

GLEANINGS FROM EXCHANGES.

THE VOLCANO of Mauna Loa, as we learn from the Honolulu *Advertiser* of March 17, was still active and as much if not more of an object of interest as at the time of our last account. The scene of eruption is visited almost daily by adventurous parties, both male and female, some of whom barely escape with their lives. Others encounter severe hardships—such as suffering extreme thirst for two or three days, while “traveling over clinkers, with their boots worn to tatters and the blood, during the last day, marking their track over the lava.” A volcanic crusade.

The *Advertiser* says that Mr. Vaudry, an English traveler, went to visit the new craters and, from the course he intended to take, it was thought he had got between the new and old flows of lava, which would render his position very critical.

Mauna Loa has several craters—some of which have been developed since the commencement of the eruption. Kilauea is that from which the vast columns of burning lava and immense boulders are thrown to such an incredible height—later and more accurate accounts say from two hundred and fifty to five hundred feet. This crater lies several miles to the eastward from the volcano of Mauna Loa proper, and, it would seem, “is but remotely connected with the shaft that is now sending out Lava.”

In the central craters of Mauna Loa the lava is not thrown up in massive columns, but, rising to the mouth of the crater and overflowing, pours its overwhelming torrent of hot lava into the sea, after flowing about thirty eight miles, through a district utterly devastated by its ravages.

Count Strzelecki, a Polish nobleman, who visited the crater of Kilauea in 1838 says that, “having visited most of the European and American volcanoes, I find the greatest of them inferior to Kilauea crater, in intensity, grandeur, and extent or area.” But the present eruption is said to excel that of any previous eruption on the Sandwich Islands.

The same traveler, in his attempt to describe that eruption, thus continues:—

“No where does the solution of the great problem of volcanic fires by Sir Humphrey Davy, receive a more palpable illustration than here; the access of the water to the ignited masses of these minerals of alkaline and earthy bases, by which that great philosopher explained the convulsions of volcanic fires, is displayed here in most portentous, most awful effects. It is only to those millions of vents all around the crater, through which the superabundance of steam escapes—to the millions of fissures through which the sulphurous and sulphuric acids liberate themselves from beneath, that the preservation of Hawaii from utter destruction, by the expansive force of steam and gases, can be ascribed.”

Kilauea is at an elevation of 4,104 feet above the level of the sea, while some of the more central craters are about 12,000 feet above the sea level.

From an account published in the Honolulu *Advertiser* of March 10, giving a history of various eruptions of this volcano, Mauna Loa, on the Island of Hawaii, is justly regarded as one of the most remarkable in the world, rising directly from the sea, in one stupendous mount, to the distance of some 14,000 feet—nearly three miles. The volcanoes of Cotopaxi—a peak of the Andes in Ecuador, which rises 18,887 feet above the level of the sea—and Popocatepetl, in Mexico, which rises some 17,700 feet, are counted among the most remarkable; but these, having their bases on elevated table lands, in reality show a height of only eight or nine thousand feet.

On the island of Hawaii, there are, or have been, three large volcanoes—Mauna Loa, Mauna Kea and Hualalai—which, it is thought, were in frequent action during the eighteenth century. Mauna Kea and Hualalai are now extinct. Mauna Loa is the only volcano now active, on Hawaii.

Hualalai was last in action about sixty years since. It was first ascended by a party from Vancouver's vessels, in 1794. At its last eruption “it poured out a volume of liquefied rock, which overran a wide extent of country, destroying several villages, fish ponds, and plantations, finally expanding itself in the ocean, where it filled up an extensive bay, twenty miles in length, and formed a new headland several miles beyond the old termination of the coast.”

The natives narrate the unfortunate destruction of a woman and her child, by one of these last eruptions. At the base of the mountain there were then, as there is now, small villages of fishermen along the coast. Though the eruption began in the night, nearly all the inhabitants escaped. In one hut, only the husband was awakened by the hissing noise of the burning, molten mass, as it urged onward, con-

suming everything before it that was destructible. He went out to ascertain the cause of the noise and, in his consternation, fled, barely escaping, leaving his wife and child in the house asleep and, before the woman could be awakened, the lava had encircled the house. To attempt to cross the fiery stream would be instant death. The hut was soon in flames. The woman, with her child in her arms, sought refuge in a pandanus tree, which, in a few minutes, with the woman and child, was hurled into the burning torrent and utterly consumed. Mr. Jarves says that “the mountain yet looks gloomily, as if boding some new disaster.”

