

often be seen in the peasants' houses forming partitions, cupboards, or light odds and ends of furniture. These tall reed hedges, at this season bearing large, feathery flower-heads on this year's shoots, while the stems of last year, now becoming hard and woody, bear on side branches a crop of small leaves like those of the bamboo, form quite a peculiar feature in the landscape. The Caldeira itself, the father of the family of craters, and evidently the centre of the first and most powerful outburst of volcanic action, remained invisible to us—shrouded all day under a thick canopy of cloud.

In the evening we steamed into the channel between Fayal and Pico, and anchored in the roadstead of Horta, the chief town of Fayal. Here we were visited by the Portuguese officer of health, who, while making strict inquiries as to the presence of contagious disease in the ports which we had previously visited, said nothing about the health of his own town; and it was with extreme chagrin that we learned from the British vice-consul, who came on board shortly afterward, that Horta was suffering from an epidemic of small-pox, which had latterly been rather severe, especially among children. Under these circumstances Captain Nares judged it imprudent to give general leave, and on that evening and on the following morning one or two of us only took a rapid run through the town and its immediate neighborhood, to gain such a hasty impression as we might of its general effect.

Horta is a pretty little town of ten thousand inhabitants, situated in a deep bay which opens to the westward, and looks straight across to the island of Pico, distant about four miles. The bay is bounded on the north by a bold lava promontory, Ponta Espalamaca; and on the south by a very remarkable isolated crater, with one-half of its bounding wall broken down, and allowing the sea to enter, called Monte da Guia, a very prominent object when entering the bay from the southward. Monte da Guia is almost an island, and apparently at one time