

***HESKETH VERNON
HESKETH
PRICHARD***



***THROUGH
THE HEART
OF PATAGONIA***

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Through the Heart of Patagonia

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INTRODUCTION

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Patagonia is a country about which little is known to the world in general, books dealing with it being few and far between, while the aspect of that quaint tail of South America and its wild denizens has practically never before been pictorially brought under the eye of the public. The following pages have been written with the idea of familiarising my readers with the conditions of life in Patagonia, and of reproducing as strongly as possible the impressions we gathered during our journey through regions most interesting and varied, and, as regards a certain portion of them, hitherto unvisited and unexplored.

The original motive with which these travels were undertaken lay in a suggestion that a couple of years ago created a considerable stir amongst many besides scientific people, namely, that the prehistoric Mylodon might possibly still survive hidden in the depths of the forests of the Southern Andes. In a lecture delivered on June 21, 1900, before the Zoological Society, Professor E. Ray Lancaster, the Director of the British Museum of Natural History, said: "It is quite possible—I don't want to say more than that—that he (the Mylodon) still exists in some of the mountainous regions of Patagonia." Mr. Pearson, the proprietor of the *Daily Express*, most generously financed the Expedition in the interests of science, and entrusted me with the task of sifting all the evidence for or against the chances of survival obtainable on the spot.

During the whole time I spent in Patagonia I came upon no single scrap of evidence of any kind which would support the idea of the survival of the Mylodon. I hoped to have found the Indian legends of some interest in this connection, and I took the utmost pains to sift most thoroughly all stories and rumours that could by any means be supposed to refer to any unknown animal. Of this part of the subject I have given a full account elsewhere.

There then remained to us but one thing more to do, and that was to examine as far as we could—I will not say the forests of the Andes, for they are primeval forests, dense and heavily grown, and, moreover, cover hundreds of square miles of unexplored country—but the nature of these forests, so as to be able to come to some conclusion on the point under discussion. This we did, with the result that I personally became convinced—and my opinion was shared by my companions—that the Mylodon does not survive in the depths of the Andean forests. For there is a singular absence of animal life in the forests. The deeper we penetrated, the less we found. It is a well-known fact that, where the larger forms of animal life exist, a number of the lesser creatures are to be found co-existing with them, the conditions favouring the life of the former equally conducing to the welfare of the latter. Our observation of the forests therefore led us to conclude that no animal such as the Mylodon is at all likely to be existing among them. This is presumptive evidence, but it is strong, being based on deductions not drawn from a single instance but from general experience.

Still I would not offer my opinion as an ultimate answer to the problem. In addition to the regions visited by our Expedition, there are, as I have said, hundreds and hundreds of square miles about, and on both sides of the Andes, still unpenetrated by man. A large portion of this country is forested, and it would be presumptuous to say that in some hidden valley far beyond the present ken of man some prehistoric animal may not still exist. Patagonia is, however, not only vast, but so full of natural difficulties, that I believe the exhaustive penetration of its recesses will be the work not of one man or of one party of men, but the result of the slow progress of human advance into these regions.

I have recorded some of my observations upon the habits of Patagonian game, and have written somewhat fully upon that most interesting race, the Tehuelche Indians, but I have abstained from very lengthy appendices, for these would be of purely scientific interest.

It is my hope to be able to return to Patagonia and to go further into the many interesting subjects to which my attention was drawn. In any book that may result from this second journey, I look forward to including lists of various zoological, palæontological, and botanical collections, all the materials for which have not at the moment of writing arrived in England.

I would very cordially acknowledge the unfailing help which Dr. F. P. Moreno has accorded to me in every way, and would specially thank him for the photographs and maps he has allowed me to use in the following pages. My thanks are also due to Dr. A. Smith Woodward, F.R.S., for his kind

permission to reproduce his description of the Mylodon skin and other remains discovered at Consuelo Cove by Dr. Moreno; to Dr. Moreno for permitting me to reprint his account of that interesting discovery, and to Mr. Oldfield Thomas, F.R.S., for allowing me to make use of his description of *Felis concolor pearsoni*, the new sub-species of puma which we brought back. I further offer my acknowledgments to the Zoological Society, in whose "Proceedings" the two first-mentioned papers originally appeared.

