

in the rocky valleys, and afford a good deal of very exciting, if rather break-neck, sport. The most useful wild plant is the Cape gooseberry (a species of *Physalis*), which is very common, and yields an abundance of pleasant subacid berries. *Vinca rosea* has spread all about, in its white and lilac varieties, and a tuft of its showy flowers is about the only relief to the general sterility. In a genial tropical climate, prevented from becoming insupportably hot and dry by the moisture-laden trade, and with a soil rich from the decomposition of volcanic minerals, it is wonderful what a tendency to vegetation there is. The beds are so porous that the unfrequent rain dries off at once; but even the slightest shower brings into transient blossom and beauty some little parched-up mummy of a plant in every crevice. If they could only irrigate bit by bit for a few years till enough of vegetable soil had been accumulated to make the surface a little more compact and retentive, I am sure this wilderness would soon blossom like the rose. Natural causes will carry this out in time; and no doubt some of Captain East's remote successors in office, a few centuries hence, will be pruning their vines on the slopes of Cross Hill.

For the last mile the road zigzags up the steep slope of Green Mountain, and the whole character of the scenery suddenly changes. The clouds, driven before the south-east trade, gather and linger about the top of the mountain, and besides a frequent most refreshing mist, a reasonable amount of rain falls; not only enough to supply the requirements of the little colony on the mountain, but enough (except in exceptionally dry weather) to supply George Town also, whither it is conveyed from Dampier's Springs and other sources in iron pipes to a reservoir.

An area on the top of the mountain, of between four and five thousand acres, thus forms an oasis of the most delicious verdure in the middle of the desert, with a charming climate, the thermometer ranging from about 17° to 27° C.