



CAPE TOWN, SOUTH AFRICA.—This Capital of the British possessions in South Africa, lies at the foot of Table Mountain on the shore of Table Bay. It was founded by the Dutch in 1650, but in 1795 was taken, together with the colony, by the English. At the peace of Amiens it was restored to the Dutch, but in 1806 it was once more taken by the English and has since remained in their possession. The town is quite regularly built; the houses are of good size and are mostly of brick or stone, generally having a veranda in front. The town is exposed to great heat, facing the noon-day sun, and backed by naked mountains. The Castle is on the right side of the town and commands the anchorage of Table Bay. Many of the public offices of the Colony are within the fortress and its walls also contain barracks holding 1,000 men. Table Bay is capable of containing a great number of ships, but it is exposed to a very heavy swell during the prevalence of the westerly winds in June, July and August, though at other times it affords safe anchorage. An observatory has been built about two miles north of the town and large iron buildings have been erected as depots for coal to supply steamers touching at Cape Town en route to Australia. Table Mountain at the height of 900 feet is a solid mass of granite, but after ascending 900 feet more it changes to red sandstone. Its entire height is 3,567 feet above the sea.