My best thanks are also due to the Royal Geographical Society, who lent us instruments and gave us every aid in their power, and also to Dr. Rendle and Mr. James Britten, of the Botanical Department of the British Museum, for their kindness in preparing a botanical appendix.

I must record my indebtedness to Mr. John Guille Millais for the pains he took with his illustrations for this book. Before I started, my friend, Mr. Millais, drew me some sketches of huemul, guanaco, and other Patagonian animals. These I showed to the Tehuelches, and was once taken aback by being offered a commission to draw an Indian's dogs. He offered me a trained horse as payment. The praise of the "man who knows" is, after all, the great reward of art.

My thanks are also due to Mr. Edward Hawes, who kindly overlooked the proofs of this book to correct the spelling of the Camp-Spanish. And I would add the name of Mr. Frank A. Jukes, who saw to the outfitting of a medicine-chest.

I would not omit grateful mention of Señor Garcia Merou, the late Minister of Agriculture of the Argentine Republic, of

the late Señor Rivadavia, the then Minister of Marine, to Señor Josué Moreno, to Messrs. Krabbé and Higgins; also to Mr. Ernest Cattle, Mr. Theobald, of Trelew, and to the many kind friends who live in the Argentine Republic.

I am indebted to my friend, Alfred James Jenkinson, Scholar of Hertford College, Oxford, for his kindness in preparing photographs for reproduction.

Most of all I owe a debt (a debt which runs yearly into compound interest) to my mother, who is accountable for anything that is worth while in this book, and who has collaborated in its production.

H. HESKETH PRICHARD.



THE PAMPAS (SHOWING FIRST DIVISION)

CHAPTER I PATAGONIA

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Physical features of Patagonia—The pampas—Climate—Discovery of Patagonia by Magellan—Description of the natives—Sir Francis Drake—Other travellers—Dr. Moreno—Coast-towns—Farms—Gauchos—Emptiness of interior—Route of expedition.

Patagonia forms the southern point or end of the South American continent and extends, roughly speaking, from about parallel 40° to the Straits of Magellan. Up to very recent times the geography of this southern portion of the New World has been in a nebulous condition. Vast tracts of the interior of Patagonia are as practically waste and empty to-day as they were in the long-past ages. It is certainly curious that this land should have been left so completely out of view when the great overflow of European humanity looked overseas in search of new homes where they might dwell and expand and find ample means of livelihood.



ONE OF OUR GAUCHOS

Perhaps the description of Patagonia given in the earlier part of the last century by Darwin had something to do with this omission. He spoke of it as a land having "the curse of sterility" upon it. He dwelt on its desolate appearance, its "dreary landscape," and it would seem that his undervaluing of the country of which, after all, he had but a short and curtailed experience, influenced the whole circle of the nations, with the result that only during the last thirty years or so have the peoples who desire to colonise been discovering how desirable and profitable is the great neglected land of the south.

Patagonia has grown to its present condition very rapidly. Not so long ago it was almost entirely given up to Indians and the countless herds of guanaco. Now there are farms upon the coast, and a few settlements, such as Gallegos with its 3000 inhabitants, and Sandy Point or Punta Arenas, still more populous with 11,000. Behind this narrow strip of

sparsely inhabited coast-land the immense extent of the interior lies vacant.

Patagonia strikes the traveller as huge, elemental. Its natural conformation is stamped with these characteristics. From the River Negro on the north it tapers gradually to the Straits of Magellan on the south. Three great parallel divisions, running north and south, of plain, lake and mountain, each strongly marked, make up the face of the country. From the shores of the Atlantic the pampas rise in gently graduated terraces to the range of the Andes, while between them are strung a mighty network of lakes and lagoons, some connected by rivers, others by channels, many of which shift and alter under the influence of climate and other local causes. From the sea to the Sierra Nevada stretch the pampas, all tussocky grass, thorn, guanacos and mirages. On the western rim of the pampas the Cordillera stand against the sky, a tumult of mountains climbing upwards, their loftier gorges choked with glaciers, their hollows holding great lakes, ice-cold, ice-blue, and about their bases and their bastions thousands of square miles of shaggy forests, of which but the mere edges have yet been explored.

