

water yielded by the natural melting of the snow above, and there is no place where any can be gathered.

At about 4,000 feet elevation we went through a dense bank of cloud, formed by the trade wind, a similar one to that which was seen from below on the day before, and which had hidden the middle of the mountain from our view, but not the same, for in the early morning there had not been a cloud in the sky. The bank formed at about mid-day. At our 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.

We enjoyed a very extraordinary sunset effect. The upper surface of the cloud-bank stretched away like a snow-white billowy sea beneath us in every direction, hiding the actual sea from our sight entirely, but just allowing us a glimpse 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 amongst these little distant clouds from time to time assumed fantastic shapes, and once we were almost persuaded that we were looking upon the sea in the distance with two very far-off ships upon it, but it was merely a delusion. The sea was entirely shut out from our view, except once for a few instants when a small rift in the cloud-bank occurred, and gave us a momentary glimpse of the rippling surface far below, a sort of vista view dimmed by the misty frame through which it was seen.

All the while the snowy peak itself was perfectly cloudless, and stood out clear and sharp against a deep blue arctic-looking sky. Soon the sunlight faded and the moon came out bright, and the peak glistened in its light, which was strong enough for me to read by easily. The view of our tent and camp fire amongst the dark broom bushes with the moonlit snowy peak in the background, fronted by some dark ridges of lava, was most picturesque.*

We set fire to some of the large Retama bushes and soon

* For an account of the Peak of Tenerife and its cloud phenomena, see C. Piazzi Smyth, F.R.S., etc., "Tenerife: an Astronomer's Experiment." London, Reeve, 1858.