half the 'vigias' that are found on the charts. Whales, when struck by the fishers, frequently escape and perish; the carcass then floats on the surface of the sea, until decomposed or eaten by birds and fishes. A small vessel striking against such a mass, would probably be severely injured; and at night, the body, from its buoyancy and the sea not breaking against it, would not be readily seen.

On the 4th, being about one hundred miles to the N.E. of Cape Blanco, I communicated with Captain Stokes, and gave him directions to proceed to Port Desire for chronometrical observations, and then follow me immediately to Cape Fairweather or Cape Virgins. We had light winds during the night, so that the Beagle made very little progress. In the afternoon, Cape Blanco, a long level-topped ridge, came in sight, of which good views are given in Lord Anson's voyage. We steered towards the land, and at six o'clock were in eighteen fathoms, the rocky hill at the extremity of the Cape bearing S. 10° E. thirteen miles; at seven o'clock, the same hill was six

miles and a half off, bearing S. 3° E., when we observed a line of rippling water, extending from east to as far as we could see on the south horizon. The depth was seventeen fathoms, but as we proceeded it gradually decreased to twelve and ten, and soon afterwards to seven fathoms, when the Beagle was observed to be firing guns; but whether they were intended to warn us of danger, or as signals of her own distress, we could not determine, and I hauled to the wind to cross where the ripple appeared least violent. In passing through it we had not less than seven fathoms, and then it deepened to twelve and fifteen fathoms. We had now leisure to attend to the Beagle, and soon saw that her signals were only to warn us, for she had resumed her course under a press of sail.

After steering four miles to the S.E., we again found ourselves in the midst of ripplings, in which the water shoaled to six fathoms. It being then dark, and not knowing how to proceed, we shortened sail and brought to the wind, in order that if the ship struck it might be with less force; but happily we passed on without any further decrease of soundings. In going through the ripple, the Adelaide, though deeply laden, behaved well.

Commodore Byron passed over these shoals, which he describes as lying at a greater distance from the shore: it was to avoid them that we passed so near the land.

During the following evening there was a very heavy dew, the never-failing prognostic of a northerly wind; the horizon, also, was very hazy, and the water perfectly smooth. We were not more

than ten miles off shore, yet the land was completely distorted in appearance by mirage.

Next morning we were very close to the position assigned to the Bellaco, or St. Estevan's Shoal, the existence of which has been very much doubted. It was discovered by the Nodales, and in the diary of their voyage is thus described: "At five o'clock, or later in the evening, we discovered a rock a-wash ('una baxa que lababa la mar en ella') about five leagues from the shore, more or less. It is a very deceitful rock ('Es muy bellaco baxo'), because it is under water, over which, in fine weather and smooth water, the sea breaks. We sounded near it, and found twenty-six fathoms stony bottom. Its latitude is 48½°, according to our noon observation, and the course and distance we have since run."[90]

The late Don Felipe Bauza, one of the companions of Malespina, informed me, that on the voyage of the Descubierta and Atrevida, their boats were sent to look for it, but were unsuccessful.

At noon we were in lat. 48° 40′ S., long. 66° 6′, depth forty-two fathoms, but without any signs of the Bellaco. Sailing on, the coast was seen in the neighbourhood of Beachy Head (so named from its resemblance to the well-known promontory). Afterwards, Cape Fairweather came in sight, and on the 10th Cape Virgins, which we passed in the evening, and, half an hour afterwards, rounding Dungeness, we again entered the Strait of Magalhaens; and anchored near the northern shore.

[90] Nodales, p. 48.

In Possession Bay we were detained several days, although repeated attempts to pass the First Narrow were anxiously made.

One evening, clouds gathered, and the weather assumed such a threatening appearance, that I expected to be obliged to run to sea; but to our surprise, when the cloudy mass seemed on the point of bursting over us with a deluge of rain, it suddenly vanished, and was succeeded by a beautifully clear and fine night. This favourable appearance gave us hopes of being able to make good our entrance on the following day; but a fresh gale set in, and kept us at our anchorage.

Early on the 14th we made another fruitless attempt to pass the First Narrow. As the Adelaide sailed under our stern, Lieutenant Graves informed me that he had lost an anchor, and had only one left, to which he had bent his chain-cable; and that she had shipped so much water in attempting to beat through, that he was on the point of asking permission to bear up when we ourselves gave up the attempt. It blew too hard to give any assistance to the Adelaide, but next morning, when the weather was more moderate, I seized an opportunity of sending our two kedge anchors; and in the afternoon we supplied her with some water and other necessaries, so that she was comparatively well off, and my anxiety on her account much relieved.

Fires on the Fuegian side had been kept up since our arrival, but we could not distinguish any inhabitants; on the Patagonian shores we saw a great number of guanacoes feeding quietly, a proof of there being no Indians near them.

On the 16th, the weather appearing favourable, our anchor was weighed, and, with the Adelaide, we soon entered the sluice of the Narrow, proceeding rapidly, though the wind blew hard against us. The tide carried us to an anchorage, about four miles beyond the western entrance, and it was slack water when the anchor was dropped; but, no sooner had the stream turned, than we found ourselves in the midst of a 'race,' and during the whole tide, the water broke furiously over the ship. At slack water we got underweigh, but the Adelaide not being able (from the strength of the tide), to purchase her anchor, was obliged to slip the cable: it was fortunate that we had supplied her with our kedges, or she would then have been without an anchor. The night was tempestuous, and although we reached a much quieter birth, the Adelaide drifted considerably; had she remained at the morning's anchorage, in order to save her anchor and cable, we should probably never have seen her again.

The succeeding morning, after a hard beat to windward, both vessels anchored in Gregory Bay. No Indians were in the neighbourhood, or we should have seen their fires. In the afternoon the wind moderated, and as there was every appearance of fine weather, I remained to survey the coast.

On the summit of the land, about half a mile northward of the extremity of the Cape, while Lieutenant Graves and I were taking bearings, and making observations, two guanacoes came up and stood neighing at us; the observation, however, was of consequence, and as they were not disturbed, they remained

watching us for some minutes before they took alarm and fled.

Lieutenant Wickham and Mr. Tarn made an excursion to the summit of the Table Land, previously described as extending from the low land behind the Second Narrow to the N.E., in the direction of Mount Aymond, and were amply repaid for a fatiguing walk, with the thermometer at 81°, by a magnificent view: Cape Possession to the eastward, and to the south the mountains near Mount Tarn, eighty miles distant, were plainly distinguished. The view to the westward, stretching over a large extent of grassy plains, was bounded by lofty ranges of snow-capped mountains; but to the north it was intercepted by another summit of the mountain upon which they stood. The country they passed over was covered with short grass, through which a mass of granite occasionally protruded. Neither trees nor shrubs were observed, excepting a few herbaceous plants, and the berberis; a goose, some ducks, snipe, and plovers were shot; and guanacoes were seen at a distance, but no ostriches, nor did they meet any Indians. Large fires were, however, kindled on both shores of the Strait, in answer to the fire which they made for cooking. In consequence of those on the Patagonian coast appearing so close to us, we expected a visit from the natives before night, but none made their appearance.

