

pose of viewing the sunrise from its elevated crest. This, indeed, is one of those rare spectacles which indelibly impress themselves upon the mind, and are treasured up among its most precious things in the storehouse of our memory. It can never be forgotten; at the bidding of the will, it returns again and yet again, to illuminate the dark watches of the night, or to stand out conspicuous and unrivalled among all the sights of noon—a wondrous, sublime, and almost awful manifestation of the glory and majesty of the Creator through the medium of his creation. Oh, to see it, as the stars one by one recede from their “azure towers,” where, during the still night, they have patiently kept watch and ward,—as the rose of dawn gradually reddens on the distant horizon—as above the darkened earth float, like wraiths, the vast masses of vaporous cloud, rapidly assuming on their upper surface a coloured glow like that of an Arctic Aurora—to see it as the eastward sky becomes barred and checkered with streaks of crimson, and clear against the pure heaven shine the golden crests of the Apulian mountains—to see it as out of the mysterious infinite rises the radiant orb of day, clothed in unutterable splendour, faint gleams of which are caught by the nearest peaks, and fast transmitted from one to another through all the long, long chain—to see it when the purple shadow of Etna is projected like a mighty pall over half the island, while the other half smiles, dimples, laughs in the exuberant beauty of the morning,—is to see what poet never dreamed of in his boldest vision, and to realize, if only for a moment, some conception of the glories of another world!

The scenic view (if we may use the expression) from the summit is of an imposing character.

Vastness and dreary sublimity predominate, says Mr. Bartlett,* relieved with some few touches of exquisite beauty. Standing on the dread summit of the volcano, the eye takes in with astonishment the immense extent of the region at once desolated and fertilized by its eruptions. Wide beds of lava—black, abrupt, and horrid—may be traced down its sinuosities and chasms, winding half concealed

* [W. H. Bartlett, “Pictures from Sicily,” pp. 164, 165.]