

its upper end, they struck across to the head of the ravine. It terminated in a ridge, which looked down upon an immense field or sea of hardened lava, spreading over an area of several miles till it reached the ocean. This ancient bed of lava was full of the most singular and fantastic details of lava structure. It was a field of charred ruins, among which were more or less open caves or galleries, some large enough to hold a number of persons standing upright, others hardly allowing room to creep through on hands and knees. Rounded domes were common, sometimes broken, sometimes whole; now and then some great lava bubble was pierced with a window blasted out of the side, through which one could look down to the floor of a deep, underground hollow.

The whole company, some six or eight persons, lunched in one of the caves, resting on the seats formed by the ledges of lava along its sides. It had an entrance at either end, was some forty feet long, at least ten feet high in the centre, and perhaps six or eight feet wide. Probably never before had it served as a banqueting hall. Such a hollow tunnel or arch had been formed wherever the interior of a large mass of lava, once cooled,