

but the whole aspect of the country is decidedly that of a volcanic production: the rocks seem to have been cast up and torn asunder by some prodigious violence, and hurled, by a force which nothing but a volcano could possess, into the most grotesque and irregular shapes. It is no uncommon thing to pass under a huge crag, leaning almost horizontally over the road, and bedded in the earth by a foundation apparently so slight, as to appear liable to fall every moment, precipitating the enormous mass upon the luckless wretch beneath. Nay, the very colour of the stones, and the quantity of what bears every resemblance to vitrification, scattered about, all tend to induce the belief that the main island owes its formation to the same cause which doubtless produced the smaller one that has now disappeared.

It is not, however, to be inferred from the above description that St. Michael's is nothing but a barren rock; far from it. There is, indeed, in this direction at least, a fair proportion of that commodity; but tracts of cultivated ground are not therefore wanting. I should not certainly suppose that the soil was remarkably rich in any part of the island; but it produces the fig, the orange-tree, and a grape from which the inhabitants make very tolerable wine; and there is excellent pasture for sheep, and a competent supply of grain. But that in which the Azores, and St. Michael's among the number, particularly excel, is the extreme salubrity of the climate. Lying in nearly the same degree of latitude with Lisbon, the intense heat which oppresses in that city is here alleviated by refreshing sea-breezes; by which means, though I believe there is no occasion at any season to complain of cold, it is only in the very height of the dog-days, if then, that a person, not actually engaged in violent exercise, is justified in complaining of sultriness.

The trade of St. Michael's, as far as I could learn, is confined exclusively to fruit: the fig and the orange are the staple commodities; and being both very abundant, they are, of course, proportionably cheap. Into the praise of a St. Michael's orange it is unnecessary for me to enter, because it is generally allowed to be the best with which the English market is supplied; but of the excellence of the St. Michael's fig, I am not sure that my countrymen in general are so much aware. It might be, that not having seen a fig for a considerable lapse of time, my appetite