

spite of yourself. There is nothing complicated about it. You see almost at a glance what it is,—a great circular building, vaulted at the top in a somewhat flattened dome roof that is broken now but reminds you roughly of the Pantheon. You can enter if you wish,—the arched doorways are open to all,—but you get no new effect. You are standing on a damp, moss-grown, rubbish-littered floor, with the circular wall around you and the open dome of the broken roof above you. Only the blue sea with the fishing boats strikes you with a new beauty as you see it framed in the old arched doorway that opens towards the bay.

There are two other baths,—the so-called Temples of Mercury and Diana,—the former a series of three of these great round vaulted rooms. In one of them an eager individual who drops from nowhere in particular earns two cents (a very respectable tip) by showing you a whispering gallery effect that is not at all bad, and you play with it for a few minutes,—disgracefully oblivious for the moment of the Claudii, the Antonii, the Horatii, who once refreshed their dissipated frames here. But you turn away from Baia after a while and with the burdensome memory and afflicting consciousness of a bad dinner profusely flavoured with olive oil, you start on one of the drives of your life.

On the south shore of the bay, a few miles nearer Naples than Baia, is the town of Pozzuoli,—the Puteoli where St. Paul once landed. On the road you pass fragment after fragment of Roman villas, swept away long ago to their foundations. The bay that the proud rulers of the world could

look over from their gardens lies there still in all its loveliness, but gardens and villas have vanished as completely as patricians and Caesars, except for the low grass-covered mounds that mark old foundation lines, or here and there exposed spaces of criss-crossed plaster, once covered with bright stucco or brighter fresco. The completeness of the destruction of it all amazes you. You turn from the flowers and grass and from the ruins veiled by nature in soft green to the bay on the other side shading off in lighter blues to the Mediterranean, and your consuming wish is for an hour of quietness to let the whole effect have a chance to sink in. No moralist ever preached a truer or clearer lesson on the vanity of riches and power. Never before have you felt so intensely your own littleness; and yet, with the crushing humiliation of the dead foundations before you, you feel strangely enough more vividly than you ever did at home the greatness and the *reality* of the Romans.

Then you rattle along the narrow paved streets of Pozzuoli, and you remember that you want to see the crater of Solfatara, the little Vesuvius as they call it. So you drive up the long slope, passing a Roman amphitheatre on the way, and then walk until you enter the crater. Your notion of an extinct crater hitherto has been a blackened, barren, ash-covered basin. But here you are walking in a little meadow of myrtle, with the sides of the crater sloping up from you covered with grass and exquisite flowers. You come soon though to a round hole three or four feet in diameter, and six feet down you are horrified to see furiously boiling muddy