Next morning, Mr. Graves accompanied me in a boat to a station three miles within the Second Narrow on the north side, and in our way we found the geological structure of the cliffs to be of a decomposed clay-slate, arranged in strata, much distorted

by the violent action of the water, and dispersed in vertical and inclined directions in very thin laminæ.

These cliffs are about one hundred feet high, the soil a sandy alluvium, of a sterile character, scantily covered with a wiry, stunted grass, and here and there a berberis bush, loaded with ripe fruit, which, from the poverty of the soil, was tasteless and dry; the ground was also, in many parts, over-run to a considerable extent with an insipid cranberry, scarcely worth the trouble of gathering.

We struck across the country, with the view of examining the place where the Indians were residing at our last visit, and the tomb which had then been erected. Grass had grown up, and effaced the traces of feet; but the tomb had suffered no farther alteration than the weather might have effected. We found that the place had been recently visited by the natives, for within a few yards of the entrance were strewed the ashes of a large fire, containing vestiges of the former decorations of the tomb, and the end of one of the flag-staffs, with the unburnt corner of one of the banners. Amongst the ashes, also, we found calcined bones; but whether they were human or not, we could not ascertain.

The discovery of the bones impressed us with the idea that the body had been burnt, and determined me to examine the tomb. The bushes that filled up the entrance appeared to be placed exactly as when we first saw them, and indeed the whole pile seemed to have remained quite undisturbed; but there was

no appearance of the brass ornaments, or of the effigies of the horses.

Having effected an opening in the bushes, we found an inner covering, made of horse-skins. Having cut two holes opposite each other, for the admission of light, we saw nothing but two parallel rows of stones, three in each row, probably intended as a bier for the body or a covering for the grave; but the ground around and between them bore no appearance of having been disturbed for burial.[91] As we hourly expected the Indians would arrive (the place being in the direct line of their journey to the ships), and were unwilling to let them know we had disturbed the sanctuaries of their dead, we restored the former appearance of the tomb; and it was fortunate we did so, for three women on horseback, carrying their children in cradles, with a quantity of skins, provisions, and other merchandise, evidently the harbingers of the tribe, made their appearance, and immediately began to erect their tents.

When we next went on shore we found several Indians arrived, and divided into three groups, with mantles, ostrich-feathers, skins, and joints of guanaco meat displayed for sale.

As the meat appeared fresh, it is probable that, on seeing us,

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[91] Falkner says, in his account of the burial ceremonies of the southern Patagonians – that, after a certain interval, the bodies are taken out of the tomb, and skeletons are made of them by the women – the flesh and entrails having been burnt. It is possible that in this case the body had been so treated, and that the fire near it was for the purpose of burning the flesh, and perhaps with it all the flags and ornaments of the tomb.

the women were despatched to place the toldos, while the men set out to provide guanaco meat, for they knew our partiality for this excellent food. When we landed, an active barter began.

From the haste and avidity shown in offering their goods, and closing the bargains, it seemed as if they were anxious to monopolize our articles of barter before the rest of their party, or tribe arrived. One old man attempted to cheat; but my interdiction of all farther traffic with him brought him to a sense of his error, and I then made him a present of some tobacco and allowed him to trade, which he afterwards did, with cheerfulness and honesty.

One of the party was the Fuegian chief, whom I previously noticed, as a squalid, meagre-looking man; but he was now enlarged to Patagonian dimensions, by his improved diet and more cheerful mode of life. The appearance of bad weather obliged us to suspend the barter and get on board. After we had reached the ship, successive parties of the tribe arrived, and formed the encampment. Among them, mounted on her white horse, was Maria, who, duly escorted, paraded on the beach to challenge our recognition. In the centre of the encampment, a large flag suspended from a pole was a signal to us, and showed the position of her toldo.

The next morning being fine, we landed near the encampment, and were most cordially received. Maria was particularly attentive, and embraced me closely, while her companions chaunted in chorus a song of delight at our arrival.

When we reached her toldo, a mat was spread out for me to sit on. Maria and her family placed themselves in front of me, while the rest sat round. Almost the first question was an inquiry for my son Philip, whom they called Felipe,[92] and two or three skins were given to me for him. They then asked for our pilot on the former voyage, and were much disappointed to find he had left the ship. After a short conversation I returned the two bags (which I had so unwillingly carried away at our last visit), having filled them with flour and sugar, and then proceeded to deliver our presents. As each article was delivered into her hands, she repeated, in Spanish, I'll pay for this; but upon a bit for her horse being presented, a general burst of admiration followed, and it was handed round the tents, whilst each individual, as it passed on, looked, I thought, anxious to be its possessor.

Maria then began to consider what adequate requital she could possibly make me. The result was, a present of two mantles, one new, of guanaco skin, and the other well worn, of zorillo skin, besides two or three skins of the puma. She then produced a piece of paper, carefully wrapped up in canvas, containing a letter, or memorandum, left by Mr. Low, master of the Uxbridge sealer, addressed to any shipmaster passing through the Strait, apprising him "of the friendly disposition of the Indians, and impressing him with the necessity of treating them well, and not deceiving them; for they had good memories, and would seriously resent it."

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[92] He was a great favourite with them.

The advice, no doubt, was good; but I think the fear of forfeiting advantages and comforts to be derived from traffic would induce them to restrain their resentment.

I brought no spirits; for which, after a short time, Maria asked, complaining that she was very ill, and had sore eyes, and for some time past had nothing but water to drink, and wood to smoke. Her illness was evidently assumed, but her eyes seemed highly inflamed; and no wonder, for the upper part of her face was smeared over with an ochrous red pigment, even to the very edge of her eyelids: indeed, the whole tribe had ornamented themselves similarly, in compliment, I suppose, to our visit.

As I prepared to return on board, Maria's importunity induced me to allow her to accompany me; upon which she began to muster up all her empty bags, old mantles, and skins, and, attended by her husband, her brother-in-law, his wife and daughter, got into the boat. While going on board, the spray washed the painted countenances of our visitors, much to their regret.

Upon reaching the ship, I ordered them to be regaled with meat and biscuit, of which they partook very sparingly, but took care to put what remained into their bags. Some spirits and water, too, which I thought would be soon dispatched, and which had been plentifully diluted to prevent their being made tipsy, they emptied into bottles to take on shore "for the evening," when, as Maria said, they would be "very drunk."

Among various things shown to amuse them was a musical

snuff-box, which I had procured for the express purpose of exciting their astonishment; but I was surprised to find, that a penny-whistle produced a ten-fold greater effect upon their senses. This indifference to musical sounds I should not have suspected, because they frequently sing, though certainly in a monotonous manner.

As soon as their repast was concluded, the party, except Maria and the girls, commenced bartering their mantles and skins, and, by the time their stock was expended, they had amassed a large quantity of biscuit, and a bundle of various trifles, some of which they had attempted to get by pilfering. They made themselves so contented, that it was not without much difficulty we could persuade them to go on shore. Maria had made her mind up to pass the night on board, and so anxious were they all to remain, that it was only by giving Maria two bottles of spirits (which had been well diluted) that they were induced to get into the boat, and accompany me ashore. Being a lee-tide, and low water, the boat grounded at a considerable distance from the beach; seeing this, some of the Indians rode into the water, and taking us up behind them, conveyed us to the encampment, my place being behind Maria, the smell of whose zorillo-skin mantle was hardly bearable; but it was necessary to conceal our dislike of our companions as much as possible, for they are very sensitive, and easily offended.

