

shortly as a whole, and where oceanic animals and plants will also be treated of to some extent.

The voyage of the "Challenger" occupied three years and 155 days, and out of this period about 520 days, or portions of these, were available for excursions on shore. A very large proportion of the time in harbour was necessarily spent at places where dockyards and workshops were available for repairs to the ship. The stays made at less-frequented places of especial interest to the naturalist were comparatively short. This circumstance should be borne in mind by the reader.

After stopping at Lisbon, Gibraltar, and Madeira—which latter island was afterwards visited a second time, and will be referred to in the sequel—the ship reached Tenerife, one of the Canary Islands, and anchored off Santa Cruz, the chief town of the island, on February 7th, 1873.

**Tenerife, Canary Islands, February 7th to 14th, 1873.**—The most striking feature in the natural vegetation of Tenerife is the *Euphorbia canariensis*. The fleshy prismatic branches of this plant are devoid of leaves, have a bluish-green colour, and are perfectly straight and perpendicular, being disposed side by side, and 10 or 15 feet in height. The plant is abundant all over the rocks at a low elevation, and resembles a cactus in appearance. It has an abundant milky juice, which is very acrid and poisonous. Of the introduced vegetation, the plantations of the broad-lobed cactus (*Opuntia*), employed for the raising of the Cochineal insect, are curious. The crop of insects was, in the month of February, just being started on the plant, that is to say, the female insects were being placed upon the leaf-shaped lobes of the plant to lay their eggs, and start a fresh brood. The females are, when thus put out at the beginning of the season, held on to the plants by means of white rags tied round the lobes. Hence the fields, when seen at a distance, look as if they contained some crop bearing a continuous sheet of large white blossoms. I was greatly puzzled by them when looking at them as the ship was approaching the island. The island is so steep and rocky that it has been terraced for purposes of cultivation, and nearly every available spot has been treated in this manner.

I accompanied a party on an excursion up the Peak. The way led from Santa Cruz, through the Cochineal fields, and up a steep but well-engineered road, planted with tamarisk trees to the summit of the central ridge of the island. Here was passed a dilapidated town, thoroughly Spanish in its architecture, with some fine houses in it in a ruinous condition. The central square of the town was overgrown with weeds, and its streets mostly covered with grass; but so are many in the capital,