Within its 300,000 square miles of surface Patagonia offers the most extreme and abrupt contrasts. Flat pampa with hardly a visible undulation, mountains almost inaccessible in their steep escarpments. Side by side they lie, crossing many degrees of latitude, the contrast descending to the smallest particulars, mountain against plain, forest as opposed to thorn-scrub, rain against sun. The wind only is common to both more or less, though it is

felt to a far greater degree upon the pampa. The contrast extends to the coasts. The eastern coast is a level treeless series of downs with few bays to offer shelter to shipping; the western coast, on the contrary, is grooved and notched with fjords, and the beetling headlands loom dark with forests.



AMONG THE ANDES

Roughly speaking, the country to the east of the Andes belongs to Argentina, that on the west to Chili: between them lies a long strip of disputed territory. From this great dividing-line rivers flow into both oceans, into the Atlantic and into the Pacific. On the eastern side of the range, where our travels took us, the rivers cut transversely across the continent to the Atlantic. Such are the Chubut, the Deseado, the southern Chico, which joins with the Santa Cruz in a

wide estuary before reaching the ocean, and the Gallegos. At the mouth of each of these a settlement has sprung up.

On the western side the mountains approach more closely to the sea, some of the glaciers on the heights of the Andes actually overhanging the Pacific. The shore is there deeply indented with winding and intricate fjords, and dense dripping forests grow rankly in the humid climate, for the rainfall on the Chilian side of the Cordillera is extraordinarily heavy.

Patagonia is the home of big distances. The Boer used to boast that he could not see the smoke of his neighbour's chimney. On the Atlantic coastland of Patagonia it is often three, four or five days' ride to the nearest farm. The holdings are measured not by the acre or any analogous standard but by the square league. One farm alone in Tierra del Fuego is 400 square leagues in extent. The distances are at first appalling. A man accustomed to cities would here feel forlorn indeed. One stands face to face with the elemental. As you travel into the interior, Nature, with her large loose grasp, enfolds you. There is no possibility of being mentally propped up by one's fellow man. Empty leagues upon leagues surround you on every side, "the inverted bowl we call the sky" above.

Who, having once seen them, can forget the pampas? Evening, and the sun sloping over the edge of the plain like an angry eye, an inky-blue mirage half blotting it out, in the middle distance grass rolling like an ocean to the horizon, lean thorn, and a mighty roaring wind.

Out there in the heart of the country you seem to stand alone, with nothing nearer or more palpable than the wind,

the fierce mirages and the limitless distances.

This wild land, ribbed and spined by one of the greatest mountain chains in the world, appears to have been the last habitation of the greater beasts of the older ages. It is now the last country of all to receive man, or rather its due share of human population.

It must not be forgotten that this is the nearest bulk of land to the Antarctic continent. It thrusts forth its vast mass far into southern waters, and beyond lie a covey of islands, small and large, upon the outermost of which is situated the famous Cape Horn.

On the Antarctic continent there is no life to speak of. In Patagonia, the nearest large land, the human race has been, through the centuries, represented by a few thousand nomad Indians, who in their long roving followed certain well-known trails, from which only a very rare and venturesome individual thought of deviating. Far outside these paths dwelt, according to the native imagination, dangers and terrors unknown. You can follow the same trails to-day. Picture to yourself a dozen or twenty field-paths running side by side, obliterated by the fingers of the spring, and invisible under your feet, but strangely growing into distinctness half a mile ahead, waving onward towards the pampas. Such is the Indian trail.

