



I *An Account of the upper part of the Burning Mountain in the Isle of Ternata according to the View taken thereof; written to the Right Worshipful Nicholas Witzen, Burgermaster of Amsterdam &c. And by him communicated to Dr. Martin Lister, S. R. S.*

**A**FTER many Undertakings to search and examine the Constitution of the opening of the Mountain, as near as 'twas possible to any of the Inhabitants, or *Europeans*: And after many Tryals made by my self in other parts of the Mountain, it hath hitherto been impossible to come so near, as to see the right Constitution of it.

My last Expedition to this end I undertook from *Gamma Lamma*, which is towards the South-West of the Mountain; and being got upon it, I found it impossible to approach on that side, because the opening on the top of the Mountain is towards the North side. And we being upon the South side of the same, from X to W S and R, as far as we could see, (which seemed to be about 25 Hundred Foot) the top of the Mountain was all covered with Reed or Cane, by the Inhabitants called *Cannacanna*. Not far from this small Hill X, upon which then we stood, to discover the upper part of the Mountain, was a Valley T, which received the Water coming down from the Northern part W, to the Easterly S, and Southerly parts R, which made a great noise, it having rained very much. This Water falling downwards to the West T, has by length of time made a cavity, so that we heard the Water roar beneath our feet. Now if it had been possible to have known at what distance we had been, after we had pierced with hard  
Labour

Labour through this *Cannacanna*, I would not have drawn back, although it had required at least two days hard Work. But besides this, the Cold and Weather, having no shelter or Wood to burn, hindred me from going further : So that I cannot say that it is absolutely impossible to come near it on this side ; although it be my Opinion it is as well inaccessible there, as from *Terlucco*, which is on the East or North-East side Q From this latter place. I shall only say, that the inaccessibility from it to the opening of the Mountain is visible, because of the great and spacious Gulphs in the Mountain : Since this I have made a Tryal from *Xoela Tacony* towards P, with a firm Resolution to surmount all Difficulties, that I might be able to give an Account of this Wonderful Work of God. Wherefore having invited some Friends to Accompany me, the Weather being very fair and settled, I went with a small Boat the 10th. of October, 1693. from *Xoela Tacony* toward P, on the North-West side of the middle of the Mountain ; and being arrived there, passed the Night on the Sea-side, and next Morning having well considered that part of the Mountain which we thought fittest, we marched half an hour Westward towards N, so directing our Course that we might come to the North-west upper part of the Mountain, where we observed two Hills higher than the rest, C and D, both covered with *Cannacanna*. And then having passed through very great Difficulties, and mounted very dangerous Precipices, we came to the place where this *Cannacanna* was, M. And towards the Evening we had gotten to L, where we lay that Night, and the next Morning, being well refreshed, we set forward, and after some hard Work, came to the place betwixt the two Hills C and D, where from below is seen a place covered with *Cannacanna*, rising suddenly upwards M, L, which ended against some Rocks, on either side of which were stony Caves. From this Height we could

look downwards, and see how best to get up higher : To this end we went on the North side, and got up by the Rocks. But being come as far as the steep place K, and one of our Companions that was like to break his Neck the day before, being now much terrified, did not only stay his further Discovery, but also brought another Companion into the same fear ; I notwithstanding mounted by this steep place upwards as far as B, where I observed this place to be as a sharp Ridge, beginning at the Hill D, and stretching it self towards the Southerly part C, till about the middle, where is a great Rock E, from whence this Ridge riseth up higher : and from the height of this, F, right over against it Eastwards, at the distance of about 600 Foot, is the opening of the Mountain, which continually burneth A. But before I relate the manner and circumstances of this opening, I shall give an Account of our further ascending and descending.

Upon the mentioned Ridge B, we sat down, as I guess about 1200 Foot South-East from the terrible fire-vomiting Opening, looking upon it near half an hour, but afterwards mounted as far as the great Rock E, which being somewhat higher than the very Mouth, we could see some of the inward parts burning, as also we had in our coming up towards the North side seen some of the stuff which was cast out of it, burning as we pass. When we were upon the place last mentioned F, we made a sign with shaking of our Hats to the Slaves that staid behind at B. Then I resolv'd to go nearer, that I might look down into the Hole, to which end observing that the Wind was Southerly and brisk, I made a Circuit to come above it, and then approach'd it. One that was the foremost, a mad Spark, said, Lieutenant, hear ye how terribly it roars ? if now it should cast forth, as sometimes, we were soon dispatched. But being got nearer, till he saw plainly down into the opening, he  
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came back apace, crying out, God preserve us, what most terrible Hole is this? I pray you do not venture to go nearer. To whom I answered, that he had suddenly altered his Language; but thinking my self to be almost in as great danger as I could be, I approach'd it nevertheless, but by reason of the Smoak could see nothing of the inward parts at that time; wherefore I went back a little, tarrying for a better Opportunity: when having three times returned, at last we saw that most terrible and fearful Opening, wherein there is an inexpressible Noise, and out of which the smoak came forth. After this, thinking that I had seen enough, and satisfied my Curiosity, we withdrew to place F, where I sat down to draw the Passages and Places most Remarkable, and afterwards went down as far as where we had left our fearful Companions, to whom we related the things we had seen, and encouraged them to go up where we had been, upon condition that we should assist them in all: So we returned with them to the Hill B, and so further. When I was come up the second time, I found the Smoak very much diminished; wherefore we made haste to the mouth of the Burning Mountain, when I saw the Opening which is underneath the North side G, from whence the Cavity extended it self towards the South, till the edges on both sides came to terminate at the North side of that which was fallen in. Wherefore we went towards the East side I, to look into the Western Cavity, but we saw nothing but a fiery and flaming Substance, and the conveyances of it. We did not venture to go to the North side to see into the South Cavities, not only because of the Southerly Wind, but also because it is like that the most spacious *antra* are on the South side, which causeth the smoak to be driven Northerly (as we have said above) and because we had met with pieces of matter that was cast out, and yet burning, towards the North side near B.) After this we retired, and passed