Prof. Dana, of the U. S. Exploring expedition, gives an account of several early eruptions of Kilauea. He says:—

“The first eruption of Kilauea, of which tradition gives any definite knowledge, occurred about the year 1789, during the wars and conquests of Kamehameha I. It took place between Kilauea and the sea, in a south-easterly direction. It is said to have been accompanied by violent earthquakes and rendings of the earth, and an eruption of stones and cinders from open fissures. It was so violent and extensive that the heavens were completely darkened, and one hundred lives are supposed to have been lost.”

The same eruption is said to have destroyed a portion of the army of Keoua, rival of Kamehameha.

The next eruption was in 1823, which is thus described by Mr. Ellis:—

“A large tract of country in Kan was flooded, and the stream, when it reached the sea, as I am informed by Mr. Coan, was five to eight miles wide. The earth is said to have been rent in several places, and the lavas were ejected through the fissures, commencing their course above ground some miles south of Kilauea. There was no visible communication with the lavas of the crater at the time, but the fact of their subsiding some hundred feet simultaneously with the eruption, is satisfactory evidence of a connection.”

In June, 1832, both Kilauea and the summit crater of Mauna Loa were active. Prof. Dana remarks:—

“The only ejection at this time of the lavas of Kilauea to the surface, of which we have definite account, occurred in the east wall of the crater. A deep fissure was opened in the wall, from which streams flowed out, part back into Kilauea down the steep slope, and part across into the old crater, which at the time was overgrown with wood.”

Preceding the eruption above alluded to, there was an earthquake which had rent in twain the walls of the crater, on the east side, from top to bottom.

The summit crater of Mauna Loa, during this eruption, continued burning for two or three weeks. “The lavas broke out in different places and were discharged from so many vents that the fires were seen on every side of the dome and were visible as far as Lahaina.”

In 1840, on the 30th of May, according to Mr. Jarves’ “Scenes and Scenery,” a terrible eruption of Kilauea occurred. When the inhabitants of Hilo fully comprehended their condition, with an awful, burning mountain above them, fear seized upon many; but happily, the torrent of lava turned in a north-easterly direction and, in less than four days, reached the sea, having flowed a distance of forty miles. The depth of the torrent was from twelve to upwards of two hundred feet. Jarves writes that:—

“To the windward, the running lava could be approached near enough for those who visited it to thrust long pole into the liquefied rock, and draw forth specimens.—On the leeward side, owing to the intensity of the heat, the noxious and deadly vapors and gases with which the air was impregnated, and the showers of hot ashes, sand and cinders which were constantly descending, all vegetation for many miles was destroyed, and the inhabitants obliged to flee with the greatest expedition.”

Fortunately, however, the district through which the flood passed was sparsely populated and the loss was confined to a few small huts and a multitude of swine and poultry.—The color of the mass, while sluggishly flowing, was of deepest crimson; when more active, it “resembled gore and fresh blood violently stirred together.” Such was the brilliancy of the light from this volcanic mass, that, at Hilo and places forty miles distant, “the finest print could be read at midnight.” The same writer says that “This noon-tide brightness, converting night into day, prevailed over all East-Hawaii, for ten weeks, and is represented by eye-witnesses, to have been a spectacle of unsurpassed sublimity. It was like the glare of a blazing furnace and was seen for upwards of a hundred miles at sea.”

Another eruption took place in January, 1843, breaking out at the summit of Mauna Loa, in two streams, at an elevation of nearly 13,000 feet. One of the streams was twenty-five or thirty miles wide and averaging a mile and a half in width.

On the north side of Mauna Loa, another eruption broke out in February, 1852, the rumbling of which was heard forty miles. Mr. J. Fuller, in an account of it, says:—

“Language, on such an occasion, is powerless; eloquence is dumb, and silence is the expression most congenial to the sentiments of the soul.”

