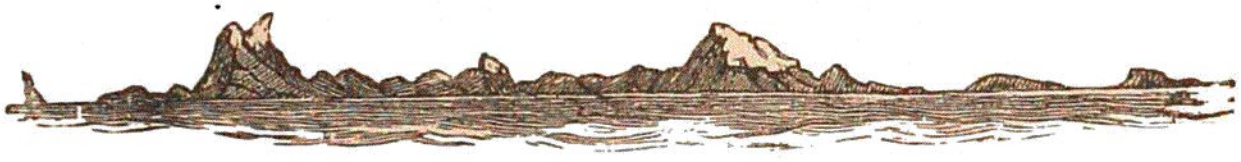
CHAPTER III.

ST. PAUL'S ROCKS AND FERNANDO NORONHA.

St. Paul's Rocks. Equatorial Current. Nests of Noddies. Predatory Habits of *Grapsus strigosus*. Fishing off the Rocks. Nests of Boobies. Pugnacity of the Young Birds. Other Inhabitants of the Rocks. Fishing for Cavalli with Salmon Tackle. Geological Structure of the Rocks. Seaweeds growing on the Rocks. Fernando Noronha. Calcareous Sandrock containing Volcanic Intermixture. Tree Shedding Leaves in Dry Season. *Jatropha urens*. Birds. Brazilian Convicts. St. Michael's Mount. Frigate Birds Nesting. Pigeons Nesting with Sea Birds. Lizards of the Islands.

St. Paul's Rocks, August 28th and 29th, 1873.—The ship arrived at St. Paul's Rocks on August 25th. The rocks are about 540 miles distant from the coast of South America, and 350miles from the island of Fernando Noronha. The group of rocks is scarcely more than half a mile in circumference, and their highest point is only 64 feet above sea level.

At 5 P.M. the rocks were about half a mile from the ship. Their smallness is the striking feature in their appearance as they are approached. They show themselves as five small projecting peaks, which are black at their bases, and white with birds' dung on their summits. A yellowish-white band shows



ST. PAUL'S ROCKS.

out about tide mark. The sea was dashing up in foam at the south-east end of the rocks, and a long line of breakers stretching from the opposite end marked the course of the equatorial current.

The birds were to be seen hovering over the island in thousands. Only three kinds inhabit it—two noddies and the booby. The noddies (*Anous stolidus* and *A. melanogenys*) are small terns or sea swallows, black all over, with the exception of a small white patch on the head. The booby (*Sula*