

beginning to creep upon us. The driver urged on his horses at full speed, interspersing the almost continuous cracking of his long whip with an occasional "ah! ah!" We who had been accustomed to see horses walk pantingly up a hill, be it ever so slight, remonstrated with him for his seeming cruelty. He smiled, with a look of superior knowledge and informed us that were they to stop it would take the force of Vesuvius itself to urge them on again, or words to that effect. To our dismay we afterwards were enabled to substantiate this statement and ascertain that he spoke the truth. As we passed onward and upward we began to see traces of the devastation that Vesuvius had wrought in its day. It must have been no small labour to build the road we were travelling on, although one would suppose that after the lesson the then dwellers near this fiery font learned in A. D. 79, few persons would care to risk their lives and property by building dwellings in this vicinity, yet we found even the sides of the mountain were not altogether destitute of houses. Suddenly as though from the bowels of the earth a mountaineer joined us. He was hatless and shoeless, and his clothes were in rags. From the absence of hat we were confident that he could not be a beggar. He seemed to emerge from under the carriage, and on looking behind it we discovered that he had found his shoes so heavy that he had transferred them to the axle of our carriage. Vast masses of lava lay around us on every side. Some looked as though they had suddenly cooled whilst boiling most fervently and one could almost detect the bubbles still in them. Others looked as though they had been hurled from the top of Vesuvius and broken into thousands of pieces. All showed traces of a mighty destruction having taken place. The top of Vesuvius looked so near one felt like walking up to it, yet we went on and on, for a time at least, and it seemed to draw no nearer. The air became filled with a delicious odour, which we found proceeded from clusters of yellow flowers that grew in abundance even in this wild spot. Our friend the mountaineer seemed to perceive our appreciation of it, for he at once came forward with bunches of flowers and threw them into the carriage. We were astonished that he did not demand money for this service, and we still were convinced he was in no way related to the Lazzaroni, but had a soul above such trifles as lira and centesimi. Whether it was the additional weight of our mountaineer's shoes—some shoes are large and heavy—or a general fit of "pure cussedness" I know not, but suddenly as though by mutual consent our steeds came to a standstill and refused to proceed further. Imagine our position, half-way up Vesuvius, three baulky horses, plenty of Italian profanity, and empty stomachs. In vain our guide and driver "ah'd" and "ah'd" but all to no purpose. It was a case of "get out and shove;" "shoulders to the wheels." Our mountaineer worked with a will. Traces broke, harness snapped, but still the brutes would not go on. We were joined by several other mountaineers who

assisted. As the road was narrow and built over the lava which rose above us on one side and formed steeples on the other the aspect of affairs was decidedly dangerous. Finally we all left the carriage and climbed on the rocks of lava, leaving our Neapolitan steeds to prance, rear, or back, just as they pleased. The driver used his lash with great celerity, but we remained an hour in or about the same spot. Finally with as much suddenness as they had stopped, after our harness had been nearly torn to shreds and just as we had decided to return to Naples, the brutes started off on the full gallop and we had to toil for some distance to overtake them. Sighs of relief passed freely amongst us when we re-entered our carriage. After ascending for some time in continued terror lest the trio should abruptly come to a standstill again we reached the foot of the cone and entered the waiting and dining room there without needing special invitations, as it was now nine o'clock and the inclined railway in which we were to surmount the cone and peep into the depths of Vesuvius did not send up a car till ten, we had an opportunity of refreshing ourselves. We called for breakfast. Like the usual continental breakfast this consisted of coffee and two rolls. When we who are accustomed to Canadian breakfasts had partaken of this frugal fare, we felt by no means satisfied but called for lunch or "dejeuner a la fourchette." These two meals had the effect of calming our ravenous appetites, and we prepared to ascend the cone. From this position we had a magnificent view of the surrounding country, of Naples with its beautiful bay and the islands adjacent, but this was nothing in comparison with what was yet in store for us. To one standing at the foot of the cone and looking up, the railroad seemed almost perpendicular, and those of us who are prone to be giddy shuddered at the prospect of being hung between earth and heaven half-way up a precipice. The car which was drawn up by a wire rope worked by a stationary engine at the foot of the cone, was like the carriages on the Rhigi Railroad, so constructed that we always occupied a horizontal seat, or one nearly so. When we entered the car we were followed by about eight rough looking Italians whose object in ascending we were at a loss to imagine. They chattered incessantly and with such animated gesticulation we were exceedingly anxious to have their conversation explained to us, which our guide did, and to our disgust we found it was all about a poor stray bird some one had seen and they were expressing their sorrow they had not brought a gun to shoot it. After some delay we began to ascend and our view of the surrounding country was simply beyond description. Our position, to our surprise, produced not the slightest giddiness on any of us. Even here nature has been supplemented by art and science. At intervals we came upon electric lamps suspended from long poles, which must give a strange effect at night time. The Queens of Italy and Portugal who had paid Vesuvius a visit a short time before this made the ascent at night