

attached to the basin which we call the Bay of Naples is "Crater." The old observers had taken notice that there was in this locality a connected system of volcanic vents, and that Vesuvius, Vulture, the Solfatara of the Phlegrean fields, Avernus, Ischia, Stromboli, with *Ætna* itself, were but minor formations on the lip of a gigantic flue for the escape of the elastic gases, whose egress by their former channel the influx of the Mediterranean had checked. In that old appellation—"Crater"—have we not also a lingering reminiscence of a huge upheaval, and consequent oscillation of ocean, of which tradition spoke—when perhaps the Aral parted company with the Caspian, and the Caspian with the Black Sea, and all three with the Baltic,—when the Black Sea no longer formed a continuous expanse with the Mediterranean,—when Thessaly became dry land, and Pelion fell from *Ossa*,—when the Red Sea ceased to receive the Jordan, and the valley of the Nile, the Mediterranean,—when the mountain chain which had previously linked the continents of Europe and Africa together was ruptured, and Atlantis, not all a fable, sank beneath the deep?

But be this as it may, Vesuvius is one of a system of volcanic vents, either open or for the present obstructed, which it is interesting to trace in this neighbourhood;—with which system are doubtless connected also the extinct volcanoes of the Albano hills, near Rome, the Solfatara on the road to Tivoli, and the Lago di Bracciano, to the north-west of Rome.

The base of Vesuvius is now encompassed on two sides by railways. The one to the north-east runs to Capua, and is ultimately to reach Rome. The other to the south-east is completed, I believe, now to the ancient port of Brundisium. The south-eastern road has "stations" at Herculaneum and Pompeii, and by this route many persons proceed from Naples to Resina, where the ascent of Vesuvius is usually commenced. But although to travellers in the United States of America the idea of rushing by rail to Rome, Syracuse, and Troy is sufficiently familiar, the tourist who is desirous of keeping his mind in harmony with the past, whose veritable relics he is about to contemplate, will certainly do well to prefer the old public road. By taking this route to Pompeii, you also have the advantage of witnessing a succession of animated scenes of popular life, the whole line of road being an almost continuous suburb of Naples, and swarming with inhabitants. Here will be seen crowds, who, in their sun-burnt, copper-coloured skins, scantiness of dress, showiness of rude ornament, and want of productive occupation, will strike the Canadian who has visited Caughnawaga, Manitouahing, or the Sault, as—Indians, of a rather superior class. In your way out, too, by this route, you will be sure to meet or pass numbers of those nondescript, characteristic vehicles of the neighbourhood, the country caleches, made so brilliant with gay paint and bright brass, in respect to which one is constrained to wonder (first) how fourteen or more passengers—embracing motley groups of peasants, soldiers, ecclesiastics, monks, women, children, and infants in arms—can be placed within them, or slung on to them—for slung on many literally are in nets hanging down behind,—and (secondly) how the one diminutive horse or mule manages to whirl them along as, decked with little flags, streaming ribands, jingling bells, and glittering gear, he merrily does. You will have an opportunity of calling, if you feel inclined to do so, at one of the innumerable maccaroni manufactories which—at Torre del Annunciata, for example—line the street, where almost every house looks like a chandlery of farthing rushlights, the pipes of the popular esculent suspended in the open air on countless rows of long rods to dry, resembling in colour and diameter that once celebrated article. Within, you can examine the process, which will not fail to interest, by which the farinaceous dough of which this staple food of the neighbourhood consists is forced into the various shapes of

maccaroni, vermicelli, fedelini, ribands, sheets, and the minute little discs resembling the green seeds of the hollyhock, so abundantly to be met with in Neapolitan soups.

At Torre del Greco you can descend from your carriage and examine the lava, which here in vast sheets has found at various times its way into the sea. In 1794 it destroyed the principal portion of this town by passing through it in a stream 1200 feet wide, and of a thickness varying from 12 to 40 feet, advancing into the Mediterranean a distance of 380 feet. The desolation occasioned by this, and another later fiery flood (1806), is still fresh to the eye. The disintegrating force of the atmosphere has not yet had time to dissolve the rocky surface into soil, which ultimately heals the wounds of earth, and obliterates all scars. The colour of the solid mass is here a dark bluish gray, reminding one of our familiar Kingston limestone when newly quarried. Here, and everywhere along the drive out from Naples, the lava is seen turned to useful account. Houses are built of it; the streets are paved with it; the heaps of metal piled by the way-side for the purpose of repair are composed of the same omnipresent substance.

But in noticing what may be seen at Torre del Annunciata and Torre del Greco I have gone beyond Resina, where, as I have said, the ascent of Vesuvius is usually commenced. In practice, indeed, I believe, persons generally do pass through Resina, visiting Pompeii first, and taking Vesuvius in their return. But inasmuch as "Vesuvius and its neighbourhood" is my subject, I hasten to despatch the mountain first, and reserve what I have to say on its neighbourhood for the second division of my paper.

Deposited, then, at Resina, you procure horses and a guide. An unromantic carriage-drive has been constructed, by which a considerable portion of the mountain may be circuitously ascended. A more interesting mode of ascent is by a rough bridle-path on horseback. Taking this route, you proceed up a sort of water-course, passing over bare lava which shelves backwards by great flights of broad irregular steps. At first on the right and left are vineyards and gardens, till you approach a rather level portion of the mountain, where stand the place of refreshment called the Hermitage and an Astronomical Observatory—not the scene of the discoveries of De Gasparis—that, one gazes at with interest close to Naples itself. At this point vegetation ceases, or has been destroyed over the upper portions of the southern and western flanks of the mountain, and the far outskirts of the cone begin to present some rather startling evidences of the desolating power of volcanoes. The whole apex of the mountain rises solemnly before you, apparently a pile of solid lava—of lava which bears very visible marks of having flowed down from the crater above in broad outspreading cataracts. Its furrowed, ruddy look is like the surface of one of our unmacadamized back-streets after a sudden frost. Here and there you see where the descending ponderous fluid has met in its course with some solid mass of anterior date, and has coiled heavily around it, leaving great sluggish circular ripples, set fast for ever. You start from Resina very buoyantly; you are carried gaily along on your willing nag. The brilliancy of earth, air, and sky fills the mind with a sort of child-like glee. But as you approach the base of the cone, a sobriety comes over the spirit. Like the child advanced onwards into manhood, you find that you have entered a rather stern region, and that nothing short of hard work will enable you to overcome its difficulties.

Arrived at length, after two hours and a half, at the Atrio dei Cavallo, near the base of the cone, you dismount. You take a rough scramble up a wild desolate ravine underneath the precipitous walls of Monte Somma, the north-westerly summit of Vesuvius; you notice the stratified layers of the ancient lava, and the