

Paul's Rocks, fixed against the lower parts of the cliffs, breeds a species of Noddy (*Anous*), and together with it a beautiful small snow white Tern with black eyes (*Gygis candida*), called by the seamen the "White Noddy," to distinguish it from the "Black Noddy."

The summit of the rock is flat, and the plateau is covered with guano; in hollows nest the Booby (*Sula leucogastra*), a Gannet (*Sula piscator*), and the Frigate Bird (*Tachypetes aquila*). The throat of the Frigate Bird hangs in the form of a sort of pouch in front, which is bare of feathers and of a brilliant vermilion colour, as if rubbed over with some bright red powder; this gives the bird a very handsome appearance.

When the plateau was first reached all the birds allowed themselves to be knocked over with sticks on their nests or when near them, but they soon became generally alarmed and took to flight. The Frigate Birds were on the lookout whenever the Gannets were molested, and snatched up the small fish which they disgorged, thus profiting by the general disaster. A single "Wideawake," the name given to the Tern (*Sterna fuliginosa*), which breeds in millions gregariously at "Wideawake Fair" on the main island, was found on the plateau; the bird was nesting amongst the Gannets for some reason or other.

It was striking to find breeding thus in the middle of the Atlantic, on the top of a steep volcanic rock, the same assemblage of birds which had been seen breeding together on a coral island at sea level off the northeast coast of Australia. At Raine Island there is a third species of Gannet and a Frigate Bird but no *Gygis*; the same Noddy, the same two Gannets, and the Wideawake breed there together as at Ascension; and also one of the species of Tropic Birds of Ascension.

The whole island is a series of extinct volcanic cones (fig. 331); the rocks collected being augite-andesite, basalt, phonolite, trachyte, liparite (?), obsidian, pumice, volcanic tufa; one ejected specimen was a granite.

The Expedition remained at Ascension from the 27th March to the 3rd April, coaling and provisioning the ship, and obtaining astronomical and magnetical observations. During this time the members of the Expedition visited all the chief points of interest, and received the greatest attention and assistance from the resident naval authorities.

#### ASCENSION TO PORTO PRAYA.

At 5 A.M. on the 3rd April the voyage to England was resumed. After sounding and dredging in 420 fathoms close to the island, a line of soundings was carried northwards to the Equator to join a line of soundings which had been obtained in August 1873 from the Cape Verde Islands south to the parallel of 3° N. At a position in lat. 3° 10' N., long. 14° 51' W., a dredging was taken in 2450 fathoms on the same spot where a sounding was obtained on the 21st August 1873. The ship then proceeded northwards along the coast of Africa to Porto Praya, San Iago.

Between Ascension and the Cape Verde Islands the southeast trade only extended to