

Clarence Bay, off Tartar Stairs, the landing-pier of George Town. The sun was just setting, and the outlines and coloring had a most improbable effect; the near cones perfectly symmetrical and of a deep crimson; intermediate rough lava-masses, like cinders seen through a huge magnifying-glass, deep brown or pitch-black; and in the middle Green Mountain, an irregular peak of gray trachyte, the gray of the rock melting into the curious blue green of the Australian foliage above.

Ascension is certainly a strange little place. It is purely volcanic; and although there is now no sign whatever of volcanic activity, the cones of tufa are so fresh, and so defined and vivid in their different shades of brown and red, and the lava-beds are so rugged, apparently utterly unaffected by atmospheric action, that the impression is irresistible that it is a lately formed heap of cinders and ashes, probably still resting upon slumbering fires. The island is irregularly oval in form, about seven and a half miles long by six wide; the position of the central peak is lat. $7^{\circ} 56' 58''$ S., long. $14^{\circ} 20'$ W. It is directly in the path of the south-east trade; so that there is an exposed weather side, with abrupt cliffs and precipices and unsafe landing, and a lee side, where there is the settlement and anchorage. As in almost all these volcanic islands in the path of constant winds, during the periods of eruption the scoriæ and ashes have been driven to leeward of the centre of action, and have produced a bank which now forms good holding anchorage-ground.

From the anchorage there is not a particle of vegetation to be seen, except the slight green tinge near the top of Green Mountain, about six miles distant; only a waste of lava and ashes, black, gray, and red, rising peak after peak and ridge after ridge, until the harsh outlines and abrupt alternations of color become somewhat softened down and mellowed in the distance. The little town is placed on a dreary plot of cinders at the end of a valley which winds up between two great cones of red ashes, and eventually reaches the foot of Green Mount-