

from Cumberland Bay to Mount Portezuela, 1800 feet high, west of El Yunque, and this ridge was visited several times by the officers of H.M.S. "Adventure." It was here that Alexander Selkirk had his lookout, as from this point both sides of the island can be seen, and in its vicinity Commodore Powell of H.M.S. "Topaze" has placed a tablet with the following inscription :—

In Memory of
ALEXANDER SELKIRK, Mariner,
 A native of Largo in the County of Fife, Scotland,
 Who was on this island in complete solitude
 for four years and four months.
 He was landed from the Cinque ports Galley, 96 tons,
 16 guns, A.D. 1704, and was taken off in the
 "Duke" privateer, 12 February 1709.
 He died Lieutenant of the "Weymouth," A.D. 1723,
 Aged 47 years.

This tablet is erected near Selkirk's look-out by
 Commodore Powell and officers of
 H.M.S. "Topaze," A.D. 1868.

On the coast of Juan Fernandez are some small indentations, and vessels have anchored on all sides of the island ; but Cumberland Bay on the north shore is the only good place, and even here the great depth of water and the squalls from the hills render it sometimes insecure, for the interval of calm between the squalls renders a ship liable, by surging ahead after having had a taut cable, to overrun her anchor and foul it so that eventually she drifts off the bank. To guard against such an accident it is advisable to lay out a small anchor to the northward.

In the valleys the soil is of some depth, and fit for the production of any vegetable, and wheat might possibly be grown, but the hillsides, as before mentioned, are very steep, and the soil there is shallow and soon washed away by the rains. The tops of the hills are frequently capped, and from this circumstance there is never any want of fresh water on the island, every valley apparently possessing a small stream or rivulet, by the sides of which the early navigators planted water cresses, which still flourish. There are upwards of twenty-four species of ferns growing in this small island of Juan Fernandez, and in any general view the ferns form a large proportion of the main mass of vegetation. Amongst them are two tree ferns, of which only one was seen amongst the rocks in the distance, but could not be reached. The preponderance of ferns, especially the tree ferns, gives a pleasant yellow tinge to the general foliage. Curiously enough the almost cosmopolitan common Brake Fern (*Pteris aquilina*) does not occur in the island. Four species of the ferns out of the twenty-four present are peculiar to the island, and one (*Thyrsopteris elegans*) belongs to a genus which occurs only here ; its appearance is