

as Cape Horn ; but though the Andes seem to be lost in the sea before the southern apex of the continent is reached, Chili can hardly be blamed for planting the penal colony of Punta Arenas in the Straits of Magellan. Not content with that, she contends that the whole continent south of the Rio Negro, which takes its rise in the Cordillera in lat. 36 deg., and flows into the Atlantic, and, therefore, all Patagonia is hers. Patagonia may be of little value, but the Straits of Magellan have become a highway of commerce since steam permitted the abandonment of the circuitous Cape route for the shorter but more dangerous passage of the strait ; and Chili showed foresight in taking possession. The Argentine Republic holds a different view of the question, which revives every few years, and is discussed with a bitterness which savours of war.

The sea only disputes with Chili, possession of her rocky coast from Cape Horn northward for 1200 miles to the 25th parallel south latitude ; there Bolivia claims that her jurisdiction begins, while Chili wished to push her boundary north to the 22nd deg., though she did not insist on fixing it farther north than the 23rd deg. In the Colonial days Peru and Chili were contiguous. Bolivia then, had no existence. It branched off from Peru and constituted itself a separate power only after the revolution had broken out. Previously to that, the interior of what is now Bolivia, existed under a distinct colonial organization, subordinate to Peru Bajo, as Peru Alto ; but on the coast, according to certain colonial documents, it would seem that the 25th parallel of south latitude, was regarded as dividing the kingdoms of Peru and Chili. However, a degree more or less, evidently mattered little, for a map prepared by order of the Spanish king, in 1790, and the official report of the then viceroy, define the limits of Chili, as between 22 and 28 deg., south latitude. Amidst

such discrepancies, Chili was able to make out a strong case when the discovery of guano within the debateable ground, gave her a motive for extending her power as far as she reasonably could to the north ; and she showed her moderation in not demanding that the 22nd deg. instead of the 23rd deg., be the dividing line. War was averted by compromise, for by the treaty of 1866, it was agreed that the 24th parallel should divide the two countries, but that the republic of Chili and the republic of Bolivia, should divide equally the products of the deposit of guano already discovered, or which might hereafter be discovered in the territory comprised between the degrees 23 and 25 of south latitude. Yet so little value did this export then possess, that it was not till 1870 a commission was appointed to determine and mark the points corresponding to the 25th, 24th, and 23rd parallels, and to run the lines inland across the desert from the coast to the Cordillera. Just then all Chili was excited by news of the recent discovery of a new silver region, forty leagues inland from the coast, and not far from, if not within, the neutral zone. Those Bolivians who have intelligence, devote their minds to politics and revolution—the mass of the people are as ignorant of what passes outside their own villages, as the outside world is ignorant of them. To the Bolivian mines of Caracoles there did not flock, therefore, Bolivian miners from famous Potosi, but Chilenos from Chanarcillo. Chilian science also soon erected splendid silver-reducing works at Antofagasta, on the Bolivian coast, and Chilian capital ran a railroad over the desert towards the mines. Antofagasta was also, even at that date, the seat of another Chilian industry. It was then the most southerly point at which had been opened the beds of nitre that underlie the pampas above the coast breastwork of the Pacific from Arica, for 450 miles, even to Taltal in Chili. Languishing attempts to exploit this