

before the appearance of the European mounted hunter, enables it to see far ; its dim grey plumage, the colour of the haze, made it almost invisible to the eye at a distance, the long neck being so slender and the bulky body so nearly on a level with the tall grasses ; while its speed exceeded that of all other animals inhabiting the same country. When watching the chase of Ostriches in the desert pampas, abounding in giant grasses, it struck me forcibly that this manner of hunting the bird on horseback had brought to light a weakness in the Rhea—a point in which the correspondence between the animal and its environment is not perfect. The Rhea runs smoothly on the surface, and where the tall grass-tussocks are bound together, as is often the case, with slender twining plants, its legs occasionally get entangled, and the bird falls prostrate, and before it can struggle up again the hunter is close at hand and able to throw the *bolas*—the thong and balls, which, striking the bird with great force, wind about its neck, wings, and legs, and prevent its escape. When I questioned Ostrich hunters as to this point they said that it was true that the Rhea often falls when running hotly pursued through long grass, and that the deer (*Cervus campestris*) never falls because it leaps over the large tussocks and all such obstructions. This small infirmity of the Rhea would not, however, have told very much against it if some moderation had been observed in hunting it, or if the Argentine Government had thought fit to protect it ; but in La Plata, as in North America and South Africa, the