

razo is discerned on the horizon, may lead us to suppose, that it must be seen at a very great distance in the South Sea. Pilots highly worthy of credit have assured me, that they have seen it from the rock of Muerto, to the south west of the isle of Puna, at a distance of 47 leagues. Whenever it has been seen at a greater distance, the observers, uncertain of their longitude, have not been in a situation to furnish precise data.

Aërial light, projected on mountains, increases the visibility of those which are seen positively; its power diminishes, on the contrary, the visibility of objects which, like the peak of Teneriffe and that of the Azores, detach themselves in a brown tint. Bouguer, relying on theoretical considerations, was of opinion that, according to the constitution of our atmosphere, mountains seen negatively cannot be perceived at distances exceeding 35 leagues. It is important here to observe, that these calculations are contrary to experience. The peak of Teneriffe has been often seen at the distance of 36, 38, and even at 40 leagues. Moreover, in the vicinity of the Sandwich Islands, the summit of Mowna-Roa, at a season when it was without snows, has been seen on the skirt of the horizon, at the distance of 53 leagues. This is the most striking example we have hitherto known of the visibility of a mountain; and it is the more remarkable, that an object seen negatively furnishes this example.

The volcanoes of Teneriffe, and of the Azores, the Sierra Nevada of St. Martha, the peak of Orizaba, the Silla of Caracas, Mowna-Roa, and Mount St. Elias, insulated in the vast extent of the seas, or placed on the coasts of continents, serve as sea-marks to direct the pilot, when he has no means of determining the position of the vessel by the observation of the stars; everything which has a relation to the visibility of these natural seamarks, is interesting to the safety of navigation.