At nearly three o'clock we reached Olinda, where is the last house. Here we stopped for a short time to get water for ourselves and horses, as we could find none beyond. We were now at a height of 4,000 feet, and still had to ascend 6,000 feet, in a distance of six miles. Above Olinda the grass rapidly disappeared, and the road became a mere trail. When one mile from the summit we passed a cave in which many people pass the night, going to the summit in the morning. From this point our horses suffered considerably from the rarefaction of the atmosphere, and panted laboriously as we proceeded.

A few minutes before sunset we arrived at the edge of the crater, and gazed, not without awe, into its depths. The shadows cast by the rays of the setting sun produced a very weird effect. We watched them till the sun disappeared below the horizon, and then turned to unsaddle and camp, but so suddenly does the darkness come after sunset, that we were obliged to work by the light of a fire.

We arose early the next morning to watch the sun rise out of the sea of clouds in which there were only a few small islands visible, the highest peaks of West Mani, Mauna Loa, and Mauna Kea on Hawaii, and the peak on which we stood. It seemed as though we had suddenly been transported to the Arctic regions and were looking over its frozen seas. The upper surface of the clouds was wreathed and curled in fantastic outlines like snow-drifts, and as the rays of the rising sun gradually lighted up there we beheld a scene of beauty that is seldom surpassed. It was with a sigh that we finally turned from this fairy scene to inspect the crater behind us.

Every feature of the crater was now in the light. As we gazed down upon its floor we could see several crater cones here and there, which looked like ant-hills upon its surface, so far were they below us, yet we knew that some of them were nearly a thousand feet high. From one of these we could trace a stream of lava which still appears fresh, although it is a few centuries since it burst forth. We spent some time in exploring the rim of the crater and descending a few hundred feet down its almost vertical walls. We were fortunate enough to get by much exertion a few fine specimens of the silver-sword, a plant which is peculiar to the highest peaks of these islands and is now rapidly becoming extinct.

A fine view was obtained from the summit of the mountain when the sun had dispersed the clouds. To the northwest we could see the mountains of West Mani, seamed and furrowed by their numerous gulches, and beyond the islands of Lanai, Molokai, and Oahu. To the southeast we could plainly see nearly all the northern coast line of Hawaii and the triple peaks of that island beyond. The ocular illusion so often met with on high peaks was here very perfect. It seemed as though we were at the bottom of a deep circular bowl of which the horizon was the rim.

Toward noon we began our descent. When about four thousand feet below the summit we entered a belt of cloud which was so dense that we could see but a little distance in any direction, and we soon lost our way. This was a pilikia.* much to be dreaded. Riding in one direction we soon came to a gulch too deep to be crossed; turning in the opposite direction we soon met with a similar gulch there. Finally coming to a rail fence I dismounted and followed this, crossing several gulches by the way, till I found the point where we had passed it the day before. Then I accidentally found the only place where horses could cross the deep gulch for several miles. As we rode through its bottom we passed along the edge of a precipice where a single misstep would have precipitated us at least fifty feet. Having once found the road we were soon out of the cloud and at Olinda. We were completely drenched from the mist and walking through the bushes, but we soon became dry when in the sunshine. We were troubled with ringing in the ears and a severe headache nearly all the way down the mountain, but when we rode into Spreckelsville, just at night, these had entirely disappeared.

* Native word meaning trouble or misfortune of almost any sort.