

of St Januarius should be brought out and shown to the mountain ; and when this was done, all the uproar ceased on the instant, and Vesuvius became as quiet as a lamb !

(33.) He did not continue so, however, and it would have been well for Naples if the good Saint's head could have been permanently fixed in some conspicuous place in sight of the hill—for from that time till the year 1779 it never was quiet. In the spring of that year it began to pour out lava ; and on one occasion, when Sir William Hamilton approached too near, the running stream was on the point of surrounding him ; and the sulphureous vapour cut off his retreat, so that his only mode of escape was to walk across the lava, which, to his astonishment, and, no doubt, to his great joy, he found accompanied with no difficulty, and with no more inconvenience than what proceeded from the radiation of heat on his legs and feet from the scoriæ and cinders with which the external crust of the lava was loaded ; and which in great measure intercepted and confined the glowing heat of the ignited mass below.

(34.) In such cases, and when cooled down to a certain point, the motion of the lava-stream is slow and creeping ; rather rolling over itself than flowing like a river ; the top becoming the bottom, owing to the toughness of the half-congealed crust. When it issues, however, from any accessible vent, it is described as perfectly liquid, of an intense white heat, and spouting or welling forth with extreme rapidity. So Sir Humphry Davy described it in an eruption at which he was present ;