

The sea-coast is lined with date and cocoa trees. Groups of the musa, as the country rises, form a pleasing contrast with the dragon-tree, the trunks of which have been justly compared to the tortuous form of the serpent. The declivities are covered with vines, which throw their branches over towering poles. Orange trees loaded with flowers, myrtles, and cypress trees encircle the chapels reared to devotion on the isolated hills. The divisions of landed property are marked by hedges formed of the agave and the cactus. An innumerable quantity of cryptogamous plants, among which ferns are the most predominant, cover the walls, and are moistened by small springs of limpid water. In winter, when the volcano is buried under ice and snow, this district enjoys perpetual spring. In summer, as the day declines, the breezes from the sea diffuse a delicious freshness. The population of this coast is very considerable; and it appears to be still greater than it is, because the houses and gardens are distant from each other, which adds to the picturesque beauty of the scene. Unhappily the real welfare of the inhabitants does not correspond with the exertions of their industry, or with the advantages which nature has lavished on this spot. The farmers are not land-owners; the fruits of their labour belong to the nobles; and those feudal institutions, which, for so long a time, spread misery throughout Europe, still press heavily on the people of the Canary Islands.

From Tegueste and Tacoronte to the village of St. Juan de la Rambla (which is celebrated for its excellent malmsey wine), the rising hills are cultivated like a garden. I might compare them to the environs of Capua and Valentia, if the western part of Teneriffe was not infinitely more beautiful on account of the proximity of the peak, which presents on every side a new point of view. The aspect of this mountain is interesting not merely from its gigantic mass; it excites the mind, by carrying it back to the mysterious source of its volcanic agency. For thousands of years, no flames or light have been perceived on the summit of the Piton, nevertheless enormous lateral eruptions, the last of which took place in 1798, are proofs of the activity of a fire still far from being extinguished. There is also something that leaves a melancholy impression on beholding a crater in the centre