People in England, one finds, are divided into two groups as to their opinions of the Patagonian climate. One group maintains that the country must be tropical, since it is included in the continent of South America; the other that it is an ice-bound region, for the good reason that it lies close to Tierra del Fuego. Oddly enough, both are in a degree

justified, for the summers there are comparatively hot, but the severity of the winter, when snow lies deep on the country, and cutting winds blow down from the frozen heights during those months that bring to us our long English evenings, is undeniable.

Some day, no doubt, the land will lose its untamed aspect; it will become, as others are, moulded by the hand of man, and expectant of him. But now the great words of one whose eyes never rested on Andean loneliness marvellously describes it:

A land where no man comes nor hath come
Since the making of the world,
But ever the wind shrills.

The discovery of Patagonia dates from the early part of the year 1520, when that most intrepid of explorers, Ferdinand Magellan, forced his way doggedly down the east coast in the teeth of continuous storms. With his little fleet of five vessels he pushed on in the hope, which few if any of his companions shared, of finding a strait joining the two great oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific. Upon what foundation he based this belief cannot now be certainly told, but the analogy of the Cape of Good Hope and rumours that obtained among the geographers and seafaring captains of the day, helped, no doubt, to confirm his own idea that some such outlet existed. As early as 1428, a map of the world, described by one Antonio Galvao as "most rare and excellent," showed the Straits of Magellan under the name of the "Dragon's Tail." This map, being carefully kept in the treasuries of Portugal, was, it may fairly be presumed,

known to Magellan. Also there were two globes, made in Nuremberg shortly before he sailed, in which the channel between the great seas was clearly indicated.

For all that, the existence of a passage was far from being an established fact, but Magellan undauntedly continued his voyage down the Patagonian coast in search of it. He reached the harbour now known as San Julian on March 31, 1520, and there proposed to winter.

Almost at once the famous mutiny against his authority broke out, headed by those who desired to turn back, and who had no faith in the existence of the strait. One of the rebel captains was stabbed upon his own deck, a second executed ashore and a third marooned. The commander of the fourth ship, the *Santiago*, was a friend of Magellan's, who stood by his leader throughout the troubled time.

Weeks passed by, the winter settled down upon them with great severity, and yet no sign of native inhabitants had been perceived upon the shore. The Captain-General sent out an expedition to go thirty leagues into the interior, but the men returned with a disheartening account of the country, which they described as impassable, barren of the necessities of life, and, as far as their experience went, entirely devoid of inhabitants. But one day not long after, a native appeared upon the beach who cut antics and sang while he tossed sand upon his head. This man was successfully lured on board of Magellan's ship. He was dressed in skins, with clumsy boots of the same material, which last fact is supposed by some authorities to have led Magellan to call the people the Patagaos, or big feet. Pigafetta, an Italian who accompanied the exploring fleet,

wrote an account of this Patagonian's appearance. "So tall was this man that we came up to the level of his waist-belt. He was well enough made, and had a broad face, painted red, with yellow circles round his eyes, and two heart-shaped spots on his cheeks." He further says the man was armed with a bow and arrows, the bow being short and thick and the arrows tipped with black and white flint heads. In another place Pigafetta asserts that the least of the Patagonians was taller than the tallest men in Castile.



