

of a few yards right to windward, some tern struggling against a very strong breeze, while, where I stood, the air was quite calm. Approaching close to the brink, where the current seemed to be deflected upward from the face of the cliff, I stretched out my arm, and immediately felt the full force of the wind: an invisible barrier, two yards in width, separated perfectly calm air from a strong blast.

I so much enjoyed my rambles among the rocks and mountains of St. Helena that I felt almost sorry on the morning of the 14th to descend to the town. Before noon I was on board, and the "Beagle" made sail.

On the 19th of July we reached Ascension. Those who have beheld a volcanic island, situated under an arid climate, will at once be able to picture to themselves the appearance of Ascension. They will imagine smooth conical hills of a bright red color, with their summits generally truncated, rising separately out of a level surface of black rugged lava. A principal mound in the centre of the island seems the father of the lesser cones. It is called Green Hill; its name being taken from the faintest tinge of that color, which at this time of the year is barely perceptible from the anchorage. To complete the desolate scene, the black rocks on the coast are lashed by a wild and turbulent sea.

The settlement is near the beach; it consists of several houses and barracks placed irregularly, but well built of white freestone. The only inhabitants are marines, and some negroes liberated from slave-ships, who are paid and victualled by government. There is not a private person on the island. Many of the marines appeared well contented with their situation; they think it better to serve their one-and-twenty years on shore, let it be what it may, than in a ship; in this choice, if I were a marine, I should most heartily agree.

The next morning I ascended Green Hill, 2,840 feet high, and thence walked across the island to the windward point. A good cart-road leads from the coast settlement to the