

Such are some of their caprices, and each one has its own. But at bottom they are less distinct than is apparent to the eye. Sometimes, when one lights up, another also takes fire—and not the nearest, but a volcano situated at some considerable distance off. When a shock of earthquake occurs, a remote volcano is frequently extinguished, like a taper suddenly blown out.

One of their most marked characteristics is, that they are all deeply furrowed. Seated on the ancient basalts which seem the foundation of the island, they love the basaltic form. Their beams and profound grooves rudely imitate the architecture of those black eldest-born of earth, the colonnades of Staffa and Fingal. An explanation of this has been sought in the influence of water, but it would never have worked with so much regularity. It could not have displayed their cones in that singular fashion which resembles nothing so much as the radiation of the whalebone of an umbrella. This singular uniformity of structure is prominent among all their other diversities. Thus they are all brothers, yet all different, of a capricious, fantastic, and terrible aspect.

The central crest of Java is formed of a range of volcanic mountains, from 5000 to 13,000 feet in height, which ends on the east in a series of thirty-eight separate volcanoes, rising into cones from colossal bases. They are all situated on a plain of no great elevation above the sea, and each individual mountain has apparently been formed in entire independence of its neighbours. Most of them are very ancient, and their flanks labour with a rich, dense vegetation. Some are extinct, or only emit smoke; others eject with great fury clouds of sulphurous vapour; the crater of one is filled with boiling water; a few, even of recent years, have broken into violent eruption.*

In 1772, the greater part of one of the largest (Papandáyang) was swallowed up after a brief but severe combustion: a flame-kindled mass of cloud enfolded the mountain on the 11th of August, and shortly afterwards the huge bulk actually disappeared within

* Sir Stamford Raffles, "On Java."