

That, he said in reply, was the easy criticism that any one who came to the reading in a hostile spirit would make. They would fasten on that apparently weak point and not pay much attention to the fact that it is fairly met and answered in the book. When he first read the book it convinced him ; but he had come to it with an open mind and I with a prejudiced mind on account of my religious ideas. He advised me to read it again, to read and consider it carefully with the sole purpose of getting at the truth. "Take it," he said, "and read it again in the right way for you to read it—as a naturalist."

He had been surprised that I, an ignorant boy or youth on the pampas, had ventured to criticize such a work. I, on my side, had been equally surprised at his quiet way of reasoning with me, with none of the old scornful spirit flaming out. He was gentle with me, knowing that I had suffered much and was not free yet.

I read it again in the way he had counselled, and then refused to think any more on the subject. I was sick of thinking. Like the wretch who long has tossed upon the thorny bed of pain, I only wanted to repair my vigour lost and breathe and walk again; to be on horseback, galloping over the green pampas, in sun and wind. For after all it was only a reprieve, not a commutation of sentence—though one of a kind unknown in the Courts, in which the condemned man is allowed out on bail. My pardon was not received until a few years later. I returned with a new wonderful zest to my old sports, shooting and fishing, and would spend days and weeks from home, sometimes staying with