While waiting for the tide, we witnessed a drunken scene at Maria's toldo. Fifteen persons, seated around her, shared the

spirits she had obtained on board, until all were intoxicated. Some were screaming, others laughing, some stupified, and some bellowing. The uproar drew all the other Indians round the tent, who tendered their assistance to compose their friends, and we returned to the ship. When we visited them the next day, they were quite recovered, and gave us some guanaco meat, which had been brought in that morning. On communicating my intention of proceeding on the voyage, Maria wished to know when we should finish our "seal-killing," and come back. I told her "in five moons," upon which she endeavoured to persuade me to return in four, because she would then have plenty of skins to barter.

I wrote a few lines to Captain Stokes, who, I expected, would arrive in a day or two, communicating my desire that he should follow, as soon as possible, to Port Famine, and committed the letter to Maria's care, who promised to deliver it to him; then, taking leave of her and her companions, I embarked, and proceeded through the Second Narrow to an anchorage off Cape Negro.

Our visit to Gregory Bay, and communication with the Indians, furnished us with many additions to our zoological collection; among them was a tiger-cat, which seemed, from the description, to be the *Felis pajaros* of the Encyclopédie Méthodique (the "Chat de Pampa" of D'Azara). Maria gave me a very large bezoar stone, that was taken from the stomach of a guanaco. It is used medicinally by the Indians, as a remedy for

bowel complaints.[93]

Whilst we were at the anchorage before Cape Negro, Mr. Tarn and Mr. Wickham visited the lake at the back of Laredo Bay, and saw two swans, which, from the colour of their plumage, seemed to be the black-necked swan of the River Plata and of the Falkland Islands[94] (Dom Pernettey, ii. p. 148). They brought on board with them a new species of duck, which is described in the proceedings of the Zoological Society as *Anas specularis* (Nob.), and a small burrowing animal, of the rat tribe, that, from the character of its teeth, is probably of a genus not hitherto noted: it approaches nearest to F. Cuvier's *Helamys*.

We next anchored in Port Famine, where the tents, &c. were replaced in their former positions, the ship was unrigged and secured for the winter, and all hands set to work, preparing the Adelaide for service.

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[93] The medicinal property of this intestinal concretion is well known wherever the animal is found. Marcgrave, in his "Tractatus topographicus et meteorologicus Brasiliæ," folio, p. 36, says: – "Hæc animalia (guanacoes) generant lapides Bezoares in sinu quodam ventriculi, qui maximi æstimantur contra venena et febres malignos ad roborandum et refocillandum cor, aliosque affectus. Materia è qua generantur sunt herbæ insignis virtutis, quibus vescuntur naturæ instinctu ad sanitatem tuendum, aut morbos et venena superandum. Hi lapides inveniuntur in adultioribus hisce animalibus atque interdum tam grandes, ut unum in Italiam attulerim qui pendet uncias duas supra triginta." – Mr. Thompson, on Intestinal Concretions. See his Syn. of Chemistry, iv. 576.

[94] *Anser nigrocollis*. Encyc. Méthod., art. Ornithol. 108.

CHAPTER VIII

Find that the Cutter had been burned – Anxiety for the Beagle – Uxbridge Sealer – Beagle arrives – Her cruize – Bellaco Rock – San Julian – Santa Cruz – Gallegos – Adeona – Death of Lieutenant Sholl – Adelaide Sails – Supposed Channel of San Sebastian – Useless Bay – Natives – Port San Antonio – Humming-birds – Fuegians – Beagle sails – Sarmiento – Roldan – Pond – Whales – Structure – Scenery – Port Gallant.

Port Famine bore evident marks of having been visited in our absence by the Indians, for a large fire, apparently recent, had over-run the grass, and burned the trees upon Point Santa Anna, particularly in that part where our boat had been so carefully concealed. Eager to know whether she had escaped the fire, I lost no time in hastening to the spot, directly after the Adventure anchored, and found, as our fears had anticipated, that she had been completely destroyed, scarcely a vestige of her wood remaining, and most of the iron-work having been carried away; for which, doubtless, the Indians had set her on fire.

The sheds for the cooper and armourer, which had been erected with some pains, were also entirely consumed, and every thing portable had been carried away. Those things which were of no use to them were either broken or burnt; but some of our station poles on Point Santa Anna were left uninjured; as well as

the tablet erected to the memory of Mr. Ainsworth and the boat's crew; which was singular, because it was secured by iron hoops – of great value, in their eyes.

From the fresh traces of horses in the neighbourhood, we at first suspected the conflagration to have been caused by the Patagonians; but we soon found we owed our loss to the Fuegians, for in two new wigwams were strewed some remains of our boat.

The last winter appeared to have been milder than that preceding it, for last January, Mount Sarmiento and the hills to the southward, over Fitton Bay, were so covered with snow, that not a particle of the rock could be seen; but this year many bare spots were visible. Every thing else, however, indicated a bad season, and the berberis bushes and arbutus shrubs had scarcely any show of fruit; which was rather a disappointment, as the berries of the former plant proved an agreeable addition to our food last year. However, there was no scarcity of birds, and with the seine we procured plenty of fish.

The Beagle's long and unexpected absence caused us much uneasiness, and some apprehension for her safety. Her visit to Port Desire ought not to have occupied more than three days, and her superior sailing should have enabled Captain Stokes to rejoin us in the entrance of the Strait. People were sent daily to look out for her, and every succeeding day increased our anxiety.

A long succession of blowing and rainy weather much impeded our progress with the Adelaide; but the Hope was hoisted out, and prepared for service.

Before daylight on the 14th I was informed that the Beagle was seen in the offing. Blue lights were burnt, and lanterns immediately shown to guide her to the anchorage; but our disappointment was great when the stranger proved to be Mr. W. Low's schooner, the Uxbridge. He had been sealing since November in the neighbourhood of Noir Island, near the outer entrance of the Barbara Channel, and was on his way to Cape Gregory to meet his elder brother, who had been collecting sea-elephant oil at South Shetland. The Uxbridge had entered the Strait from the Pacific, by the Magdalen 'Channel,' which last year we thought a Sound, and had attempted to explore in the Hope, but had been deceived by the abrupt change in the direction of the Channel at Cape Turn.

At last (on the 28th), after the Beagle's absence had been protracted to more than a month beyond the time intended, we were relieved from painful anxiety, and much rejoiced, by Mr. Tarn's telling us he had just seen her, and in two hours afterwards she arrived.