A TEHUELICHE CACIQUE

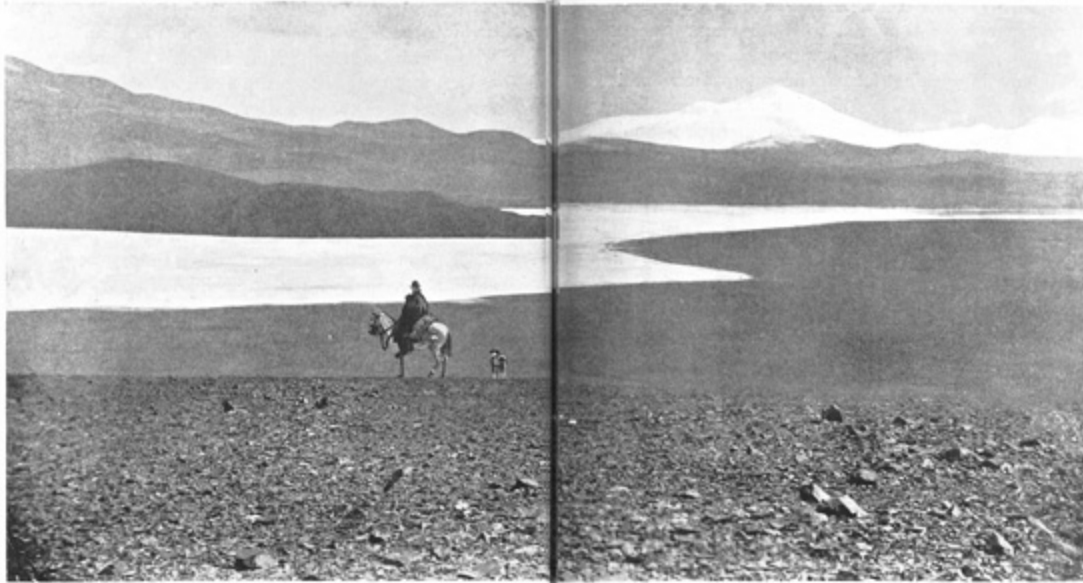
Magellan treated the man with kindness, and soon other natives paid the Spaniards visits. With them they appear to

have brought a couple of young guanacos, leashed together and led by a cord. They stated that they kept these animals as decoys for the wild herds, who on approaching the tethered guanacos fell an easy prey to the hunters lying in ambush close at hand.

The Patagonians are said to have eaten rats, caught on the ship, whole, without even removing the skins! However, they seem to have been peaceably disposed towards the Spaniards, until Magellan, being struck with their great height, resolved to take home some specimens of the race as curiosities for the Emperor, and consequently he entrapped two of the young men while on board his vessel. Seeing, however, that one of these Patagonians grieved for his wife, Magellan sent a party ashore with a couple of the natives to fetch the woman: but on the road one of the natives was wounded, the result being that the whole tribe took to flight after a slight skirmish with the Spaniards, one of whom died almost instantly after being struck by an arrow. From this event it would seem that the Patagonians of that period used poisoned arrows, as do the Onas of Tierra del Fuego to-day. These people do not employ vegetable poison, but leave their arrows in a putrid carcass until they become infected.

The next navigator to visit the shores of Patagonia was Sir Francis Drake in 1578. He also commanded a small squadron of five vessels, and, curiously enough, had to cope with a plot against his life when in the same harbour of Port San Julian. The story is well known. Mr. Thomas Doughty, the chief mutineer, was given his choice of death, or of marooning, or to be taken home for trial. He chose death,

and was accordingly executed. Drake speaks of the natives as being no taller than some Englishmen.



LAKES AND THE DISTANT CORDILLERA (SHOWING SECOND DIVISION)

During the next hundred years various expeditions touched upon the coasts, some captained by Englishmen, such as Narborough, Byron, and Wallis. The two latter differ a good deal from each other with regard to the stature of the Patagonians. Byron mentions a chief 7 ft. high, and adds that few of the others were shorter. Wallis, on the other hand, gives an average of from 5 ft. 10 in. to 6 ft., the tallest man measured by him being 6 ft. 7 in. At an earlier date than either of these a Jesuit named Falkner, being in Patagonia, mentions a *cacique* some inches over 7 ft.

In 1783 the traveller Viedma penetrated into the interior and discovered one link of the long chain of lakes lying under the Andes, which still bears his name. He gave the people an average of 6 ft. of stature. Some fifty years after this, H.M.S. *Beagle*, with Darwin on board, touched at many points of the coast, and short trips inland were undertaken.

Darwin's journals give the first detailed account of the country. He agrees with Captain Fitzroy in describing the Patagonians as the tallest of all peoples.

