

CHAPTER XI.

DECEPTION ISLAND.

THE following remarks on Deception Island are from the Journal of Dr. J. S. Whittle, of the Expedition, who visited the place in the schooner *Seagull*, in March, 1839.*

The harbour of Deception Island has the shape of a horseshoe, and is from fifteen to twenty miles in circumference. The entrance is but three hundred yards wide. It is inclosed by a ridge of hills varying from eight hundred to one thousand eight hundred feet high; on the north, as seen from the bay, they are black and gloomy, while those on the south side are streaked with red. Not a trace of vegetation is anywhere to be seen. Pendulum Cove, in which we finally anchored, is a small basin, about four hundred yards in diameter, surrounded by some of the highest hills on the island; their slopes are deeply furrowed by the rains, and present a singularly bleak and desolate appearance.

There is great difficulty in ascending the hills on account of the looseness of the soil, as it gives way under every step. When dry, it has a dark gray colour, but is perfectly black when wet. The banks are formed of volcanic rocks, nearly of the same colour as the soil, though sometimes lighter, and of masses of ice, mixed layer for layer with earth.

On the southern side of the harbour, about two miles from the anchorage, several streams of salt water were observed running from the lower part of the hills and emptying into the bay, which were hot enough to have boiled an egg. Three miles farther towards the mouth of the harbour we saw vapour rising in immense quantity;

* Many specimens were collected by Dr. Whittle and Mr. J. W. E. Reed, U. S. N., but they were unfortunately lost in the upsetting of a boat.