Captain Stokes, to my great surprise, told me that he had been examining the whole coast between Port Desire and Cape Virgins, and for the last ten days had been detained in the Gallegos River by heavy gales of wind. He had sounded round, and fixed the position of the Bellaco Rock, or St. Estevan's Shoal, the existence of which had been so long doubted. He had also visited and partially surveyed, the harbours of Port San Julian and Santa Cruz, besides Coy Bay, and had made almost a complete

survey of the River Gallegos, which he found to be a large and rapid river, whose entrance forms a spacious port: instead of being blocked up by a mound of shingle four or five feet above the level of the sea, and having so small a stream as to escape the notice of Mr. Weddell as he walked along the beach.[95] Cape Fairweather is so remarkable, and so correctly placed upon the chart, that Mr. Weddell, in his search for the river, must have very much deceived himself. I should think he must have mistaken the ravine described upon my former visit, since that is the only part which answers his description: it could not be Coy Bay, because that opening, although of minor importance, has a broad boat communication with the sea.

Captain Stokes described the tide at the anchorage, within the mouth of the Gallegos, as running at the rate of five knots, and rising forty-six feet. From Mr. Weddell's account, he was on the point of passing by without examining it; but the weather being fine, he determined to go in his boat and ascertain the truth of that description. It was soon evident that the river was large, and, returning to his ship, he lost no time in anchoring her within the entrance, where she rode out a heavy gale from S.W.

The Beagle left the Gallegos on the 23d, and reached Port Famine on the 28th, a very short passage, since she remained for a night and the greater part of a day at Gregory Bay, to communicate with the natives. When approaching the First Narrow, Captain Stokes observed a brig, apparently at anchor,

[95] Weddell's Voyage.

under Cape Orange, and supposing her either to have found a good anchorage, or to be in distress, steered towards her. Before he had reached within two miles of her, the Beagle touched the ground, but was extricated from the danger most fortunately, because it was nearly high water; and had she remained a-ground during the tide, the consequences might have been serious – at least, she could not have been got off without lightening her considerably. The brig proved to be the Adeona (Mr. Low's vessel), on her way to meet the Uxbridge. In attempting to enter the narrow, she grounded on the shoals, and had been left dry. The following tide again floated her, and she was on the point of getting underweigh, when the Beagle hove in sight. Captain Stokes finding that the Adeona had received no damage, proceeded to Gregory Bay.

By the Beagle's arrival we were informed of the death of Lieutenant Robert H. Sholl, after an illness of ten days. His remains were interred at Port San Julian, where a tablet was erected to his memory.

This excellent young man's death was sincerely regretted by all his friends, and by none more than by me. He was appointed to the expedition, as a midshipman, solely on account of his high character.

During our voyage from England, he made himself conspicuously useful in saving the cargo of a vessel, which was stranded in Port Praya; and on our arrival at Rio de Janeiro, the Commander-in-chief appointed him to a vacant lieutenantcy on

board the Beagle: an appointment which, up to the period of his lamented death, he filled zealously and most creditably.[96]

On the 1st of March we were surprised by the appearance of three Europeans, walking round Point St. Anna. A boat was sent for them, and we found they were deserters from the Uxbridge, who had come to volunteer for our ships.

The following day the Adeona and Uxbridge arrived, on their way to Port San Antonio, to boil their oil; but I recommended Bougainville, or (as the sealers call it) Jack's Harbour, as more convenient for their purpose, and more secure from storms, as well as from troublesome visits of the natives.

Upon my offering to restore the three deserters to the Uxbridge, Mr. Low requested me to keep them, and another, also, who was anxious to join the Adventure, to which I consented, as the Adelaide wanted men.

A few days after Mr. Low's departure, he returned in a whale-boat to ask assistance in repairing the Uxbridge's rudder. By our help it was soon made serviceable, and she was enabled to prosecute her voyage, which could not otherwise have been continued.

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[96] I cannot avoid noticing here the considerate conduct of the Commander-in-chief (Sir George Eyre) with respect to this appointment. By the tenor of my instructions the Adventure and Beagle were placed under the Admiral's orders; and the vacancy, had he wished to exercise his prerogative, might have been filled by one of his own followers. It was, however, given, at my request, to Mr. Sholl, as being more conversant with the duties of this peculiar service than any of the midshipmen of the flag-ship. The Admiral's conduct, on this occasion, calls for my warmest thanks.

The Adelaide being ready for sea: her first service was to be an examination of the St. Sebastian Channel, which, from its delineation on the old charts, would seem to penetrate through the large eastern island of Tierra del Fuego. In the voyage of the Nodales (in the year 1618), an opening on the eastern coast, supposed to be the mouth of a channel, communicating with the Strait of Magalhaens, was discovered. After describing the coast to the south of Cape Espiritu Santo, the journal of that voyage states: "We found, in the channel of St. Sebastian, twenty fathoms clear ground. The north shore is a beach of white sand, five leagues in extent, stretching out from the high land that terminates at Cape Espiritu Santo, and giving the coast here the appearance of a deep bay; but, on a nearer approach, a projecting tract of low shore is observed. The south extremity of this low beach is a sandy point, round which the channel trends; the mouth is a league and a half wide. The south shore is higher than the land to the northward, and in the middle of the bay the depth is from fifteen to twenty fathoms clear ground, and a good bottom; but from mid-channel to the south shore the bottom is stony, and the water, of little depth, there being only six and seven fathoms. From hence the channel shows itself, and continues, as far as we could see, of the same breadth. It seemed to be a large sea. The latitude was observed to be 53° 16′."[97]

From the above account, and from the chart that accompanies

[97] Relacion del Viage, &c. que hicieron los Capitanes B. G. de Nodales y Gonzalo de Nodales, p. 59.

it, in which this inlet is made to communicate with the Strait of Magalhaens by the opening round Cape Monmouth, our knowledge of the supposed St. Sebastian Channel was derived. That there is a deep bay, in the latitude of 53° 16′, not only appears from the account of the Nodales, who were within the heads, although it seems they did not proceed beyond the stony ground on the south side of the entrance; but also from the accounts of vessels who have lately seen it; and of one ship-master who was deterred from entering, by the formidable notice on our charts of its being "only navigable for small vessels," whence he conjectured that the tides would be very strong, and the channel occasionally narrow, as well as narrow, and shoal.

Sarmiento, Narborough, Byron, Wallis, Bougainville, and Cordova, have severally noticed an opening, which corresponds to this supposed channel, namely, that between Capes Monmouth and Valentyn; but the object of those voyagers having been to make the passage through the known Strait, to explore this opening was, in all probability, considered a waste of time; yet, that such a channel was supposed to exist, we must conclude from the conspicuous figure it makes in the charts of Tierra del Fuego.

Had there been a knowledge of its affording any communication with the sea, surely Sarmiento and Narborough, as well as the Nodales, who navigated the Strait from west to east, would have been induced to attempt to pass through; and avoid the dangers, as well as difficulties, of the channels to the

northward.

Anxious to set the question at rest, I gave Captain Stokes orders to proceed to survey the western coasts, between the Strait of Magalhaens and latitude 47° south, or as much of those dangerous and exposed shores as he could examine, with the means at his disposal, and sailed myself, in the Adelaide, to explore the supposed St. Sebastian Channel. Every discretionary power was given to Captain Stokes to act as he pleased, for the benefit of the service; but he had strict orders to return to Port Famine by the 24th of July, when I hoped to move the Adventure to some other part of the Strait, and to recommence operations with the earliest days of spring, if the winter should be unfit for our work.

