

Vice-Consul, all the arrangements were made for an ascent of the Peak on the following morning. The route lay up a long sloping ridge, which leads to the base of the actual cone of the Peak. This ridge is bounded by a precipice on the side facing Orotava. When a height of about 2000 feet had been attained, the villagers tried to dissuade the party from going farther, saying that all would be frozen to death.

The well-known zones of vegetation of the Peak of Tenerife are not very well defined on the ordinary route which was the one adopted. The limit of cultivation was reached at about 3000 feet, at which height corn of some kind was just springing up, and above this a zone was entered covered with a tree-like Heath (*Erica arborea*), which continued for about 2000 feet, and then ceased abruptly. A little higher up, the mountain side was somewhat sparsely covered by large bluish-green bushes of the species of Broom (*Spartocytisus nubigenus*), called by the natives "Retama," and well known from the accounts of numerous travellers; amongst these shrubs a tent was pitched, at an elevation of 6500 feet. Above the retama, a small Violet (*Viola teydea*) is said to extend up to 10,000 feet, and beyond this all is barren. The Pine (*Pinus canariensis*) which grows on some parts of the mountain is not seen on the usual track of ascent. A halt was made amongst the heath for lunch, and plenty of water cresses were found growing in a spring. Water had to be carried up from this spring, since there is none to be obtained above, except by melting snow, as the porous volcanic ashes soak up all the water yielded by the natural melting of the snow, and there is no place where any can collect. At about 4000 feet elevation a dense bank of cloud, formed by the trade wind, was passed through, a similar one to that which had been seen from below on the day before, and had hidden the middle of the mountain from view, but not the same, for in the early morning there had not been a cloud in the sky; the bank formed about mid-day. At the camp, far above this cloud-bank, the sun shone brightly, until about six o'clock in the evening, when it began to disappear, and the air, which had been almost too hot, became suddenly cold, the temperature going down almost to freezing point.

A very extraordinary sunset effect was observed. The upper surface of the cloud-bank stretched below in every direction, like a snow-white billowy sea hiding the actual sea from sight entirely, but just allowing a glimpse to be caught of the far-off island of Palma, which appeared as a purple streak at the edge of the cloud horizon. As the sun went down, the clear sky beyond the white motionless cloud-bank became tinged of a brilliant orange colour, and over it there shot out from the descending sun a fan of pale crimson streamers deeply tinted at their base, and gradually fading off into the dark blue sky above but visible nearly to the zenith. Beyond the great cloud-bank more distant streaky clouds, lit up of a brilliant violet, formed a sort of background to the scene. Some of these little distant clouds from time to time assumed fantastic shapes, and once it seemed almost certain that it was the sea in the distance that was seen below with