

on January 23rd. The Falklands are a treeless expanse of moorland and bog, and bare and barren rock. Though it was summer, and the islands are in about a corresponding latitude to London, a bitterly cold hail-storm pelted in my face as I was rowed to the shore. The islands are occupied as sheep- and cattle-runs, and since sheep are found to pay best, they are supplanting the cattle, formerly so numerous, to a large extent.

The mutton is most excellent, but the supply is so far in excess of the small demand, that the Falkland Island Company has a large boiling-down establishment, where their sheep are boiled down for tallow.

I rode with Lieut. Channer 60 miles across the large island, on which the town of Stanley is situate, to Port Darwin, in order to examine some reported coal-beds, at the request of the Governor. The route lay over the dreary moorland, and wound and turned about in order to avoid the treacherous bogs. A "Pass" in the Falkland Islands means, not a practicable cleft in the mountains, but a track by which it is possible to ride across a bog. The horses born and bred in the island know full well when they are approaching dangerous ground, and tremble all over when forced to step upon it.

At every ten miles or so a shepherd's cottage was met with. Usually the shepherd was a Scotchman in the employ of the Falkland Company. Otherwise the entire route was uninhabited. Some of the shepherds are married. They seem well off and were very hospitable. These Scotchmen have almost entirely supplanted the "gauchos" from the mainland, who did all the cattle work at the time of Darwin's visit to the islands. They come out from home usually entirely unaccustomed to riding, but very soon become most expert with the lasso and bolas, and can ride and break in the wildest horses. There were only two Spanish guachos in the employ of the Company at the time of our visit.

The Company's shepherds are each allowed eight horses, a fresh one for every day of the week, and a pack-horse. The horses feed together on the moorland near the shepherd's cottage, and keep together in a band though quite free. An old broken-down mare, which cannot roam far, is usually kept with each band.

Generally, the mare is one in which the hoofs, as occurs quite commonly in the Falklands from the softness of the soil, are grown out and turned up, somewhat like rams' horns.* Though the gauchos themselves are a thing of the past in the

* The hoofs of cattle in the islands grow out in a similar manner. "Proc. Zool. Soc.," 1861, p. 44, 1869, p. 59. See also C. Darwin's "Journal of Researches," p. 192.