

me on the spot by an eye-witness—the Old Man of the Mountain, Mario Gemellaro—the side of Ætna was rent by a great fissure or crack, beginning near the top, and throwing out jets of lava from openings fourteen or fifteen in number all the way down, so as to form a row of fiery fountains rising from different levels, and all ascending nearly to the same height: thereby proving them all to have originated in the great internal cistern as it were, the crater being filled up to the top level.

(40.) From the summit of Ætna extends a view of extraordinary magnificence. The whole of Sicily lies at your feet, and far beyond it are seen a string of lesser volcanos; the Lipari Islands, between Sicily and the Italian coast; one of which, Stromboli, is always in eruption, unceasingly throwing up ashes, smoke, and liquid fire.

(41.) But I must not linger on the summit of Ætna. We will now take a flight thence, all across Europe, to Iceland—a wonderful land of frost and fire. It is full of volcanos, one of which, HECLA, has been twenty-two times in eruption within the last 800 years. Besides Hecla, there are five others, from which in the same period twenty eruptions have burst forth, making about one every twenty years. The most formidable of these was that which happened in 1783, a year also memorable as that of the terrible earthquake in Calabria. In May of that year, a bluish fog was observed over the mountain called Skaptar Jokul, and the neighbourhood was shaken by earthquakes. After a while a great pillar of smoke was observed to ascend from it, which dark-