the Night in the lower part of the Mountain, and the 13<sup>th</sup>. of *October* came again to the Sea-side, and the same Evening to *Malayen*, bringing with us some pieces of Branches of the Fruitful Clove-Trees that we had passed by.

I shall not be tedious in giving your Worship a farther Account of all the Trouble and Pains we met with, but I shall give you a more particular Description of the highest Parts of this most fearful Opening, with full Assurance that the thing is really so; and for the better comprehending of it, I have made a Draught thereof, with Characters signifying the several things observable.

The Northerly side of this Burning Hole A, is at the utmost height of the Mountain to the Northward, or from *Heri*. To the West and Eastward of it there is on each side a Hill higher than the brinks of this Hole, both of them grown over with *Cannacanna*: The most Westerly D, is situated more Northerly from the Hole; on the South side of this we got up. The most Easterly, on the contrary Part O, lyeth more backwards from it, and to the Southward of it. The Riff or Ridge F, descending a little towards the Eastward, is joyned with the North side of the brinks of the Hole, and is divided towards the South in two, running both Parts to the Eastward about, until they be stopt by the Northerly side of the Mountain, or terminates there on the side of Z. The mentioned Southerly Hill C, on the West side of the Mountain, turns likewise about to the Eastward with a Riff or Ridge, and terminates as the other. So that the mouth of this fearful Hole on the West and South-East sides is surrounded, as by a Bank, each Bank having a several Ditch: As also betwixt the first H, and the brinks of the opening A; since the brink of the mouth is upon the highest part, descending on the outside. The three first Hillets, *viz.*  
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the nearest to the Hole, are quite barren, and nothing but Stone ; but the most remote is covered with thick Reeds.

Round about the Hole lyes scattered much of the matter that hath been cast forth ; and it is perceivable that it must be soft when it comes out, because it falls flat, according to the figure of the place where it falls. The colour of it is dark green, not clear, but somewhat gray ; and this matter generally does burst or separate it self as the Dung of a Cow. There are of this both great and small pieces, now turned into Stone, being inwardly blackish and spongeous, mixt with white spots. And ( to give you some further Particulars of this Burning Mountain ) I have observed that the extreamest, or most Southerly round Bank V ( for no more Southerly could be seen from the place F, and I describe nothing but what appeared or shewed it self there ) is all covered with *Cannacanna*, and it is the highest also. The Smoak, which in respect of *Malayen*, seemed to come forth out of a higher place, now in the descending of the Mountain, doth notwithstanding seem to come forth at the same height. The barren Hill near Z, that seems to be situated on the North side of the top, a little descending towards *Malayen*, is about the same height as the highest top that is seen from *Malayen*, but since it falls back to the West, and is only seen from the first Eminence, it seemeth as if it descended, which is easily understood by any body that knoweth Perspective. Furthermore, the reason why the Smoak seemed to come forth from a higher place is, because the Opening was more Southerly, and then in regard of *Malayen*, only it seems that the Smoak comes forth more towards the midst. Wherefore I do certainly believe that the right Opening formerly has been where the round Banks now lye ; that is, to the Southward. For whereas after a good space of violent Burning, there groweth a small

Bank; any Person that should see the Situation, would be of my mind. And besides, it being Nine or Ten Years, since the last Burning was perceived, there are to be seen round about the Opening (besides the barrenness on both sides, which is some distance from the Opening in descending towards the West and North sides) as also above on the South and East sides, Trees all about, of an equal thicknes, as all grown since that time, and now newly burst and burnt by the Fire.

Lastly, My Opinion is, that although the Smoak of it has not been seen from below, the Fire nevertheless hath not discontinued, because the inward noise is so terrible, that any Person whosoever hears it, would judge with me that it is a bottomless Pit of the vehementest Fire, which cannot be quenched while the World lasts. The Horror and Danger that one undergoes who will see this, is rather to be conceived by Thoughts, than expressed by Words.

*Given at Ternate, 1693.*