

which is difficult at this season of the year, as the southwesterly monsoon sometimes reaches the island. The town is clean, and has a good supply of water, brought in by an aqueduct from the foot of the hills. Coal is stored on Quail Island, and can be procured if necessary, but it is not so cheap as at St. Vincent.

The country rises inland in a succession of terrace-like steps often remarkably flat at the top, and formed by successive flows of lava. The flat table-land nearest the sea was parched and had very little green upon it. Behind rises a succession of small conical hills and higher table-lands, which were brilliantly green.

There is a large Baobab tree (*Adansonia digitata*) near the town, which has been mentioned by travellers. Its stem is irregular in transverse section and short; it measured 42 feet in circumference at the time of the visit, when it was in full flower with no fruit as yet of any size. An excellent photograph of it was obtained (see Pl. II.).

Quails were not at all plentiful, being only migratory visitors to the island, and not having as yet arrived in numbers. The Kingfisher (*Halcyon erythrorhyncha*), mentioned by Darwin, is common; it is peculiar to the island, though very closely allied to an African species, and is a beautiful bird, brilliant blue and white with a red beak. Like many other kingfishers it is not aquatic in its habits, but feeds mainly on locusts and other small terrestrial animals; it has a terribly harsh laughing cry, a feeble imitation of that of its congener of Australia the Laughing Jackass. Birds of prey are very abundant in St. Iago; large falcons and hawks were very common, and eagles were seen in San Domingo valley. Ravens and crows were also very plentiful. It is difficult to understand on what so many predaceous birds can feed; possibly the falcons and hawks frequent the island in numbers only in the quail season. The Gecko, *Tarentola delalandii*, which had been found in Tenerife, was obtained here, as also a Skink (*Euprepes*).

An excursion was made by Mr. Moseley to the San Domingo valley, in the hopes that it would be found possible to ascend the highest mountain of the island, called San Antonio, 7400 feet in altitude, in search of the plants growing on its summit. The journey to the base, ascent, and return to the harbour in twenty-four hours was stated to be feasible by the townspeople, but it proved that such is by no means the case. The road led directly inland, and as the successive terraces were ascended the hills became greener and greener, being covered by a continuous carpet of seedling grass and other herbs as yet only two or three inches in height. The guide said that it would be a foot or eighteen inches high later on, and that then the quails would abound and the guinea fowl breed, so that the breeding season of these birds here appears to be in the autumn, and determined by the rainy season.

The valley of San Domingo into which the road at length led is deep, with precipitous cliffs and steep mountains on either side, rising 1000 to 2500 feet above sea level. The valley is broken here and there by lateral offsets and backed towards its head by irregular mountain masses. The view up the valley is very beautiful. Beneath the