

sensible of the danger and impropriety of drinking a quantity of bad water in such a situation, yet we could not refrain. As for my own part, it was utterly out of my power to listen at that time to the dictates of prudence; and I believe it was equally difficult to my companions, if I might judge from the avidity with which they drank out of the little pools, lying on the ground at full length, that being the only posture in which it was to be obtained.

The regularity of the streets of the town, which intersect each other at right angles; the buildings, gardens, castle, and forts; with twenty-three ships then at anchor in the bay; all which appeared directly underneath us; was a sight beautiful and pleasing beyond description. The perpendicular height of this land is 1857 feet from the surface of the water. On the top of it we gathered several species of heath, some wild celery, a few shrubs, and some non-descript plants; we found also some little stones of a fine polish and singular whiteness.

In our descent which proved nearly as difficult and troublesome as going up, we saw some runaway negroes, round a fire, on the cliff of a stupendous rock, where it was entirely out of the power of their owners to get at them. To look at their situation, one would think it beyond the utmost stretch of human ingenuity to devise a way to reach it. Here they remain all day in perfect security, and during the night, make frequent excursions to the town and the parts adjacent, committing great depredations on the inhabitants. The whole of the subsistence of these fugitives depends on this precarious method: and even this method would prove insufficient, were it not for the assistance they receive from those who were once their fellow slaves. Nor is it always they succeed in their predatory trips, which necessity thus urges them to take; they are often betrayed by their quondam friends; and when this happens, as the Dutch are not famed for their lenity in punishing crimes, they are made horrid examples of. But neither the fear of punishment, nor hunger, thirst, cold, and wretchedness, to which they are often unavoidably exposed, can deter them from making Table Land their place of refuge from what they consider to be greater evils. Scarcely a day passes but a smoke may be seen from some of these inaccessible retreats.

In the mild or summer season, which commences in September, and continues till March, the Table Land is sometimes suddenly capped with a white cloud, by some called the *spreading of the table cloth*. When this cloud seems to roll down the

steep face of the mountain, it is an unerring indication of an approaching gale of wind from the south-east; which generally blows with great violence, and sometimes continues a day or more, but in common is of short duration. On the first appearance of this cloud, the ships in Table Bay began to prepare for it, by striking yards and topmasts, and making every thing as snug as possible.

A little to the westward of the Table Land, divided by a small valley, stands, on the right hand side of Table Bay, a round hill, called the Sugar Loaf; and by many the Lion's Head, as there is a continuance from it contiguous to the sea, called the Lion's Rump; and when you take a general view of the whole, it very much resembles that animal with his head erect. The Sugar Loaf or Lion's Head, and the Lion's Rump, have each a flag-staff on them, by which the approach of ships is known to the Governor, particularizing their number, nation, and the quarter from which they came. To the eastward, separated by a small chasm from the Table Land, stands Charles's Mount, well known by the appellation of the Devil's Tower; and so called from the violent gusts of wind supposed to issue from it, when it partakes of the cap that covers the Table Land; though these gusts are nothing more than a degree of force the wind acquires in coming thro' the chasm. —When this phenomenon appears in the morning, which is by no means so frequent as in the evening, the sailors have a saying, as the Devil's Tower is contiguous to the Table Land, that the old gentleman is going to breakfast; if in the middle of the day, that he is going to dinner; and if in the evening, that the cloth is spread for supper.

The foregoing high lands form a kind of amphitheatre about the Table Valley, where the Cape Town stands. From the shipping the town appears pleasantly situated, but at the same time small; a deception that arises from its being built in a valley with such stupendous mountains directly behind it. On landing, however, you are surpris'd, and agreeably disappointed, to find it not only extensive, but well built, and in a good stile; the streets spacious, and intersecting each other at right angles with great precision. This exactness in the formation of the streets, when viewed from the Table Land, is observed to be very great. The houses in general are built of stone, cemented together with a glutinous kind of earth which serves as mortar, and afterward neatly plastered, and white washed, with lime. As to their height, they do not in common exceed