

posed by Captain Lenhouse, who first set foot on the virgin land. But that of *Ferdinanda*, chosen in honour of the King of Naples, prevailed at a later period as the general appellation of an island as ephemeral as Frederick's crown.

It was, perhaps, for the purpose of reconciling the etymologists, and terminating the discussions of nations all eager to dispute the name and possession of the new island, that *Ferdinanda* disappeared one fine morning, as suddenly as it had appeared, and with it vanished the ground and motive of a "very pretty quarrel."

The island of *Ferdinanda*, which rose thus unexpectedly in 1831, was the result of a veritable volcanic eruption operating in the bosom of the Mediterranean; a volcano probably in connection with Etna, and which opened in the ocean-bed. The discharges of the volcano filled up the depth of 80 to 100 fathoms of water which at this point the Mediterranean presents, and their accumulated products, rising above the level of the sea, formed, as already stated, an island of no inconsiderable elevation.

All the little islets situated between Sicily and Africa are of volcanic formation, and dependent upon Etna.

Among these we may particularize *Pantellaria*, situated nearly midway between the south-west coast of Sicily and the Gulf of Bona, in Africa. It is a nearly desert island, whose calcined soil nourishes with difficulty a few goats. If the reader drew a straight line from this island towards Etna, it would pass through the small town of Sciacca, on the south-west coast of Sicily. Opposite this town, and at about mid-distance between the coast of Pantellaria, in  $37^{\circ} 8' 30''$  N. lat., and  $12^{\circ} 42' 15''$  E. long., was formed the volcano which, in 1831, by its accumulated discharges created the new island. The English hastened to take possession of it, as if every unknown or new-born territory belonged of right to the sceptre of haughty and encroaching Albion.\* But two months afterwards Julia Island disappeared. Was it to escape the rule of the English? So said the Sicilians.

Some precursory phenomena had foretold this remarkable occurrence. From the 28th of June to the 2nd of July 1831, light shocks of earthquake had been felt at Sciacca, where they had been attributed to the vicinity of Etna. On the 8th of July, the Sicilian brigantine *Il Gustavo* passed out at sea within six miles of Sciacca; suddenly the crew perceived a waterspout, one hundred feet in height, which rose for ten minutes with a noise of thunder—then fell back into the sea—rose again—and again subsided, at intervals of fifteen minutes. The leaping shaft or column of water produced a dense cloud of vapour, which brooded over the agitated sea. The waves, covered with reddish foam, tossed to and fro a number of dead fish. According to Captain Corrao, of the *Gustavo*, on the 10th of July the column was 75 feet high and 2600 feet in circumference; the jet of thick vapour which succeeded to the liquid jet rose, according to the captain's estimate, to a height of 1800 feet.

\* [The translator need hardly say that it is here the original author who speaks. Few French writers can deny themselves "a fling" at England.]