

a bright red glare; then in a few moments the lava-stream would issue through, and a portion would speedily split off and suddenly disappear in the liquid mass. This kind of action went on until the lake had extended itself to its outer bank, and had approached to within fifteen feet of their position, when the guide said it was high time to make a retreat.

John, the pilot, who was now acting in the capacity of guide, was satisfied they had stayed long enough, and had often "repeated that there was no safety in the bottom of the crater for one moment," and that "the fire would often run over ten or more acres in a few moments." In such a case destruction would be inevitable, and from what I myself have seen, I can readily believe that his opinion is correct. The usual course is for the lake to boil over, discharge a certain mass, and then sink again within its limits. It is rarely seen to run over for more than a day at a time.

John and the natives who are in the habit of frequenting it with strangers, tell many stories of the escapes they have made.

One trip to the floor generally satisfies the most daring, and as long as a person remains there, he must feel in a state of great insecurity, and in danger of undergoing one of the most horrible of deaths, in being cut off from escape by the red molten fluid; yet a hardihood is acquired, which is brought about by the excitement, that gives courage to encounter serious peril, in so novel a situation.

One of the remarkable productions of this crater is the capillary glass, or, as it is here called, "Pele's hair." This is to be seen in the crevices like loose tufts of fine tow; it is to be found also over all the plain, adhering to the bushes. The fibres of this glass are of various degrees of fineness; some are crimped or frizzled, others straight, with small fine drops of glass at one end. These adhering to the berries in the neighbourhood, make one sensible of its presence in eating them. On the leeward side of the crater, the glass is so abundant that the ground, in places, appeared as if covered with cobwebs.

Where Pele's hair is found in quantities, a very fine and beautiful pumice prevails; it usually occurs in pieces about the size of a hazelnut, of a greenish yellow colour, not unlike small pieces of new dry sponge, but so much lighter as to be blown about by the wind. The southern bank of the crater is covered with this product for some depth, and the sand blowing over it renders it stationary.

The day we remained at the volcano was employed by the natives in preparing their food, by boiling it in the crevices on the plains from which the steam issues; into these they put the taro, &c., and close the