

The adjacent country is mountainous, and chiefly covered with wood, a small part of it only being cultivated. Near the town the soil is loose and sandy, but farther from the river it is a fine black mould. It produces all the tropical fruits in great plenty, and without much cultivation, a circumstance exceeding agreeable to the inhabitants, who are very indolent. The mines, which lie far up in the country, are very rich. Their situation is carefully concealed, and no one can view them, except those concerned in working and guarding them. About twelve months before our

arrival, the government had detected several jewellers in carrying on an illicit trade for diamonds, with slaves in the mines; and immediately afterwards a law passed, making it felony to work at the trade, or to have any tools fit for it in possession, the civil officers having indiscriminately seized on all that could be found. Near 40,000 negroes are annually imported to dig in the mines, so pernicious to the human frame are those works. In 1776, 20,000 more were draughted from the town to supply the deficiency of the former number.

C H A P. II.

The departure of the Endeavour from Rio de Janeiro—Her passage to the entrance of the Streight of Le Maire—The inhabitants of Terra del Fuego described—Mr. Banks and Dr. Solander ascend a mountain in search of plants—An account of what happened to them in this excursion—The Endeavour passes through the Streight Le Maire—An account of her passage, and a further description of the inhabitants of Terra del Fuego, and its productions—Remarks respecting the south east part of Terra del Fuego, and the streight of Le Maire—Directions for the passage westward round this part of America, into the South Seas—The passage of the Endeavour from Cape Horn to the newly discovered islands—An account of their figure and appearance—The inhabitants described; with a narrative of the various incidents during the coast, and on the Endeavour's arrival among them.

ON the 8th of December, having procured all necessary supplies, we took our departure from Rio de Janeiro; and on the 9th an amazing number of atoms were taken out of the sea. These were of a yellowish colour, and few of them were more than the 5th part of an inch long; nor could the best microscope on board the Endeavour discover whether they belonged to the vegetable or animal creation. The sea was tinged in such a manner with these equivocal substances, as to exhibit broad streaks of a similar colour, for near the space of a mile in length, and for several hundred yards in breadth. Whence they came, or for what designed, neither Mr. Banks nor Dr. Solander could determine. Perhaps they might be the spawn of some marine animal, unknown to either ancient or modern philosophers.

On the 11th we hooked a shark. It proved to be a female. When opened we took six young ones out of it, five of which were alive, and swam briskly in a tub of water, but the sixth appeared to have been dead some time. From this time we met with no material occurrence till the 22d, when we discovered numerous birds of the procellaria kind, in latitude 39 deg. 37 min. south, and longitude 49 deg. 16 min. west; we also discovered great numbers of porpoises of a singular species, about 15 feet in length, and of an ash colour. On the 23d we observed an eclipse of the moon; and about seven o'clock in the morning, a small white cloud appeared in the west, from which a train of fire issued, extending itself westerly: about two minutes after, we heard two distinct loud explosions, immediately succeeding each other, like those of cannon, after which the cloud disappeared. On the 24th we caught a large loggerhead tortoise, weighing one hundred and fifty pounds. We likewise shot several birds, one an albatross, which measured between the tips of its wings nine feet and an inch, and from its beak to the tail two feet one inch and an half. On the 30th we ran upwards of fifty leagues, through vast numbers of land insects, some in the air, and others upon the water; they appeared to resemble exactly the flies that are seen in England, though they were thirty leagues from land, and some of these insects are known not to quit it beyond three yards. At this time we judged ourselves to be nearly opposite to the bay called Sans Fond (without bottom) where it is supposed by some writers, that the continent of America is divided by a passage; but it was the opinion of our circumnavigators, that there might be a large river, which probably had occasioned an inundation. On the 31st we had much thunder, lightning and rain. This day and the three following, we saw several whales; likewise a number of birds

about the size of a pigeon, with white bellies and grey beaks.

On the 3d of January we saw the appearance of land, in latitude 47 deg. 17 min. south, A. D. 1769. and longitude 61 deg. 29 min. 45 sec. well, which we mistook for Pepy's island. In appearance it so much resembled land, that we bore away for it; and it was near two hours and an half before we were convinced, that it was one of those deceptions which sailors call a Fog-bank. At this time our seamen beginning to complain of cold, they were furnished with a pair of trowsers, and a Magellanic jacket, made of a thick woollen stuff called Fearnought. On the 11th, after having passed Falkland's Island, we saw the coast of Terra del Fuego, at the distance of about four leagues from the west to south-east by south. As we ranged along the shore to the south-east, smoke was perceived, made, probably, by the natives as a signal, for it was not to be seen after we had passed by.

On the 14th we entered the streight of Le Maire, but were afterwards driven out again with such violence, (the tide being against us) that the ship's bow-sprit was frequently under water. At length, however, we got anchorage in a small cove, on the east of Cape St. Vincent, the entrance to which our captain named St. Vincent's Bay. The weeds which grow here upon rocky ground are very remarkable, they appear above the surface in eight and nine fathoms water. The leaves are four feet in length, and many of the stalks, though not more than an inch and a half in circumference, above one hundred.

Dr. Solander and Mr. Banks went on shore, where having continued four hours, they returned about nine in the evening, with upwards of an hundred different plants and flowers, of which none of the European botanists had taken any notice near this bay. The country in general was flat, and the bottom, in particular, was a grassy plain. Here was plenty of wood, water, and fowl, and winter bark was found in great plenty. The trees appeared to be a species of the birch, but neither large nor lofty. The wood was white, and they bore a small leaf. White and red cranberries were found in these parts.

On the 18th we came to an anchor in twelve fathom water, upon coral rocks, before a small cove, at the distance of about a mile from the shore. At this time two of the natives came down upon the beach, as if they expected that the strangers would land; but as there was no shelter here, the ship was got under sail again, and the Indians retired disappointed. The same afternoon about two o'clock, we came into the bay of Good Success, and the vessel coming to an anchor, the captain went