

in the chase. Nevertheless, in two places in this very central region, I found small heaps of stones, which I do not think could have been accidentally thrown together. They were placed on points, projecting over the edge of the highest lava cliff, and they resembled, but on a small scale, those near Port Desire.

May 4th.—Captain Fitz Roy determined to take the boats no higher. The river had a winding course, and was very rapid; and the appearance of the country offered no temptation to proceed any further. Everywhere we met with the same productions, and the same dreary landscape. We were now one hundred and forty miles distant from the Atlantic, and about sixty from the nearest arm of the Pacific. The valley in this upper part expanded into a wide basin, bounded on the north and south by the basaltic platforms, and fronted by the long range of the snow-clad Cordillera. But we viewed these grand mountains with regret, for we were obliged to imagine their nature and productions, instead of standing, as we had hoped, on their summits. Besides the useless loss of time which an attempt to ascend the river any higher would have cost us, we had already been for some days on half allowance of bread. This, although really enough for reasonable men, was, after a hard day's march, rather scanty food: a light stomach and an easy digestion are good things to talk about, but very unpleasant in practice.

5th.—Before sunrise we commenced our descent. We shot down the stream with great rapidity, generally at the rate of ten knots an hour. In this one day we effected what had cost us five-and-a-half hard days' labor in ascending. On the 8th we reached the "Beagle" after our twenty-one days' expedition. Every one, excepting myself, had cause to be dissatisfied; but to me the ascent afforded a most interesting section of the great tertiary formation of Patagonia.

On March 1, 1833, and again on March 16, 1834, the "Beagle" anchored in Berkeley Sound, in East Falkland Island. This archipelago is situated in nearly the same