

modern charts call the West Rock (*Roca del Oeste*), was raised by volcanic fire; and it might heretofore have been much higher; for the new island of the Azores, which rose from the sea at successive periods, in 1638 and 1719, had reached 354 feet when it totally disappeared in 1723, to the depth of 480 feet. This opinion on the origin of the basaltic mass of the *Infierno* is confirmed by a phenomenon, which was observed about the middle of the last century in these same latitudes. At the time of the eruption of the volcano of *Temanfaya*, two pyramidal hills of lithoid lava rose from the bottom of the ocean, and gradually united themselves with the island of *Lancerota*.

As we were prevented by the fall of the wind, and by the currents, from repassing the channel of *Alegranza*, we resolved on tacking during the night between the island of *Clara* and the West Rock. This resolution had nearly proved fatal. A calm is very dangerous near this rock, towards which the current drives with considerable force. We began to feel the effects of this current at midnight. The proximity of the stony masses, which rise perpendicularly above the water, deprived us of the little wind which blew: the sloop no longer obeyed the helm, and we dreaded striking every instant. It is difficult to conceive how a mass of basalt, insulated in the vast expanse of the ocean, can cause so considerable a motion of the waters. These phenomena, worthy the attention of naturalists, are well known to mariners; they are extremely to be dreaded in the Pacific ocean, particularly in the small archipelago of the islands of *Gallipagos*. The difference of temperature which exists between the fluid and the mass of rocks does not explain the direction which these currents take; and how can we admit that the water is engulfed at the base of these rocks, (which often are not of volcanic origin) and that this continual engulfing determines the particles of water to fill up the vacuum that takes place.

The wind having freshened a little towards the morning on the 18th, we succeeded in passing the channel. We drew very near the *Infierno* the second time, and remarked the large crevices, through which the gaseous fluids probably doubt because the *Guanches* considered the peak as the entrance into hell. In the same latitudes an island made its appearance in 1811.