

beholder with a fearful pleasure. From the descriptions of former visitors, I judge that Mouna Roa must now be in a state of comparative tranquillity. A lake of liquid fire, in extent about a thirteenth part of the whole crater, was boiling with furious agitation; not constantly, however, for at one time it appeared calm and level, the numerous fiery red streaks on its surface alone attesting its state of ebullition, when again, the red hot lava would dart upwards and boil with terrific grandeur, spouting to a height which from the distance at which I stood I calculated to be from forty to seventy feet, when it would dash violently against the black ledge, and then subside again for a few moments. Close by the fire was a chimney above forty feet high, which occasionally discharges its steam, as if all the steam-engines in the world were concentrated in it. This preceded the tranquil state of the lake which is situated near the south-west or smaller end of the crater. In the centre of the great crater, a second lake of fire, of circular form, but smaller dimensions, was boiling with equal intensity: the noise was dreadful beyond all description. The people having arrived, Honori last, my tent was pitched twenty yards back from the perpendicular wall of the crater; and as there was an old hut of Ti leaves on the intermediate bank, only six feet from the extreme verge, my people soon repaired it for their own use. As the sun sunk behind the western flank of Mouna Roa, the splendour of the scene increased; but when the nearly full moon rose in a cloudless sky, and shed her silvery brightness on the fiery lake, roaring and boiling in fearful majesty, the spectacle became so commanding, that I lost a fine night for making astronomical observations by gazing on the volcano, the illumination of which was but little diminished by a thick haze that set in at midnight. On Friday, January the 24th, the air was delightfully clear and I was enabled to take the bearings of the volcano and adjoining objects with great exactness. To the north of the crater are numerous cracks and fissures in the ground, varying in size, form and depth, some long, some straight, round or twisted, from whence steam constantly issued, which in two of them is rapidly condensed, and collects in small basins or wells one of which is situated at the immediate edge of the crater, and the other four hundred and eighty yards to the north of it. The latter fifteen inches deep, and three feet in diameter, about thirteen feet north of a very large fissure, according to my thermometer, compared with that