

CHAPTER VI.

CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

Aspect and Formation of the Country. Simons Bay. Appearance of the Vegetation. The Road to Cape Town. The Silver Tree. Habits of Baboons. The Rock Rabbit. Habits of Rodent Moles. Kitchen Middens. Burial Places of Natives. Antelopes. An Ostrich Farm. Tracks of Animals in the Sand. Great Variety of Flowering Plants. Clawless Otter. Land Planarians. Chameleon. Jackass Penguins. *Bdellostoma*. Rare Whale with Long Tusks. *Peripatus capensis*, the Ancestor of Insects. The Turacou.

Simons Bay, October 28th to December 17th, 1873.—We anchored at Simons Bay on October 28th, but found ourselves in quarantine because we had had yellow fever on board at Bahia.

The Cape of Good Hope lies at the end of a long narrow promontory running nearly north and south, and forming, between itself and Cape Hangklip on the east, a large bay known as False Bay, whilst at its point of origin from the mainland and on its east side, is Table Bay with Cape Town at its head.

The promontory has a sort of backbone of mountains, which in some places come right down steep into the sea, in others are flanked by more or less extensive sand-flats. The mountains are highest towards the northern extremity of the ridge which terminates in the far-famed Table Mountain, 3,550 feet in height. Constantia Berg, about one-quarter of the distance from this point to the Cape, is 3,200 feet high; the remaining mountains range from about 2,000 to 2,500 feet.

The sandy flats are towards the southern part of the promontory almost confined to its Western side, the steep slopes of the mountains on the False Bay side being for the most part washed directly by the sea, but at the head of False Bay a wide extent of flat sandy plain extends right across the head of the bay and round the foot of Table Mountain northwards. This plain is known as the "Cape Flats."

The Cape of Good Hope is at the tip of the promontory,