In August, 1855, near the summit of Mauna Loa, was another eruption, an account of

which was printed in the *Advertiser* of July 24, 1856, from which we extract the following, omitting the previous detail of the journey of an exploring party, who, after traveling four or five days, mostly through a rough and blackened volcanic region, arrived at the border of the liquid steam:—

“We approached the vents with awe, and, looking down their fiery throats, we heard the internal surging and saw the mad rushings of the great molten stream fused to a white heat. The angle of descent was from 3° to 25° and we judged the velocity to be forty miles an hour. The maddening stream seemed to be hurrying on as if on swift commission from the Eternal to execute a work of wrath and desolation in the realms below.”

They traveled for miles on the arched ceiling of this fiery canal, with the fearful, internal burning stream madly rushing beneath them. Finally they reached the summit and found themselves standing on the “craggy and smoking crest.” Here they are lost in wonder.—Says the *Advertiser*:—

“This was the high fountain of eruption—the great chimney whose throat goes down immeasurable depths into those fearful realms where man’s eye never penetrated, and where he cannot look and live.”

They felt, then, if never before, their insignificance and a sense of humility came over them. They were mere “specks—atoms in creation, obscured by smoke, startled by infernal hissings,” amid those wild wonders whose awful displays of power had scattered such a tempest of fiery hail and raised such a raging sea of molten rocks on those everlasting hills.

This eruption lasted about thirteen months, threw out quantities of lava probably never surpassed during the residence of whites on those islands and, most propitiously, ceased when the overwhelming tide of lava was within six or seven miles of Hilo. The area covered by the consuming liquid is said to have exceeded three hundred square miles.

Concerning the present eruption, which commenced Jan. 23, 1859, the *Advertiser* says:—

“In grandeur and beauty, no eruption within the memory of man now living can compare with the present. It differs from most previous ones in the fountain-like manner in which the lava is ejected from the crater to a height from 200 to 500 feet. It is seldom that eruptions occur combining a great flow of lava with such a lofty spouting.”

During the day time, the light from the crater is scarcely perceptible; but in the night, the scene is at once grand and terrific.

A heavy, dense column of smoke rises continually from the crater, to a height of, perhaps, ten thousand feet, hovering over the island of Hawaii and indeed all the islands and, when the trade wind lulls, settles down, obstructing the view.

The course of the lava stream across a plain is thus described:—

“Here was a stream of lava, rolling over the plain, twenty or twenty five feet in height, and an eighth of a mile in width, though its width varied a great deal, sometimes broader and sometimes narrower. It was, in fact, a mass or pile of red hot stones, resembling a pile of coals of fire, borne along by the more liquid lava underneath. As it moved slowly along, large red boulders would roll down the sides, breaking into a thousand small stones, crushing and burning the trees, melting the rocks, and destroying everything which lay in the track.”

The stream reached the ocean, as we have before related; where the scene assumed a character of “terrific and undecipherable grandeur.” The *Advertiser* attempts a description:

“The mightiest of earth’s magazines of fire poured forth its burning billows to meet the mightiest of oceans. For two score miles it came rolling, tumbling, swelling forward, an awful agent of death. Rocks melted like wax in its path; forests crackled and blazed before its fervent heat; the very hills were lifted from their primeval beds and sank beneath its tide, or were borne onward by its waves; the works of man were to it but as a scroll in the flames; Nature shriveled and trembled before the irresistible flow.”

Rushing over a precipice of fifty feet, the maddened, “gore-bued river of fused minerals” poured its flood into the ocean:—

“The waters recoiled, and sent forth a tempest of spray; they roamed and lashed around and over the melted rocks; they boiled with the heat, and the roar of the conflicting agencies grew fiercer and louder. The reports of the exploding gases were distinctly heard twenty five miles distant. They were likened to discharges of whole broadsides of heavy artillery. Streaks of the intensest light glanced like lightning in all directions.”

The intense heat of the red hot flood has boiled the water of the ocean for miles around. Dead fishes have come ashore, fifteen miles distant from the place of junction, and steam issues forth at every wash of the waves. At latest dates, however, the stream had ceased flowing into the sea.

Excursionists are cautioned to carry plenty of blankets, go prepared for rainy weather and, if good pedestrians, to go on foot. Small parties can find comfortable shelter in caves, without the incumbrance of tents.

