

the volcanoes which I have visited, that of Jorullo, in Mexico, is the only one that is more difficult to climb than the Peak, because the whole mountain is covered with loose ashes.

When the Sugar-loaf (el Piton) is covered with snow, as it is in the beginning of winter, the steepness of its declivity may be very dangerous to the traveller. M. Le Gros showed us the place where captain Baudin was nearly killed when he visited the Peak of Teneriffe. That officer had the courage to undertake, in company with the naturalists Advenier, Mauger, and Riedlé, an excursion to the top of the volcano about the end of December, 1797. Having reached half the height of the cone, he fell, and rolled down as far as the small plain of Rambleta; happily a heap of lava, covered with snow, hindered him from rolling farther with accelerated velocity. I have been told, that in Switzerland a traveller was suffocated by rolling down the declivity of the Col de Balme, over the compact turf of the Alps.

When we gained the summit of the Piton, we were surprised to find scarcely room enough to seat ourselves conveniently. We were stopped by a small circular wall of porphyritic lava, with a base of pitchstone, which concealed from us the view of the crater.\* The west wind blew with such violence that we could scarcely stand. It was eight in the morning, and we suffered severely from the cold, though the thermometer kept a little above freezing point. For a long time we had been accustomed to a very high temperature, and the dry wind increased the feeling of cold, because it carried off every moment the small atmosphere of warm and humid air, which was formed around us from the effect of cutaneous perspiration.

The brink of the crater of the peak bears no resemblance to those of most of the other volcanoes which I have visited: for instance, the craters of Vesuvius, Jorullo, and Pichincha. In these the Piton preserves its conic figure to the very summit: the whole of their declivity is inclined the same number of degrees, and uniformly covered with a layer of pumice-stone very minutely divided; when we reach

\* Called *La Caldera*, or the caldron of the peak, a denomination which recals to mind the Oules of the Pyrenees.