

Dôme are basaltic ; that is, consisting of columns placed close together ; and some of the cones are quite complete, and covered with loose ashes and cinders, just as Vesuvius is at this hour.

(27.) In the study of these vast and awful phenomena we are brought in contact with those immense and rude powers of nature which seem to convey to the imagination the impress of brute force and lawless violence ; but it is not so. Such an idea is not more derogatory to the wisdom and benevolence that prevails throughout all the scheme of creation than it is in itself erroneous. In their wildest paroxysms the rage of the volcano and the earthquake is subject to great and immutable laws : they feel the bridle and obey it. The volcano bellows forth its pent-up overplus of energy, and sinks into long and tranquil repose. The earthquake rolls away, and industry, that balm which nature knows how to shed over every wound, effaces its traces, and festoons its ruins with flowers. There is mighty and rough work to be accomplished, and it cannot be done by gentle means. It seems, no doubt, terrible, awful, perhaps harsh, that twenty or thirty thousand lives should be swept away in a moment by a sudden and unforeseen calamity ; but we must remember that sooner or later every one of those lives must be called for, and it is by no means the most sudden end that is the most afflictive. It is well too that we should contemplate occasionally, if it were only to teach us humility and submission, the immense energies which are everywhere at work in maintaining the system of nature we see going on so smoothly and tranquilly