

as far as the Royal Observatory, more than half way, where a halt was made for refreshments at 9 a.m., after a hot walk of two hours. Hitherto the ascent, though steep, had not been difficult; a road had been made through the lava for mules. The lava through which the road had led for an hour was of two kinds—that of this spring being entirely composed of scoria, or lava scum, and resembling ploughed fields, so much as to deceive me at first; the lava of 1858 very pure and hard, and not yet entirely cold, as the guide showed us crevices out of which hot air still came. This latter resembled externally the sea after a heavy storm when the waves, though smooth, are high; only the waves of lava appeared on the surface like a sea of thick paste that had been stirred up with poles and stopped in that position. At half-past nine we reached the beginning of the *cone*. Here all signs of vegetation ceased, and the ascent, hitherto over lava, must now be up a much steeper incline, and wading nearly knee deep at times in cinders resembling dry mud broken up very fine. In a quarter of an hour we came to patches of yellow cinders, impregnated with sulphur, which still smelt very strongly, and exuded in places through holes where the heat was very considerable. At a quarter past ten, we stood on the edge of the crater. My liveliest imaginations had never pictured such a crater; it really looked like an entrance to the regions of Satan. The whole crater is, I should think, about one mile in circumference, and, previous to the last eruption, had formed only one hole; but that eruption had formed a new crater and thrown up a ridge between it and the old one. Along this ridge we walked as far as the guide would allow us, and though the bottom of neither craters could be seen, yet a good view of the whole was obtained. For about one-half the way down the crater was composed of cinders like the outside, but much steeper, and completely dyed in many places with all the colors sulphur could give, principally yellow ochre and deep dark red; below, the rocks seemed to descend in precipices sheer down into the bowels of the earth, where away down we could occasionally hear, in peculiar tones, the boiling of lava—a noise

resembling a snow slide off a long roof in winter. After each boiling a cloud of dust like smoke would rise out of the horrible pit. The sight was grand and terrible. We walked almost around the crater on its edge, our boots burning hot at times; once we had to pass through a cloud of sulphur that almost choked me. Small apertures whence the white sulphurous smoke arose led into the earth. The heat here was very great; we shoved our alpenstocks down a couple of feet, and in a few seconds they were well scorched, causing the iron band to fall off. We began the descent at a quarter past eleven, and came down the first part in six foot strides at a great rate. At 11.50 we stopped to empty our boots of cinders at the Observatory, and arrived at Resina at half-past one, after a hard but interesting walk in a hot Naples sun of 12 or 15 miles.

Herculaneum lies right below Resina; we went down about one hundred steps to see it, and I was disappointed. Owing to the difficulty of excavating the lava what can be seen is comparatively little; part of a theatre orchestra, &c., and a street with a few houses near what used to be the sea shore, nothing very remarkable. From Resina we drove in a carriage to Pompeii, eight miles, over a road very dusty, whose white dust had been blown over and covered the fences and trees in the immediate vicinity, giving them a strange appearance. At 4 p.m. we entered ancient Pompeii between high banks of white pumice stones and cinders, covered with cactuses and other succulent plants. With Pompeii I was not disappointed; the sight was far in excess of my expectations; one-third of the whole city was before me, minus the roofs of the houses. Here was a forum surrounded with large pillars and noble mansions, and a theatre whose worn steps shewed theatres to have been as much frequented then as now. Very near was a fine, long, well paved street, with deep ruts worn in the stone, and the stepping stones laid across the street in various places to cross on in wet weather. On either side were handsome private houses paved with mosaic of various devices, and furnished with marble fountains, statuary and household gods; the walls beautifully painted,