During the years 1869-70, Captain George Chaworth Musters, of the Royal Navy, spent several months with the nomad Indians, traversing a great distance in their company, and becoming acquainted with many interesting facts concerning their habits and customs. Since the publication of his book in 1871 practically nothing exhaustive has been written about Southern Patagonia. One or two travellers have given short accounts of visits there, but the serious opening up of the country is due to the initiative and energy of Dr. Francisco P. Moreno, whose first excursion to Patagonia was made in 1873. In the following year he carried his investigations as far south as the River Santa Cruz. In 1875 he crossed from Buenos Aires to Lake Nahuel-Huapi and the Andean Cordillera, between parallels $39^{\circ} 30'$ and 42° . In 1876 he visited Chubut, and ascended the river Santa Cruz to its parent lake, which he proved was not that discovered by Viedma in 1782, but another lying farther south. To him is due the earliest suggestion of the great system of lakes which are situated in the longitudinal depression that runs parallel with the Cordillera.

Again, in 1879, Dr. Moreno crossed the country to the Cordillera on parallel 44° . Up to that time surveying in those regions was by no means exempt from danger, on account of the hostile attitude of the tribes. The amount of valuable work done by Dr. Moreno did not end with his personal expeditions. Each summer of late years the Argentine and Chilian Boundary Commissions have been surveying and

opening up the country. First and last Dr. Moreno must always be regarded as the great geographer of Patagonia.

Among the gentlemen engaged on the boundary work I should like to mention the Norwegian Herr Hans P. Waag, who, on behalf of the Argentine Commission, penetrated from the Pacific coast up the river De las Heras to Lake Buenos Aires, and from thence overland to Trelew. It would be difficult to overpraise the work of this traveller.

Others, who as pioneers, travellers, scientific men, or surveyors, have taken a part in the good work of making the interior of Patagonia known to the world are Baron Nordenskjöld, Mr. Hatcher, and the members of the Chilian and Argentine Boundary Commissions. I think that in any such list as the above mention should be made of those who first settle in a district, and who realise in greater degree than even the pioneer explorers the difficulties and drawbacks of a new country, and undoubtedly their hardihood is of immense and enduring value. I would, therefore, include the name of the Waldron family, who have taken a large part in settling the southern districts of Patagonia and also in the colonising of Tierra del Fuego.



A PATAGONIAN *ESTANCIA*

With this brief reference to the more important journeys hitherto made in Southern Patagonia, it may be well to give here some description of the country as it appears to-day. There are upon the eastern coasts some settlements, as I have mentioned, and also the Welsh colonies of Trelew, Dawson, Gaimon, besides these a very small and recent one exists at Colohaupi, near Lake Musters, and another, The 16th October, far away in the Cordillera. This last is the single settlement of any size south of parallel 40° in the central interior.

A fringe of farms runs along the coast, and at the mouths of the rivers are situated little frontier towns, such as San Julian, Santa Cruz and Gallegos. Towards the south and along the shores of the Strait the fringe of farms has grown broader and the country is more generally settled, the Chilian town of Punta Arenas being an important port. The few vast straggling farms are given up chiefly to sheep-breeding, the main export being wool. But cattle and horses are also raised in large numbers, for the land has proved very suitable for pasturage. The farm buildings vary, of course, in many ways: some are large and comfortable homesteads, others mere squalid huts, but one and all are almost invariably roofed in with the universal galvanised iron.

The Welsh colonists have introduced a good strain to the growing population, and there are constant wholesome as well as vicious importations. In a country where shepherding of one sort or another is the chief industry, it is inevitable that some equivalent of the cowboy of the North must be

developed. The Gaucho is the Patagonian cowboy, and he is manly and picturesque enough to be very interesting.



ARGENTINE GAUCHO

The Gauchos are picturesque both in their lives and in their appearance: a pair of moleskin trousers, long boots, and a handkerchief usually of a red pattern, a slouch hat of black felt, and a gaudy poncho serve them for apparel. The poncho, which is merely a rug with a hole in the middle for the head, makes a comfortable great-coat by day and a blanket by night.

