

were concealed under that fresh foliage; and the disposition of the plants, the grouping of so many inanimate objects, give the landscape all the charm of motion and of life.

Seven months had now elapsed since we had been on the summit of the peak of Teneriffe, whence we surveyed a space of the globe equal to a fourth part of France. The apparent horizon of the sea is there six leagues farther distant than at the top of the Silla, and yet we saw that horizon, at least for some time, very distinctly. It was strongly marked, and not confounded with the adjacent strata of air. At the Silla, which is five hundred and fifty toises lower than the peak of Teneriffe, the horizon, though nearer, continued invisible towards the north and north-north-east. Following with the eye the surface of the sea, which was smooth as glass, we were struck with the progressive diminution of the reflected light. Where the visual ray touched the last limit of that surface, the water was lost among the superposed strata of air. This appearance has something in it very extraordinary. We expect to see the horizon level with the eye; but, instead of distinguishing at this height a marked limit between the two elements, the more distant strata of water seem to be transformed into vapour, and mingled with the aërial ocean. I observed the same appearance, not in one spot of the horizon alone, but on an extent of more than a hundred and sixty degrees, along the Pacific, when I found myself for the first time on the pointed rock that commands the crater of Pichincha; a volcano, the elevation of which exceeds that of Mont Blanc.* The visibility of a very distant horizon depends, when there is no mirage, upon two distinct things: the quantity of light received on that part of the sea where the visual ray terminates; and the extinction of the reflected light during its passage through the intermediate strata of air. It may happen, notwithstanding the serenity of the sky and the transparency of the atmosphere, that the ocean is feebly illuminated at thirty or forty leagues' distance; or that the strata of air nearest the earth may extinguish a great deal of the light, by absorbing the rays that traverse them.

The rounded peak, or western dome of the Silla, con-

* See Views of Nature, Bohn's edition, p. 358.