

higher than themselves, in their neighbourhood; Hecla is the highest hill in Iceland: volcanoes are frequent in the highest part of the Andes in South America; and the pike of Teneriffe is known to be the covering of subterraneous fire: these are still burning, but there are innumerable other mountains which bear evident marks of fire that is now extinct, and has been so from the time of our earliest traditions: among these is Saint Helena, where the inequalities of the ground, in its external surface, are manifestly the effect of the sinking of the earth, for the opposite ridges, though separated always by deep, and sometimes by broad valleys, are exactly similar both in appearance and direction; and that the sinking of the earth in these parts, was caused by subterraneous fire, is equally manifest from the stones; for some of them, especially those in the bottom of the valleys, are burnt almost to a cinder: in some there are small bubbles, like those that are seen in glass which has been urged almost to fusion, and some, though at first sight they do not appear to have been exposed to the action of great heat, will be found, upon a closer inspection, to contain small pieces of extraneous bodies, particularly mundick, which have yielded to the power of fire, though it was not sufficient to alter the appearance of the stone which contained them.

It appeared, as we approached it on the windward side, like a rude heap of rocks, bounded by precipices of amazing height, and consisting of a kind of half friable stone, which shows not the least sign of vegetation; nor is it more promising upon a nearer view: in sailing along the shore, we came so near the huge cliffs, that they seemed to overhang the ship, and the tremendous effect of their giving way, made us almost fear the event: at length we opened a valley, called Chappel Valley, which resembles a large trench; and in this valley we discovered the town. The bottom of it is slightly covered with herbage, but the sides are as naked as the cliffs that are next the