A Gaucho may be sprung from any nation on earth. Even as the shores of Patagonia are washed by the farthest tides of ocean, so the same tides have borne to people her solitude a singular horde of massed nationalities. But it is the man born in the country of whatever stock who becomes the true Gaucho. Infancy finds him in the saddle, and he grows there. Other men can stick on a horse, but the Gaucho can ride. Living as they do, they form a class alone. On horseback they are more than men; on foot, I am half tempted to say, less, for they would rather ride fifty miles than walk two. They are farm-hands, shepherds, horse-breakers, occasionally good working vets, and when they

prosper they buy waggons and go into the carrying trade; in fact, they form the foundation of Patagonian life.

The coast settlements are similar to such places all the world over: storekeepers, men who run wine-shops, traders, and the usual sort of folk who form the bulk of dwellers on the edge of civilisation.

In Patagonia it is not difficult to leave civilisation behind you, for between lat. 43° and 50° S. the interior, save for a very few pioneers and small tribes of wandering Tehuelche Indians, is at the present day unpeopled. When the line of the Cordillera is reached, you come to a region absolutely houseless, where no human inhabitant is to be found. Comparatively speaking, but little animal life flourishes under the unnumbered snow peaks, and in the unmeasured spaces of virgin forest, which cover those valleys and in many places cloak the mountains from base to shoulder. Hundreds of square miles of forest-land, gorges, open slopes, and terraced hollows lie lost in the vast embrace of the Patagonian Andes, on which the eye of man has never yet fallen.



HALF-BREED GAUCHO

Our travels took us over a great part of the country. Starting in September 1900, we zigzagged from Trelew by Bahia Camerones, to Lakes Colhué and Musters and along the River Senguerr to Lake Buenos Aires. After spending a time in the neighbourhood of that lake, we followed the Indian trail for some distance, then touching the Southern Chico we reached Santa Cruz on the east coast in January 1901. Leaving most of the expedition there, I returned with two companions by the course of the River Santa Cruz to the Cordillera, where I remained for some months, and in May I once more crossed the continent to Gallegos to take ship for Punta Arenas, the only port in Patagonia where a steamer calls regularly. I left Patagonia in June 1901. I

compute that the whole distance covered by the journeyings of the expedition cannot have fallen short of 2000 miles.

Of the zoology of Patagonia little is known. Of the fauna and flora of the Cordillera of the southern central part it is not too much to say that practically nothing is known. Patagonia thus offers one of the most interesting fields in the world to the traveller and naturalist.

With these preliminary remarks, I will beg the reader to embark with me upon the Argentine National transport the *Primero de Mayo*, bound from the port of Buenos Aires for the south.

CHAPTER II

SOUTHWARD HO!

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Leaving England—Start—*Primero de Mayo*—Port Belgrano—Welsh colonists—Story of Mafeking—First sight of Patagonia—Golfo Nuevo—Port Madryn—Landing—Trelew—A pocket Wales—Difficulties of early colonists—Other Welsh settlements—Older and younger generations—Welsh youths and Argentine maidens—Language difficulty will arrange itself—A plague of "lords"—Lord Reed—Trouble of following a lord—Itinerary—Travelling in Patagonia—Few men, many horses—Pack-horses—Start for Bahia Camerones—Foxes, ostriches, cavy—On the pampas—Guanaco—First guanaco—*Maté*—Dogs—Farms—Indians—Landscape—Mirages—Vast empty land—*Cañadones*—*Estancia* Lochiel—Seeking for puma—Killing guanacos—Many pumas killed during winter months—Gauchos.

We arrived at Buenos Aires early in September 1900, and on the 10th we embarked again on board the *Primero de Mayo*, one of the transports of the Argentine Government, by which my companions and myself had courteously been granted passages to Patagonia. The *Primero de Mayo* is a boat of 650 tons. We carried an extraordinary amount of deck cargo, for there were a good many passengers on board, as these transports offered the sole means existing at that time^[1] of communication by sea with Argentine Patagonia.

We started about one o'clock. Lieutenant Jurgensen, the *commandante*, was good enough to invite us to dine on that