

to the Virgin. Above the grotto are the ruins of an ancient aqueduct, and the so-called "Tomb of Virgil."

Figure 46 represents Monte Tafonato, one of the loftiest summits in Corsica.

Consisting of a fine red porphyry, Monte Tafonato (that is, the "pierced mountain") is 7400 feet above the sea-level; it serves as a huge buttress to Monte Paglia-Orba, which reaches an elevation of 8650 feet. Near its crest may be seen an opening, several yards both in height and width. When the "orb of day" has already disappeared behind the surrounding mountains, the traveller beholds with delight a sudden gleam of radiance strike through this orifice.

It is impossible to explain with any degree of certainty this singular perforation of the porphyry on the summit of Monte Tafonato.

In his "Histoire Illustrée de la Corse," the Abbé Galetti offers us a legend as his sole explanation of this geological phenomenon. As a general rule it is difficult to imagine anything duller or balder than a legend. In all the countries of the world, legends tell the same story—breathe the same spirit—which does not fail to imprint a disagreeable monotony upon the works in which they are collected. In

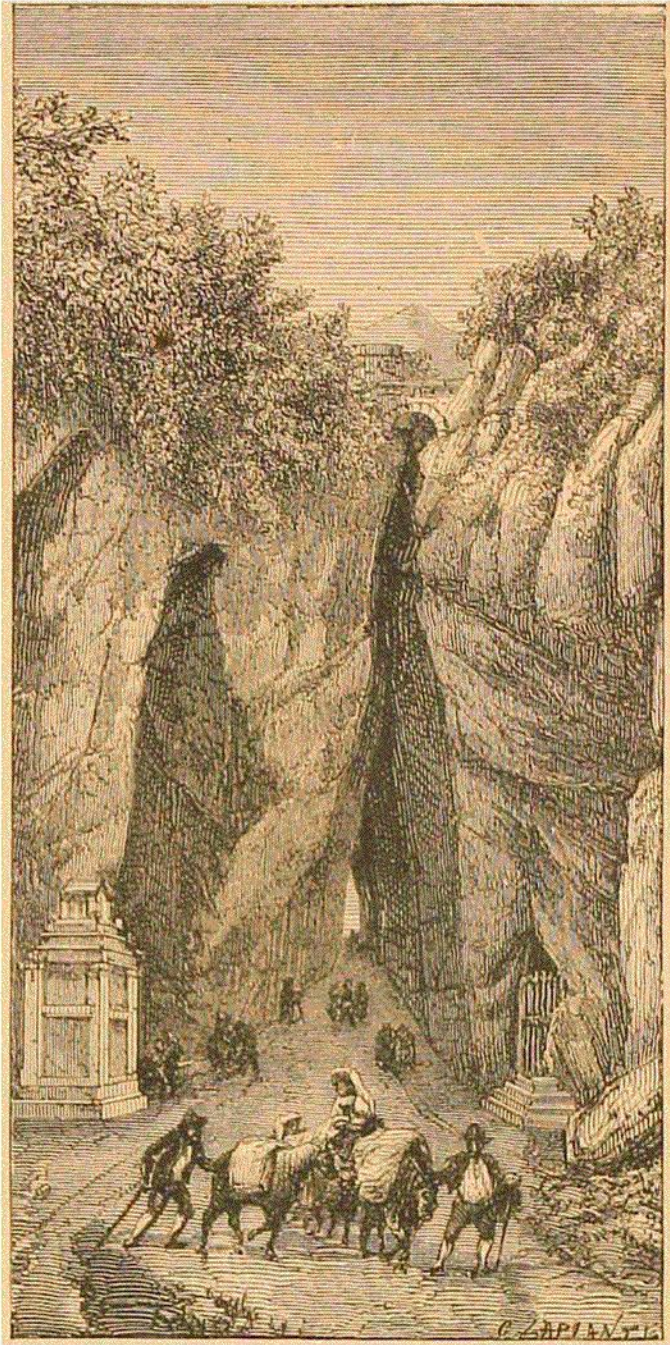


FIG. 45.—THE GROTTA OF PAUSILIPPO (ITALY).