Having crossed over to the southward of Point Boqueron, we proceeded, on the 13th of March, to the N.E. (in which direction the opening trended), at no great distance from the northern shore; behind which the country seemed to rise gradually to the summit of a long ridge of table-land, terminating near the First Narrow, and appearing like that in the neighbourhood of Cape Gregory. It was inhabited; for here and there we observed the smoke of fires, perhaps intended as invitations for us to land.

The south side of the opening seemed (after forming a small bay under Nose Peak) to extend in a direction parallel to the northern coast of the bay, for three or four leagues, when it dipped beneath the horizon. Neither shore had any opening or indenture in its coast line, of sufficient size to shelter even a

boat; so that a vessel caught here, with a south-westerly gale, would have little chance of escape; unless a channel should exist, of which, from the stillness of the water and the total absence of tide, we had very little hope. The soundings were variable between twenty and thirty fathoms, and the bottom seemed to be of shells, probably covering a substratum of clay or sand. As we stood on, a small rocky lump came in sight, which appeared to be the termination of the northern shore, and again we flattered ourselves with the expectation of finding a passage; but in less than half an hour afterwards, the bay was distinctly seen to be closed by low land, and the rocky lump proved to be an isolated mass of rock, about two miles inland. As every person on board was then satisfied of the non-existence of any channel, we put about to return, and by bearings of Mount Tarn, crossed by angles from Mount Graves, Nose Peak, and Point Boqueron, our position, and the extent of this bay, were determined. As it affords neither anchorage nor shelter, nor any other advantage for the navigator, we have named it Useless Bay. It was too much exposed to the prevailing winds to allow of our landing to examine the country, and its productions, or to communicate with the Indians; and as there was not much likelihood of finding anything of novel character, we lost no time in retreating from so exposed a place. Abreast of Point Boqueron the patent log gave for our run twenty-six miles, precisely the same distance which it had given in the morning; so that from five o'clock in the morning until ten, and from ten o'clock until four in the

afternoon, we had not experienced the least tide, which of itself is a fact confirmatory of the non-existence of a channel.

From the fires of the natives in this part having been noticed at a distance from the beach, it would seem that they derive their subsistence from hunting rather than fishing; and as there are guanacoes on the south shore of the First Narrow, it is probable the people's habits resemble those of the Patagonians, rather than the Fuegians; but as they have no horses, the chase of so shy and swift an animal as the guanaco must be fatiguing and very precarious.[98]

Sarmiento is the only person on record who has communicated with the natives in the neighbourhood of Cape Monmouth. He calls them in his narrative a large race (Gente grande). There it was that he was attacked by the Indians, whom he repulsed, and one of whom he made prisoner.

We remained a night in Port Famine, and again set out in the Adelaide to survey some of the western parts of the Strait. Bad weather forced us into Port San Antonio; of which Cordova gives so favourable an account, that we were surprised to find it small and inconvenient, even for the Adelaide.

He describes the port to be a mile and a half long, and

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[98] Falkner describes the Indians who inhabit the eastern islands of Tierra del Fuego, to be 'Yacana-cunnees,' and as he designates those who inhabit the Patagonian shore of the Strait by the same name, it might be inferred that they are of the same race; but however closely connected they may have been formerly, they certainly are not so now, for Maria (the Patagonian) spoke very contemptuously of them, and disclaimed their alliance; calling them 'zapallios,' which means slaves.

three quarters of a mile broad: we found the length a mile and a quarter, and the mean breadth scarcely a quarter of a mile. It possesses no one advantage that is not common to almost every other harbour and cove in the Strait; and for a ship, or square-rigged vessel of any kind, it is both difficult to enter, and dangerous to leave. Besides the local disadvantages of Port San Antonio, the weather in it is seldom fair, even when the day is fine elsewhere. It lies at the base of the Lomas Range, which rises almost perpendicularly to the height of three thousand feet, fronting the great western channel of the Strait, whence it receives upon its cold surface the western winds, and is covered by the vapour, which is condensed from them, while in all other parts the sun may be shining brightly.

This port is formed by a channel, a quarter of a mile wide, separating two islands from the shore. The best anchorage is off a picturesque little bay on the south island, which is thickly wooded to the water's edge with the holly leaved berberis,[99] fuchsia, and veronica, growing to the height of twenty feet; over-topped and sheltered by large beech, and Winter's-bark trees, rooted under a thick mossy carpet, through which a narrow Indian path winds between arbutus and currant bushes, and round prostrate stems of dead trees, leading to the seaward side of the island. Upon the beach, just within the bushes, and sheltered by a large and wide-spreading fuchsia bush, in full flower, stood two Indian wigwams, which, apparently, had not been inhabited since the visit of poor

[99] Berberis ilicifolia. – Banks and Solander MSS.

Ainsworth. He had occupied these very wigwams for two days, having covered them over with the boat's sail; and remains of the ropeyarns that tied it down were still there: a melancholy memento.

In no part of the Strait did we find the vegetation so luxuriant as in this little cove. Some of the Winter's-bark and currant trees had shoots more than five feet long, and many of the Winter's-bark trees were two feet in diameter. The veronica (I believe *V. decussata*) grows in the sheltered parts to the height of twenty feet, with a stem six inches in diameter. It was found too on the windward side of the island in abundance, and of large size, rooted in the very wash of the sea-beach, and exposed to the full force of the cold winds and hail-storms, which rush down the wide western reach of the Strait.

The fuchsia also grows to a large size; but it is a more delicate plant than the veronica, and thrives only in sheltered places. Many were observed six inches in diameter; the stems of the two last plants were used by us, during our stay, for fuel.

The day after our arrival, the gale subsided, and the weather became very fine indeed. The stillness of the air may be imagined, when the chirping of humming-birds, and buzzing of large bees, were heard at a considerable distance. A humming-bird had been seen at Port Gallant last year, and was brought to me by Captain Stokes, since which none had been noticed. Here, however, we saw, and procured several; but of only one

species.[100] It is the same as that found on the western coast, as high as Lima; so that it has a range of 41° of latitude, the southern limit being 53½°, if not farther south.

The islets, at the north part of the port, were well stocked with geese and other birds, which supplied our people with fresh meals. The steamer duck we found difficult to shoot, from its excessive wariness, and power of remaining, for a great length of time, under water.

Our fine weather lasted but a few hours, and (no unusual occurrence in these regions) was succeeded by a week's rain and wind, during which we were confined to the small space of the Adelaide; and for some days had three anchors down, owing to the violent squalls. Farenheit's thermometer ranged between thirty-six and forty-six degrees, and we had several snow storms, but the snow did not lie on the low grounds.

On the 28th the gale began to subside, and there was a change for the better; but we were again disappointed, and not until the 31st could we effect our departure from this dreary and confined little place.

The day before we sailed, three canoes, containing in all

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[100] The specimen that was found at Port Gallant was sent by me to Mr. Vigors, who considering it, although well known to ornithologists, as never having yet been named, describes it in the Zoological Journal (vol. iii. p. 432, Aug. 1827), as Mellisuga Kingii. Shortly afterwards M. Lesson published it in his Manuel d'Ornithologie (vol. ii. p. 80.), as *Ornismya sephaniodes*, as a discovery belonging to La Coquille's voyage, in the illustrations of which it is figured at plate 31. I rather think, however, that it is Molina's *Trochilus galeritus*. – (Molina, i. 275.).

sixteen persons, of whom six only were men, came alongside.