—*POI*.—The staple article of food among the natives of the Sandwich Islands, is getting scarce and high-priced, owing in some measure, says the Honolulu *Advertiser*, to the winter freshets, which have swept away great quantities of taro; but principally to the “increasing indolence and vice created by the recent introduction of *Hulo*.” The *Adv.* says that “complete starvation is evidently in prospect under the present order of things.”

—THE NEW American cent, mint of 1859, is a little smaller than the five dollar gold piece and about as thick. It is handsome and handy.

—THE CHINESE—some of the more wealthy of them—are leaving California and returning home. Two hundred of them recently touched at Honolulu, on their way, on board the ship *Sea Bird*.

—IT WAS PROPOSED, some time since, to erect a monumental hall at Honolulu, to the memory of Capt. Cook, the great navigator, who was killed by the natives at Kealakekua Bay, nearly one hundred years ago. Capt. Cook was an Englishman and the British Acting Consul at Honolulu, having lately paid a visit to the spot where Cook met his death, the matter is again brought to notice by a letter from the Acting Consul, B. Toup Nichols, in which he asks if any of his British brethren will aid him at once to place “some simple stone to mark the spot where Cook fell?” He says, “Is it any wonder that foreigners taunt us with the neglect of the fame of our men of science?” And further, “A rotting stump is still the only monument to Cook’s memory.” Towards this object Consul Nichols subscribes one hundred dollars. After this small memento is placed on the spot, he has signified his willingness to “join in any measure for collecting subscriptions throughout the world, to erect on Diamond Head, or else where, a monument in some degree more commensurate with Cook’s fame.”

—A SAILOR’S HOME is to be erected in Hongkong, China.

—NEW GUANO islands have been recently discovered in the Pacific, south west of the Sandwich Islands. These new localities of guano deposits are not laid down on any chart and were taken formal possession of. Their locality is not accurately described, but it is said that holes five feet deep were dug in the deposits of wild fowl droppings, without reaching the bottom, and the quantities are estimated at several million tons.

Malden’s, Arthur’s, Howland’s, and Christmas are the names of other new guano islands recently discovered in the Pacific, which have also been formally taken possession of by citizens and recognized by the government of the United States. At one of these islands there is a “land-locked harbor in a lagoon six miles wide by twelve miles long, which is entered from a bay outside, where ships can safely anchor in seven to ten fathoms water. Almost the entire surface of this island, over forty miles long and fifteen wide, is covered with guano from one to ten feet deep.”

—THE PORTUGUESE whaling company, says the San Francisco *Times*, composed of fifteen men, in the year 1857, in the bay of Monterey and the adjoining ocean, captured thirty one whales, which yielded 31,926 barrels of oil, which, at the California market price, 40 cents per gallon, would be worth upwards of \$400,000, giving a net profit to each man of about \$27,000 for one year’s labor.

The *Advertiser* (Honolulu) exclaims, after alluding to the above, “Who wouldn’t go a whaling?” While the average yield of the whales said to have been taken by the Portuguese company would be more than a thousand barrels each, the common yield of whales is from thirty to eighty barrels. One lately captured at Lahaina, S. I., yielded forty three barrels. Those San Francisco whales must be very large fishes!—and, not requiring the enormous expense of fitting up a whale ship, they put out from March to November, in whale boats and “there she blows” is soon heard from the man in the bows, instead of the foretop—the whale is harpooned, drawn ashore and rendered into sperm. No three or four years cruise and lingering absence from home. That is the way things are done up in the Far, Far West, on the coast of the mild Pacific.

—MIKE WALSH, the notorious leader of political rowdiness in New York city, was found, on the morning of March 17, lying dead in an area in 8th Avenue. The coroner’s jury gave a verdict that he “came to his death by apoplexy, produced from being precipitated down the stone steps of No. 138, 8th Avenue” and that “from the absence of his watch and chain, which was in his possession when last seen by his friends, and other circumstances, we believe that violence was resorted to by some person or persons unknown.” Walsh had been on a drinking frolic and was about returning home. Besides his gold watch and chain, he was robbed of his diamond ring and pocket book.

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