

in length, and covers an area of 4000 square miles, is a complete mass of volcanic matter, perforated by innumerable craters. It is in fact a hollow cone, rising to an altitude of 16,000 feet, having numerous vents, over a vast incandescent mass, which doubtless extends beneath the bed of the ocean; the island forming a pyramidal funnel from the furnace beneath, to the atmosphere. The following account of a visit to the crater, affords a striking picture of the splendid, but awful spectacle, which this volcano presents.

“After travelling over extensive plains, and climbing rugged steeps, all bearing testimony of volcanic origin, the crater of Kirauea suddenly burst upon our view. We found ourselves on the edge of a steep precipice, with a vast plain before us, fifteen or sixteen miles in circumference, and sunk from two hundred to four hundred feet below its original level. The surface of this plain was uneven, and strewed over with large stones and volcanic rocks; and in the centre of it was the great crater, at the distance of a mile and a half from the precipice on which we were standing. We proceeded to the north end of the ridge, where, the precipice being less steep, a descent to the plain below seemed practicable; but it required the greatest caution, as the stones and fragments of rock frequently gave way under our feet, and rolled down from above. The steep which we had descended was formed of volcanic matter, apparently