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A VISIT TO ST. HELENA.

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We had rounded the Cape of Good Hope, homeward bound, and had left Table Mountain which we saw in the dim distance, wrapt in its mantle of mist, far behind. Day after day, the calm monotony of the boundless waters surrounded us. We were in the track of the south-east trade-winds. The sails of our ship swelled out unvarying and unshifting to the breeze as we went gliding on steadily over the wide rolling billows.

"Land!"

We hurried up from our cabin. The morning's sun shone with that bright effulgence that can only be witnessed on the clear sky of the Southern hemisphere. We could see, far away ahead of us, a haze as of a cloud resting upon the water, and amidst the haze an outline vague and indistinct, significant only to the practiced eye of the mariner. As the ship bowled on and we approached the land, the outline began to swell out into detail, until as we sailed along the coast we could see the shore cliff rise up from the ocean depths, presenting an impregnable wall and towering up to an amazing height. We could hear the splash of the waves as they curled and wreathed and burst against the base of the adamantine rock. From the precipitous heights

the green surface of the land rolled away into the farther view, an irregular mass of hills and valleys. Here and there a seagull winged its lofty flight, swooping and curving in the shadow of the perpendicular cliffs; not a habitation was visible. The only thing that indicated the presence of man was the signal station, surmounted by its tall staff. After rounding a point of the land we came in sight of a number of ships, which lay in a roadstead, where we also cast anchor, at a short distance from the shore and in full view of Jamestown, the chief, or rather the only town in the Island of St. Helena.

It may not be superfluous to remind the reader that St. Helena is an island fifteen leagues in circumference, in the South Atlantic; that it is sixteen degrees south of the Equator, and about 1,200 miles distant from the nearest point of the African coast. Its situation on the track of the south-east tradewinds rendered its possession, at one time, a matter of high importance. It lies in the course that ships from the Indies and from China were, owing to the uniform direction of these winds, under the necessity of taking; and although its value as a stronghold has become of far less magnitude since the opening of a direct route to the East, *via* the Suez