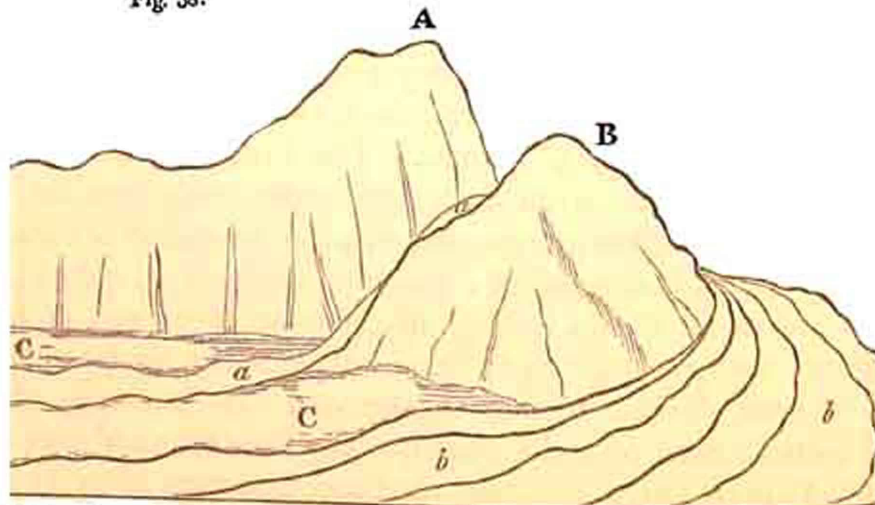


"Val del Bove," consists of rocky and *angular blocks*, tossed together in the utmost disorder. Nothing can be more rugged, or more unlike the smooth and even superficies, which those who are unacquainted with volcanic countries may have pictured to themselves, in a mass of matter which had consolidated from a liquid state. Mr. Scrope observed this current in the year 1819, slowly advancing down a considerable slope, at the rate of about a yard an hour, nine months after its emission. The lower stratum being arrested by the resistance of the ground, the upper or central part gradually protruded itself, and being unsupported, fell down. This in its turn was covered by a mass of more liquid lava, which swelled over it from above. The current had all the appearance of a huge heap of rough and large cinders rolling over and over upon itself by the effect of an extremely slow propulsion from behind. The contraction of the crust as it solidified, and the friction of the scoriform cakes against one another, produced a crackling sound. Within the crevices a dull red heat might be seen by night, and vapour issuing in considerable quantity was visible by day.*

It was stated that when the lava of 1819 arrived at the head of the Valley of Calanna, after flowing down the Val del Bove, it descended in a cascade. This stream, in fact, like many previous currents of lava which have flowed down successively from the higher regions of Etna, was turned by a great promontory projecting from the southern side of the Val del Bove. This promontory consists of the hills called Zocolaro and Calanna, and of a ridge of inferior height which connects them. (See fig. 38.)

Fig. 38.



A, Zocolaro. B, Monte di Calanna.
C, Plain at the head of the Valley of Calanna.
a, Lava of 1819 descending the precipice and flowing through the valley.
b, Lavas of 1811 and 1819 flowing round the hill of Calanna.

It happened in 1811 and 1819 that the flows of lava overtopped the ridge intervening between the hills of Zocolaro and Calanna, so that they fell in a cascade over a lofty precipice, and began to fill up the valley of Calanna (*a*, fig. 38.). Other portions of the same lava-current (*b*) flowed round the promontory, and they exhibit one of the peculiar

* Scrope on Volcanos, p. 102.