

hotel; consequently, there was a long day yet before us, in which we might see everything that was to be seen in the place. Having discharged our muleteers, therefore, who seemed overjoyed at the receipt of one dollar a-piece, swallowed a hasty breakfast, and made ourselves somewhat comfortable, we lost no time in setting out upon a stroll of examination and discovery.

Ponto del Gada is, on the whole, rather a neat town, containing from twelve to fourteen thousand inhabitants; but being built, especially in the outskirts, without much regard to compactness, it covers more ground than many places of double the amount in population. It stands upon a little bay, formed by two projecting headlands, and can boast of a tolerable harbour and excellent roadstead. In its immediate vicinity the country is more uniformly level than any I had yet observed; the vale extending to the distance of four or five miles on every side, and ending in an amphitheatre of low green hills, which resemble, in appearance, the downs as they are seen from Eastbourne in Sussex. The whole of this flat is in a state of high cultivation, being cleared, perhaps too completely, of wood, and portioned off into different fields and parks by hedges and stone walls. Judging from the appearance of the crops, I should conceive that the soil was here of some depth, as well as fertility, the whole valley being covered with wheat, barley, and Indian corn. And in truth, if the aspect of the country beyond the downs, where rocks tower one above another in rude and barren grandeur, furnish a legitimate criterion by which to determine respecting the general fertility of the island, I should be almost tempted to believe that the whole industry of its people has been expended upon this spot, simply because it was the only one capable of rewarding it. I was assured, however, by the natives, that such is not the case; and that, in the interior, and towards the opposite coast, the rugged magnificence of mountain scenery gives place to a more profitable though less picturesque champaign.

The principal streets of Ponto del Gada are paved, and kept at once cool and clean by a constant sprinkling of water, which it is the business of two or three men stationed at pumps within a certain distance of one another, to scatter over them. Of the by-streets little can be said in praise, they being, like those of