For about an hour they had hesitated to approach; but when once near us, very little invitation was necessary to induce them to come on board. One was clothed in a duck shirt, which was recognised by one of our people, who had joined us from the Uxbridge, as having been given to them a few weeks before, when that vessel passed through Magdalen Channel: another wore a red flannel shirt, and in the canoe we observed an European boarding-pike, painted green, and a part of the iron-work of the cutter, burned at Port Famine during our absence; also some relics of the boat in which Mr. Ainsworth was drowned, which last they had doubtless found thrown up on the beach. Upon our inquiring how they became possessed of the iron-work, they pointed towards Fort Famine; and I have no doubt they were concerned in the fire; but as we could not explain to them the mischief they had occasioned, it was thought better not to notice the affair, and the articles were returned to them. They could have had no idea of our being the owners of the boat, or they would have concealed all that belonged to her.

They conducted themselves very quietly during their stay on board, with the exception of one, who tried to pick my pocket of a handkerchief; the offender was ordered out of the vessel, and there was no further attempt to pilfer. They wished to go below; but this was not permitted, because the odour of their oily persons was scarcely tolerable, even in the open air. As to food, tallow-candles, biscuit, beef, plumb-pudding, were equally liked,

and swallowed most voraciously. One of them was discovered taking the tallow out of the end of the deep sea lead and eating it, although mixed with sand and dirt.

Before sunset their canoes were despatched on shore to prepare the wigwams, during which operation three of the men remained on board; and as soon as the preparations were made they called for a canoe and went on shore. We obtained several spears, baskets, necklaces, bows and arrows from them in barter; but they seemed to have very few skins. Perhaps those they possessed were hidden in the bushes, because they had no wish to part with them.

One woman was covered with a guanaco mantle; another merely wore a seal-skin over her back and shoulders, which, while she crouched in the canoe, was sufficient to cover her person. One had a black stripe down the nose, but she was the only female among them who was so painted.

Next morning the Indians visited us with a fresh assortment of bows and arrows, in the manufacture of which they had evidently passed the night, for every one was quite new; the bows were of green wood, and the arrows not even pointed. They found, however, a ready sale. One of the party was a man who had been turned out of our vessel the preceding evening, for picking my pocket; but he was daubed over with a whitish pigment to deceive us, and would probably have escaped detection, but for the unusual ugliness of his person, which was not so easily disguised. He was much disconcerted by our recognition; and our

refusal to barter with him made him angry and sullen.

The women had daubed their faces all over with bright red ochre; to add to their beauty, no doubt.

We sailed out of the port by the northern passage, and standing across the Strait, anchored in San Nicolas Bay. Mr. Graves went to Bougainville Harbour, to communicate with the Adeona, and take letters from me to Lieutenant Wickham. He brought back an account of all being well at Port Famine, and of the Beagle having sailed on the 17th.

When we left Port Famine my intention was to examine the Magdalen Channel; but, upon leaving San Nicolas Bay (1st April), the weather was so favourable for our proceeding to the westward, that I changed my mind and steered round Cape Froward in order to get to Port Gallant, whence, with a westerly wind, we might more easily survey the coast in returning. An easterly breeze carried us near Cape Holland, into Wood's Bay, where we anchored, and obtained a bearing of Mount Sarmiento, which, being clear of clouds, was a conspicuous, and even splendid object; for the sun's setting rays, shining upon the projecting snowy ridges on its western side, gave it the appearance of a mass of streaky gold. It had been in sight the whole day, as well as the preceding evening, when its bearings were taken from the islet in San Nicolas Bay.

The next day was so calm that we only reached an anchorage in Bradley Cove, on the west side of Bell Bay, of which a plan was made; an extensive set of bearings was also taken on

the west point of the bay, evidently that called by Sarmiento Tinquichisgua.[101] The conspicuous mountain at the back of the bay, on its south-eastern side, is particularly noticed by him, and, according to his opinion, is the "Campana de Roldan" of Magalhaens.[102] Between Bradley Cove and Point Tinquichisgua are two coves, over which a high double-peaked mountain forms a conspicuous object upon rounding Cape Froward; and they were named in compliment to Mr. Pond, the late Astronomer Royal.

While at Point Tinquichisgua we were discovered by some natives to the westward, who immediately got into their canoes, and paddled towards us; but, as we had no arms in the boat, I did not think it prudent to await their arrival; and therefore, after taking the requisite angles, embarked and returned to the Adelaide, examining the inlets under Mount Pond on our way. Nothing more was seen of the Indians until the following morning, when, as we sailed out of the bay, they made their appearance, but we did not communicate with them. They were as vociferous as usual, and pointed to the shore, inviting us to land. One of them, who stood up in the canoe while we passed, was ornamented about the hair and body with white feathers.

This part of the Strait teems with whales, seals, and porpoises. While we were in Bradley Cove, a remarkable appearance of the

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[101] Sarmiento, p. 213.

[102] Este monte es el que llaman las Relaciones antiguas la Campana de Roldan. – Sarmiento.

water spouted by whales was observed; it hung in the air like a bright silvery mist, and was visible to the naked eye, at the distance of four miles, for one minute and thirty-five seconds before it disappeared.

A glance at the chart of this part of the Strait will show the difference of geological structure in the opposite coasts. The north shore, from Cape Froward to Port Gallant, forms a straight line, with scarcely a projection or bight; but on the opposite side there is a succession of inlets, surrounded by precipitous mountains, which are separated by ravines. The northern shore is of slate; but the other is principally of greenstone, and its mountains, instead of running up into sharp peaks, and narrow serrated ridges, are generally round-topped. The vegetation on both sides is almost equally abundant, but the trees on the south shore are much smaller. The smooth-leaved beech (*Fagus betuloides*) and Winter's-bark are the principal trees; but here and there a small tree was observed, like a cypress, which does not grow to the eastward, excepting on the sides of Mount Tarn, where it only reaches the height of three or four feet.

The scenery of this part of the Strait, instead of being as Cordova describes it, "horrible," is at this season exceedingly striking and picturesque. The highest mountains certainly are bare of vegetation; but their sharp peaks and snow-covered summits afford a pleasing contrast to the lower hills, thickly clothed with trees quite to the water's side, which is bordered by masses of bare rock, studded with ferns and moss, and backed

by the rich dark-green foliage of the berberis and arbutus shrubs, with here and there a beech-tree, just beginning to assume its autumnal tints.

In working into the narrow entrance of Port Gallant, the schooner grounded upon a bank that extends off the mouth of the river; but the water being perfectly smooth, no damage was caused. As a secure cove, Port Gallant is the best in the Strait of Magalhaens; from the stillness of its waters, it is a perfect wet dock, and from its position it is invaluable. There are many coves as safe and convenient when once entered; but the prevailing steepness of the shores, as well as the great depth of water, are obstacles of serious importance. Here, however, is an exception: the bottom is even and the depth moderate; besides, Fortescue Bay, close by, is an excellent roadstead or stopping-place, to await an opportunity of entering.

