

CHAPTER II.

Stay at Teneriffe.—Journey from Santa Cruz to Orotava.—Excursion to the summit of the Peak of Teyde.

FROM the time of our departure from Graciosa, the horizon continued so hazy, that, notwithstanding the considerable height of the mountains of Canary,* we did not discover that island till the evening of the 18th of June. It is the granary of the archipelago of the Fortunate Islands; and, what is very remarkable in a region situated beyond the limits of the tropics, we were assured, that in some districts, there are two wheat harvests in the year; one in February, and the other in June. Canary has never been visited by a learned mineralogist; yet this island is so much the more worthy of observation, as the physiognomy of its mountains, disposed in parallel chains, appeared to me to differ entirely from that of the summits of Lancerota and Teneriffe. Nothing is more interesting to the geologist, than to observe the relations, on the same point of the globe, between volcanic countries, and those which are primitive or secondary. When the Canary Islands shall have been examined, in all the parts which compose the system of these mountains, we shall find that we have been too precipitate in considering the whole group as raised by the action of submarine fires.

On the morning of the 19th, we discovered the point of Naga, but the peak of Teneriffe was still invisible: the land, obscured by a thick mist, presented forms that were vague and confused. As we approached the road of Santa Cruz, we observed that the mist, driven by the winds, drew nearer to us. The sea was strongly agitated, as it most commonly is in those latitudes. We anchored after several soundings, for the mist was so thick, that we could scarcely distinguish objects at a few cables' distance; but at the moment we began to salute the place, the fog was instantly dispelled. The peak of Teyde appeared in a break above the clouds, and the first rays of the sun, which had not yet risen on us, illumined the summit of the volcano.

We hastened to the prow of the vessel to behold the mag-

* Isla de la Gran Canaria.