

The hills on the northern side of this lake—the walls of the ancient crater—are richly covered with chestnut trees and vines. The rim of the bowl on the southern side has been broken down, just as we have seen the southern side of the ancient crater of Vesuvius carried away. It is in consequence of a celebrated “cut” made by Agrippa—the bold engineer-statesman to whom Augustus owes so much of the eclat of his reign—that we see the lake of Avernus reduced to the limited dimensions of a mile and a half in circumference, and five hundred feet in depth. Between it and the sea, towards the south-east, we can see the famous *Lacus Lucrinus*, itself a crater, lower down on the flank of the ancient volcano. Into this Lake Agrippa admitted the sea by a canal; then by another canal he let down Avernus into Lucrinus—thus forming a magnificent double dock, where the Roman fleet, quadrupled, might float securely. This port, a grand topic with the poets and historians of the day, existed in good order until A.D. 1538, when the long dormant volcano over which the united lakes reposed suddenly awoke.—A short distance to the south-east, you may observe a conspicuous hill, resembling the cone of a volcano. This is the celebrated Monte Nuovo, which was thrown up in the space of forty-eight hours on the occasion now spoken of. After a succession of volcanic shocks a fissure took place near the Lucrine Lake; from the aperture rose to a great height, first cold water, then hot;—then followed masses of ashes and lapilli, descending on the country in torrents of mud; then followed volleys of dry ashes and red-hot pumice stones. And in forty-eight hours a hill was formed 440 feet in height, and a mile and a half in circumference, filling up a large portion of the Lucrine Lake, and ruining Agrippa's harbour. On the top of the hill is a crater one fourth of a mile in circumference, and 419 feet deep. It is only of late years that the scoræ on its surface have become sufficiently decomposed to admit of the growth of small trees thereupon. The line of the coast in the immediate neighbourhood was, during this explosion, elevated to such an extent that the sea seemed to have retired 400 paces.—The protrusion of the mountain of Jorullo, in Mexico, in A.D. 1759, is a well known parallel to Monte Nuovo. Both are interesting, as throwing light on the nascent condition of volcanic hills.—To the south-west of the Lucrine, you come to Fusaro (the old Acherusian), famous to this day for its oysters, another water-filled crater, and still further on is Mare Morte, another. To arrive at the latter, you pass through Elysium—the tract which is said to be the original and veritable prototype of that fair creation of the poets.

To the north of Avernus, I should have mentioned just now, one more crater is traceable in this region; and a fragment of its ancient walls constitutes the acropolis of the venerable Cumæ, the earliest Greek settlement in Italy.—The Lake Licola, to the north of Cumæ, which looks like one of the system of volcanic lakes, which we have been tracing out, is in reality, it is said, the remains of the canal which Nero is known to have commenced with the intention of carrying it through the Pontine marshes as far as Ostia.

From Mare Morte, or rather from the beach called Miliscola—corrupted from *Militis schola*, an ancient military parade-ground—we take the ferry and cross a narrow strait of two miles to the island of Procida, and from thence, over two miles more of sea, to Ischia. These two pyramidal masses—so impressed on the memory of the visitor to Naples, and so celebrated in song and history—are stated by those who have scientifically examined them, to be parts of one great volcanic mountain. Here, prior to the awakening of Vesuvius in A.D. 79, was the principal safety

valve of this fiery region.—Homer, Pindar, Virgil, and Ovid celebrate the eruptions of Mount Epomæus in this identical Ischia; and here Typhœus was fabled to be buried. Once only since the Christian era, has it exhibited activity. In 1302 great damage was done by an eruption of lava.

We now make the trajet back from Ischia to the mainland again. We pass the conspicuous promontory of Misenum—retaining, in accordance with the poet's prediction, “æternum per sæcula nomen.” On the left we coast along by the once voluptuous and still beautifully situated Baiæ—the favorite watering-place of southern Italy in its old palmy days. As you gaze now into the sea two hundred yards from the shore, you see the sunken substructions of villas, temples, and baths—the former haunts of luxurious emperors, patricians, poets, and orators. This coast, too, has known the presence of Hannibal, Alaric, Genseric, and Totila—You have Pozzuoli—the old Puteoli before you—covering the flanks and summit of a bold hill jutting out into the sea; the dark masses which you observe at regular distances above the sunny surface of the calm water, are the piers of its ancient mole, once surmounted by a light. We land on the west side of the hill. We are conducted at once to the Serápeon which stands near—a temple of the Egyptian Serápis—a ruin which has become memorable among physical observers—as proving to the eye, by the perforations of the marine borers called Lithodomi in its still erect columns, that the land, subsequently to the erection of the building, must have gently sunk and remained submerged for many years, and then that it must as gently again have been raised. The perforations on the columns are now seen at a height of twelve feet; they cover a space of nine feet; and then above them comes an uninjured space of twenty feet, which must have been the portion of the columns appearing above the surface of the sea, when the stratum on which they stand had sunk down to the lowest point. The shore is supposed to be again descending. In order to approach the pillars for close examination, you have to walk through an inch or two of salt water. The edifice has been large. Its exterior colonnade was 140 feet long, 122 feet wide. Here was found the remarkable sitting figure of Serápis, having his hand on a three-headed dog, now to be seen in the Museum at Naples.

We must not delay in Puteoli, though its associations tempt one to do so. As the southern terminus of the Appian way—a high road to Rome—it was, before Naples existed, the principal focus of the Italian trade with the East. The Greek colonists from Cumæ called the place Dicæarchia; but the Romans preferred the appellation “Puteoli,” as having, in sound at least, an allusion to the hot sulphureous “wells,” which abound in this volcanic locality.—Here we tread in the foot-prints of St. Paul; and standing on the now solitary beach, we can perhaps more vividly realize the interesting fact than we do when surrounded by the mosaics and marbles which encrust his shrines in Rome. The Apostle, as we know from Acts xxvii. 13, landed at Puteoli a prisoner in chains, and after his perilous voyage was allowed to rest here for seven days.—On a neighbouring rising ground you may be conducted over a remarkably perfect amphitheatre [480 by 382 feet], where, in A.D. 66, Nero contended publicly with wild animals, and where, in the time of Diocletian, Januarius, the supposed patron of Naples, with other Christians, suffered martyrdom. Here you may also be conducted over no inconsiderable remains of the Villa Puteolana of Cicero—familiar to the reader of his letters to Atticus, and distinguished as the spot where he wrote his *Questiones Academicæ* and his work *De Fato*; and also as the place where the Emperor Hadrian died.