

foliage have so disguised them, that it is difficult to determine exactly their true character.

I regretted exceedingly that the party that set out for the Lake de Taal was not able to reach it, as, from the accounts I had, it must be one of the most interesting portions of the country. It lies nearly southwest from Manilla, and occupies an area of about one hundred and twenty square miles. The Volcano de Taal is situated on an island near the centre of it, and is now in action. The cone which rises from its centre is remarkably regular, and consists for the most part of cinders and scoria. It has been found to be nine hundred feet in elevation above the lake. The crater has a diameter of two miles, and its depth is equal to the elevation: the walls of the crater are nearly perpendicular, so much so that the descent cannot be made without the assistance of ropes. At the bottom there are two small cones. Much steam issues from the many fissures, accompanied by sulphurous acid gas. The waters of the lake are impregnated with sulphur, and there are said to be also large beds of sulphur. In the opinion of those who have visited this spot, the whole lake once formed an immense crater; and this does not appear very improbable, if we are to credit the accounts we received of the many craters on this island that are now filled with water; for instance, in the neighbourhood of San Pablo there are said to be eight or nine.

The hot springs of Baños are numerous, and in their vicinity large quantities of steam are seen to issue from the shore of the lake. There are about a dozen which give out a copious supply of water. The principal one has been enclosed, and made to flow through a stone aqueduct, which discharges a considerable stream. The temperature of the water as it leaves the aqueduct is 178° . The villagers use it for cooking and washing: the signs of the former employment are evident enough from the quantities of feathers from the poultry that have been scalded and plucked preparatory to cooking. The baths are formed by a small circular building six feet in diameter, erected over the point of discharge for the purpose of securing a steam-bath: the temperature of these is 160° and 140° . A change of temperature is said to have occurred in the latter.

The rocks in the vicinity are all tufa, and some of the springs break out close to the cold water of the lake. Near the aqueduct, a stone wall surrounds one of the principal outlets. Two-thirds of the area thus enclosed is occupied by a pond of warm water, and the other third is divided into two stone reservoirs, built for baths. These baths had at one time a high reputation, and were a very fashionable resort for the society of Manilla; but their celebrity gradually diminished, and the