

The first recorded eruption of Vesuvius is that of A.D. 79, when Herculaneum, Pompeii, and Stabie were overwhelmed. It is supposed that by this explosion the upper portion of the mountain was considerably reduced in its dimensions. Strabo, the geographer, about the year A.D. 25, describes it as a truncated cone covered with vegetation nearly to its summit. Its configuration, as it then presented itself to the eye from Naples, can easily be imagined by supposing the circle of which Monte Somma is a segment to be continued all round, and the line of the present inclination of the mountain on the south-east side to be produced from the slight rise called Pelamentina until it meets this circle, the axis of the whole cone remaining the same as it is now. The portion which we thus in imagination supply, is supposed to have been broken down by the weight of the lava which accumulated in the crater after the re-awakening of the volcano in A.D. 79.

The north-eastern side of Somma is to this day a smiling slope of vineyards, gardens, farm-houses, and villages. In the days of Strabo, the south-western slopes presented a similar scene. The poet Virgil, who, as I have already said, was familiar with this Campanian coast, and has celebrated in his verse its most striking localities, does not fail to notice Vesuvius; but he does not give us to understand that he was aware of its volcanic character. From Strabo, however, we learn that it was known to be volcanic. Plutarch, in his life of Crassus, mentions a curious use to which the crater in its quiescent state was once put. Spartacus, the Gladiator, who, in B.C. 73, headed a formidable insurrection against the Roman government, entrenched himself here with his forces, after his defeat by Crassus. The swordsman had doubtless defended himself in many an arena before, but in none on so grand a scale as this. Besieged by the pretor Clodius, who thought it simply sufficient to watch the entrance to the crater—the ravine to which I have already referred as existing between Somma and the present cone—Spartacus and his men let themselves down over the precipices by means of the wild vines which grew there, and suddenly and successfully attacked their assailants in the rear.

The poet Martial, who saw the mountain a few years after the desolating eruption of A.D. 79, records the lamentable change which had taken place in its appearance. "These heights," he says, "Bacchus loved more than his own Nysa; here the rustic Satyrs held their dances; Venus preferred the spot to Lacedæmon; here Hercules himself had sojourned; but now everything lies prostrate beneath fiery floods and melancholy scoriae."

It may be here stated that the name Vesuvius—which by Roman writers is variously written *Vesevus*, *Vesvius*, *Vesbivus*—is said by Neapolitan scholars to have been given to the mountain by the Phœnicians, who, at periods prior to the old Greek foretime, formed settlements along the Italian coasts. Its Syriac form was *Vo-seveen*, "the place of flame." Similarly, *Herculaneum* has been derived from *Horoh-kalic*, "pregnant with fire;" *Pompeii* from *Pum-peeah*, "the mouth of a furnace;" and *Stabie* from *Seteph*, "overflow."

In the remarks which I now offer on Pompeii, I simply speak of the place as one of the accessories of Vesuvius. To do justice to Pompeii, in an archaeological point of view, would require a separate paper. It is well known that this city was not overwhelmed with molten lava, but by showers of sand, ashes, scoriae, and mud. The persons who lost their lives on the occasion, when compared with the population, were few. The great majority had time to make their escape. To those who first carefully examined the mass as it lay upon the various houses, it was manifest that there had been disturbances in its parts, showing

that, after the catastrophe, some of the inhabitants returned to recover their effects. The exterior walls of the town, with their gateways and low turrets, are finely disclosed. Towards their base very ancient work is occasionally seen—resembling, in the arrangement of the ponderous irregular masses, the so-called Pelægic style. In their upper portions a curious mixture of material occurs—of stone with brick-work, carefully stuccoed to resemble stone. Blocks are observed with inscriptions in Oscan—the words and letters appearing reversed, after the manner of types set up. To a Canadian, who is generally too well acquainted with "burnt districts," the interior of Pompeii has at the first glance the familiar look of a town recently devastated by fire. Bare roofless walls of no great altitude are standing about in all directions. Forests of pillars, perfect and imperfect, supply, in some quarters, the place of the chimneys, which, isolated or in stacks, are with us so conspicuous after a conflagration. The ruins, however, do not look black and fire-scathed. The compact pavement of the streets is composed of blocks of ancient lava of irregular shapes, laid together after the manner of the old *Via*, resembling somewhat, on the surface at least, the memorable flagging which formed our first attempt at trottoir-making in Toronto. Along the top of some of the walls, rows of modern tiles have been placed for protection by the Neapolitan Government. Upon the exterior of the walls along the streets you see inscriptions laid on with a sort of red paint—the names of the owners of the houses or of persons whom the owners desired to honour as patrons. Upon the walls of the Basilica—or Court-house, as we should say—idle persons, standing about, have scratched their autographs. I have taken down one—that of *C. Pumidius Dipilus*, who, more than eighteen centuries ago, thought it worth while thus publicly to record the fact that "he was here on the 7th day of October, B.C. 77," as we should now write the date. "*C. Pumidius Dipilus, hic fuit ad nonas Octobris, M. Lepid., Q. Catul. Cos.*" The little stones which compose the mosaics on the floors of the larger houses—exhibiting the originals of many of our oil-cloth and carpet patterns—are lava cut up into small blocks. The ancient frescoes on the interior walls—the prototypes of several styles of modern room-paper—are now much faded, though their designs are still clear. Whenever any objects of art and domestic use are unearthed in the excavations which are still occasionally made, they are deposited for safety in the Museo Borbonico in Naples. This museum, which is one of the most interesting in Europe, ought to be well studied by those who desire to have a clear idea of the ancient Greco-Italian life. Here you see a thousand things in the shape of utensil and ornament, personal and domestic, which show that the old Campanians were men like ourselves, influenced by the same tastes, wants, and weaknesses. Among innumerable objects of interest, I remember a charred loaf of bread—baked, of course, nearly eighteen centuries ago—bearing the baker's name (*Cranius*) legibly stamped upon it.

Thirteen years before the final catastrophe, we learn from Tacitus that the luxurious repose of Pompeii had been disturbed by a terrible earthquake. At the time of the last disaster, the inhabitants had just regained confidence to set about the repairs which had been rendered necessary. It is curious to observe in several quarters the partially new work. In the Forum, for example—the Public Exchange of the city—new lengths in the shafts of the fluted columns, resting on more ancient bases, are to be seen. On the ground are lying portions of columns nearly ready to be put up. Here stone-cutters' tools were found scattered about, as they had been left by their owners. Pillars in Pompeii, however, are not everywhere of stone; many are of brick, stuccoed. Indeed I was rather surprised to find in Rome, as well as here, how largely brick and stucco enter into the material of ancient