

structure. With this rapid notice of a few of the principal products of modern volcanic eruptions, I pass to the consideration of other phenomena connected with this subject.

The effects produced by lavas, and their slow or rapid progress, depend, of course, on their degree of incandescence and fluidity. Lava currents from Vesuvius have flowed a mile and a half in fourteen minutes; others have reached the sea in three hours from the summit of the mountain, a distance of 3200 yards. The lava stream which destroyed Catania in 1669, was fourteen miles long and five wide. In Etna, currents have been traced forty miles in length; and a stream that issued from Mount Hecla, in Iceland, is computed at ninety-four miles by fifty.* Some streams are very sluggish, and diverted from their course by any considerable obstacle; others retain a high temperature for many years. A curious circumstance occurs when trees are enveloped by lava: the upper parts and the branches alone burst out in a flame, while the trunk is only carbonized, and if subsequently removed, may leave its impression in a hollow, cylindrical tube, within the solid rock. Such moulds are common in the Isle of Bourbon, in those lava currents that have extended their ravages through forests of palms.†

15. MOUNT ETNA.—This volcanic cone, which is entirely composed of lavas, rises majestically to

* Scrope on Volcanoes, p. 92.

† Ibid. p. 107.