For repairing a ship, Port Famine is more convenient, on account of the quantity and size of well-seasoned timber lying about the beach, and also from the open character of the country. At Port Gallant the trees are much stunted, and unfit for present use, while the shore, as is the case around almost every cove to the westward of Cape Froward, is covered with shrubs and brushwood, quite to the high-water mark; so that there is no possibility of walking easily to any distance from the sea-side. A shingle, or sandy beach, twenty or thirty yards in length, occasionally intervenes, but is scarcely preferable to a vessel's deck, for a walk.

CHAPTER IX

Detention in Port San Antonio – Humming-birds in snow showers – Fuegians – Geological remarks – Canoes – Carving – Birds – Fish – Shag Narrows – Glaciers – Avalanches – Natives – Climate – Winter setting in – Adelaide loses a boat – Floods – Lightning – Scurvy – Adelaide's survey – Bougainville Harbour – Indians cross the Strait, and visit Port Famine – Sealing vessels sail – Scurvy increases – Adelaide sent for guanaco meat – Return of the Beagle – Captain Stokes very ill – Adelaide brings meat from the Patagonians – Death of Captain Stokes.

Our stay at this port was prolonged beyond my intention by thick snowy weather and hard gales, which cut off our communication with the shore; for notwithstanding we were in so sheltered a place, and the vessel had three anchors down, we did not consider her quite secure against the violent squalls. We had been fortunate in procuring observations, and took advantage of our detention to lay down the operations of the preceding days on paper. Muscles were found in great abundance on the mud flats. There are three varieties, one of which has a bitter, disagreeable taste, but the others are exceedingly good and wholesome. One of the latter is of large size (*Mytilus Magellanicus* of the Ency. Méth.) The other is of a more globose form than the bitter sort, and has a very obtuse hinge and margin. The bitter kind contains

pearls, which are valueless, because small, and of a bad colour.

At first there were plenty of sea-birds[103] in the cove, which took refuge at the head of the bay; till after two days, they deserted us altogether. There appeared to be an abundance of fish; but as we had not provided ourselves with a seine, and they would not take bait, we were confined for refreshments principally to shell-fish.

No traces of quadrupeds, excepting an Indian dog, were noticed. Here Wallis's people saw a large cloven-footed animal, which they described to be as "big as a jack-ass." It was probably a deer, one or two of which had occasionally appeared at Port Famine.([104])

It has been mentioned that we found many humming-birds at Port San Antonio, which we attributed to the sheltered situation of the place, and the luxuriant growth of fuchsias and other plants, upon the sweets of whose flowers they feed. Here, however, one of the same species was seen sporting about in a most exposed place and during the falling of a snow shower, a proof of the hardy character of this little bird, which, if it does migrate upon the approach of winter to a warmer clime, lingers, at least, as long as it possibly can. This was the middle

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[103] Here we obtained a second species of the Steamer-duck, which is described in the Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London, as '*Micropterus Patachonicus*, Nob.' It differs from the *M. brachypterus* not only in colour but in size, being a smaller bird, and having the power of raising its body, in flight, out of the water. We called it the 'Flying Steamer.'

[104] Or the animal called by Molina 'Huemul.' – R. F.

of April, the winter had, in fact, already commenced, and all the mountains around us were clothed with snow, while the ground was also coated with the same dazzling covering. Mr. Graves intended to ascend the Mountain de la Cruz; but a heavy fall of snow prevented the attempt, and we lost the opportunity of obtaining a round of angles from that elevation, which would have materially assisted our operations. We should also have obtained a bird's-eye view of the Barbara Channel and the Sounds on the opposite side of the Strait, whose extent and nature we did not know; for Cordova's notice of San Simon's Bay, and a deep inlet which exists to the westward of it, is very unsatisfactory.

There were no signs of a recent visit from the Fuegians, though at the entrance of the cove we found three or four wigwams in good repair; whence it seems probable, that the place is one of their frequent haunts. When the Beagle came here last year, some station staves were left standing; but, before her return, every one had been removed; and when Captain Stokes went down the Barbara Channel, to the relief of the Saxe Cobourg's crew, those staves were seen in the possession of the Indians.

A fine morning (11th) induced us to leave this quiet anchorage, to examine the openings of the south shore; and in the afternoon, the anchor was dropped in a convenient place, on the west side of the western inlet, named by us Warrington Cove. While crossing the bay from Point Elvira, the north extremity of Cayetano Island, several 'smokes' were observed on the low

land, at the bottom of the inlet; and after we anchored two canoes visited us, containing six men, four women, and two or three children. They approached very cautiously, and could not be induced to come alongside. At last the men landed, and invited us to communicate with them. I therefore went on shore with two or three officers, and remained with them half an hour, during which they gradually lost the distrust they had at first evinced; but each man still carried a number of pebbles in the corner of his wrapper, ready to repel any attack we might make upon them; from the knowledge we have since obtained of their character, I think it probable that they had lately committed some act of aggression on a sealing-vessel, and were afraid of retaliation. Our conduct tended to assure them of our friendship; and, shortly after we left the shore, they came alongside in their canoes, and were very familiar, eagerly bartering their necklaces and baskets. In their way to us they had probably landed their more valuable goods, such as otter and seal-skins, as well as their weapons and dogs, without which they never go far.

The natives of this part are considered by the sealers to be the most mischievously inclined of any in the Strait, or Tierra del Fuego. The appearance of our visitors was certainly against them; but they did not commit themselves during our two or three days' communication, by any act which could make us complain, or cause suspicion of their honesty and friendship. We, however, kept too good a look-out, to enable them to take advantage of our seeming good-nature.

Among bushes behind the high beach were three wigwams, but the Indians had no intention of remaining with us for the night. They went away, to our great satisfaction, at an early hour, and returned to the bottom of the sound, where a large party of their countrymen was assembled. Their departure enabled us to look round, in the vicinity of our anchorage, and examine its productions, which differed in no way from those of other parts of the coast. Its geological structure is, however, different: the rocks are greenstone, or granite, without slate. Mount Maxwell, rising immediately over the cove, is the termination of a rocky mountain range, whose summits are crowned with snow. The verdant sides of the hill, interspersed at intervals with large masses of bare rock, produced, from a distance, rather a pleasing effect; but, upon examination, the verdure was found to consist principally of moss, or a stunted vegetation, covering a soft and swampy soil. The upper portions of the mount are so precipitous as not to be easily reached; and, indeed, many parts rise with a perpendicular ascent for more than a hundred feet. On the south side of Mount Maxwell is Smyth Inlet, which contains anchorage on the north shore, particularly one in Earle Cove; but in the centre the water is deep, and on that account, it is not an inviting place for a ship. During Mr. Graves's absence in Smyth Harbour, I examined the coast as far as Cape Edgeworth, where I obtained an extensive set of bearings. The afternoon was particularly favourable for the purpose, the snow-capped mountains of the north shore were perfectly distinct; and among

them was a very high one, shaped like a Highland target, the peak of the mountain answering to the central spike of the shield. We never afterwards saw it, nor could I, on this occasion, fix its position better, than by estimating its distance. The rock is chiefly greenstone, accompanied by considerable masses of granite. A little islet, off Dighton Cove, is composed of granite, of a lamelliform structure. Mr. Graves brought me a specimen of lamelliform granite attached to a mass of greenstone.

