

lower than that of Funchal; and the mean summer temperature is  $20^{\circ}\cdot67$ ,  $1^{\circ}\cdot3$  lower than that of Palermo, and  $0^{\circ}\cdot2$  lower than that of Funchal. The mean temperature of the warmest month at San Miguel is  $22^{\circ}\cdot67$  C., and that of the coldest  $12^{\circ}\cdot28$ ; the range between the extremes is therefore only about  $10^{\circ}$  C.

All the islands are volcanic, and their structure recalls, in every respect, that of such comparatively modern volcanic districts as those of the Eifel or Auvergne. The high rugged crests, which everywhere take the form of more or less complete amphitheatres, are the walls of ancient craters, the centres of earlier volcanic action. The bottom of the old crater is now usually occupied by a lake, and in it, or round its edges, or outside it on its flanks, there are often minor craters, frequently very perfect in their form, which indicate eruptions of later date, efforts of the subsiding fires. The rocks, which everywhere stretch down in great undulating masses from the sides of the craters to the sea, are lavas of different dates, some of them not much more than a century old; the wooded ravines are sometimes the natural intervals between lava streams, deepened by rivulets which have naturally followed their direction; more frequently they are valleys of erosion, worn by torrents in intervening accumulations of loose scoriæ; and the splendid cliffs, which form an inaccessible wall round the greater part of most of the islands, show, in most instructive sections, the basaltic, trachytic, and trachydoleritic lavas, and the rudely or symmetrically stratified subaërial or submarine beds of tufa and ashes, the products of successive eruptions. As a rule, soil formed by the wearing-down of volcanic rocks is highly favorable to the growth of plants. It is wonderful to see how the coulées of lava and the mounds of pumice and ashes, formed by even the most recent eruptions—of many of which we know the dates, such as those of 1512, 1672, 1718, and 1722—are now covered with corn-fields and vineyards, and, in inaccessible places, with a luxuriant native vegetation.