The Indians visited us every day, their number being generally from twelve to sixteen, of which five or six only were men, the rest were women, and children of all ages. One of the latter could not have been more than three weeks old; yet the mother, apparently about sixteen years of age, was always occupied in the laborious employment of paddling the canoes. The child was secured in the mother's lap, with its head on her bosom, by a mantle, which was drawn tightly round both mother and child. Their canoes were similar to those of the eastern parts of the Strait, about ten feet long, holding four or five grown persons and two or three children, besides their dogs, implements, and weapons: they are formed of bark, and kept in shape by wooden cross supports secured to the gunwale, which is lined by a long, slender pole. They are divided into three compartments, the foremost occupying about one-third of the length, contains the spears, placed ready for immediate use; in the second are the grown persons, with the fire-place between them, the men sitting between the fire-place and the spears, to be ready to use them

upon the approach of seals or porpoises; on the opposite side of the fire-place are seated the women who paddle the canoe, in which the men sometimes assist, when great expedition is necessary. Behind the women, in the third division, are the elder children and the dogs, the younger children being generally stowed away in the women's laps, for the sake of mutual warmth. The fire is made upon a layer of clay, several inches thick, at the bottom of the canoe; and above the fire, across the gunwales, are laid several pieces of half-burnt wood, for fuel.

During our communications with these visitors they conducted themselves peaceably, and made no attempt to pilfer, although there was some little roguery displayed by them in barter. One of the men having parted with all his disposable property, tendered one of his daughters, a fine girl of fourteen or fifteen years of age, for some mere trifle, and, being refused, became very pressing and importunate to close the bargain for the price that was jestingly offered; nor was it without difficulty that he was convinced we were not in earnest. They were as poor as the rest of their countrymen, very badly clothed, and possessing few skins to barter. Two of them exchanged their otter skin mantles for cotton shirts, which they continued to wear without complaining of cold.

As their visits lasted all day they always brought their food, consisting of the blubber of seals and porpoises. The method used by them in cutting it up is nearly similar to that adopted by the Esquimaux Indians, as described by Sir Edward Parry in his

second voyage, and also resembles the process of the natives of King George's Sound, which I have described in the account of my survey of Australia (vol. ii. p. 140): a piece of blubber being held in the left hand, a corner of it is taken between the teeth, and it is then cut by a knife, held underhanded, into strips backward and forward, without passing the instrument entirely through: so that when the operation is finished the piece draws out into a long band, about an inch thick, formed by the connected strips. The whole affair from first to last is most offensive to the sight; and the countenance of the carver is beyond description, for his eyes being directed to the blubber, squint shockingly, and give his ugly face a hideous appearance. The strip of blubber is next divided among the party, each of whom proceeds to extract its oily juices by drawing it through his teeth and sucking it, after which it is warmed in the fire to facilitate its division into small pieces, which are swallowed or bolted without mastication. Morsels of this dainty food were given not only to the elder children, but even to infants at the breast.

On the 14th, while preparing to weigh, the Indians came on board and helped to heave in the cable, but without rendering us much real assistance. When the sails were loosed, the women in the canoes began to chatter and scream for fear we should carry off their friends, and their alarm was no sooner given than the deck was cleared of our visitors, who seemed to be quite as much frightened for their safety as the women were. In a few minutes afterwards we were proceeding to the southward, and

first tried to anchor in a bay on the south side of Smyth Harbour, but finding the depth too great, I sent Lieut. Graves to sound behind an islet where there were indications of a place of shelter, but he returned unsuccessful. During his absence I went to a very narrow passage, which he had discovered, leading to a large channel or sound; but finding it intricate, I deferred trying to enter with the vessel until a more favourable opportunity should offer, and we returned to the place south of Warrington Cove, called Dighton Bay, where we anchored off a sandy beach in twenty fathoms, and secured the vessel by laying the kedge on the shore. This sandy beach was the first we had found in the eastern part of the Strait. The sand is quartzose, of a white colour, and being a novelty, rendered the place interesting. A stream, supplied by the ravines of Mount Maxwell, runs over the beach into the sea, and from it an abundant supply of excellent water may be obtained without difficulty.

We observed no quadrupeds; but, of the feathered tribe, we found woodpeckers, kingfishers, and woodcocks, and in the sheltered nooks several humming-birds were darting about the flowery underwood of berberis, fuchsia, and arbutus. In the tide-way, at the narrow passage, the sea teemed with fish; over which hovered corvorants and other sea-fowl, preying upon the small fry that were trying to elude their voracious enemies, the porpoises and seals, thousands of which were seen sporting about as we proceeded on our way. Whales were also numerous in the vicinity, probably because of an abundance of the small red

shrimp, which constitutes their principal food.

I went again to examine the passage, and the tide being against us, we were obliged to pull close to the western shore to benefit by the partial eddies, otherwise we could not have proceeded until the turn of the tide.

These narrows, named 'Shag' Narrows, from the quantity of birds there so called by seamen, are not a hundred yards wide. The south end is fronted by an island, from whose summit, about four hundred feet high, I hoped to obtain a good view southward, and after passing the narrows we landed and reached the summit. While looking around at the view, and preparing the theodolite, a woodcock started up from the long grass and walked away so leisurely, that Mr. Tarn nearly succeeded in striking it with a stick. This bird afforded us a name for the station, which we found to be at the northern side of a large basin, ten miles wide, and six long, terminated at its south end by a channel leading to the open sea, but crowded with islands and rocks. A deep inlet or chasm in the land, at the N.W. corner of this basin, was filled with masses of floating ice, broken from an enormous glacier.

After obtaining all the bearings and embarking, we pulled three miles to the westward, and took a round of angles at Point Cairncross, the south-west point of Field's Bay, and again another set at the south head of Icy Sound, near Dinner Cove, where we found a very convenient anchorage for small vessels. Through Icy Sound we found some difficulty in penetrating, as the channel was much obstructed by ice.

Three miles within this sound the rocky shore became more precipitous, and at two miles farther, where the width across was not more than one hundred and fifty yards, the rocks rise perpendicularly on each side to the height of seven or eight hundred feet. Beyond this remarkable part the channel opens out to a basin about half a mile in diameter, bounded by a sloping glacier, from which immense masses of ice broke off frequently, and falling with a noise like the discharge of a ship's broadside, threw up the foaming water with terrific violence.

As we entered the basin, we were startled by a sudden roar, occasioned by the fall of one of these avalanches, followed by echoes which reverberated round the basin and among the mountains. We remained for half an hour afterwards waiting for another fall, but were not gratified. Several were heard at a distance, probably high up the sides of the glacier. The examination of Icy Sound occupied us until dark, when we returned to the schooner.

During our absence, Indians had again visited the Adelaide, the greater number of whom were strangers. We had also seen a party in a canoe close to Mount Woodcock, who were striking seal, and too intent upon their object to pay much attention to any thing else.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.