

A strange phenomenon, which occurred in many parts of Calabria, was especially noticed, according to the report of the Academy of Naples, in the outskirts of Rosarno. Across the whole extent of the surrounding plain opened numerous circular cavities (Figs. 127, 128), of about the size of a carriage-wheel. Some of these cavities—



FIG. 127.—CIRCULAR CAVITIES AT ROSARNO (CALABRIA).

which strikingly resembled wells in appearance—were filled with water to about ten or twenty feet from the surface; but more generally they contained dry sand. Afterwards, when the ground around them was excavated, it was discovered that they were shaped like a funnel with its mouth upwards.

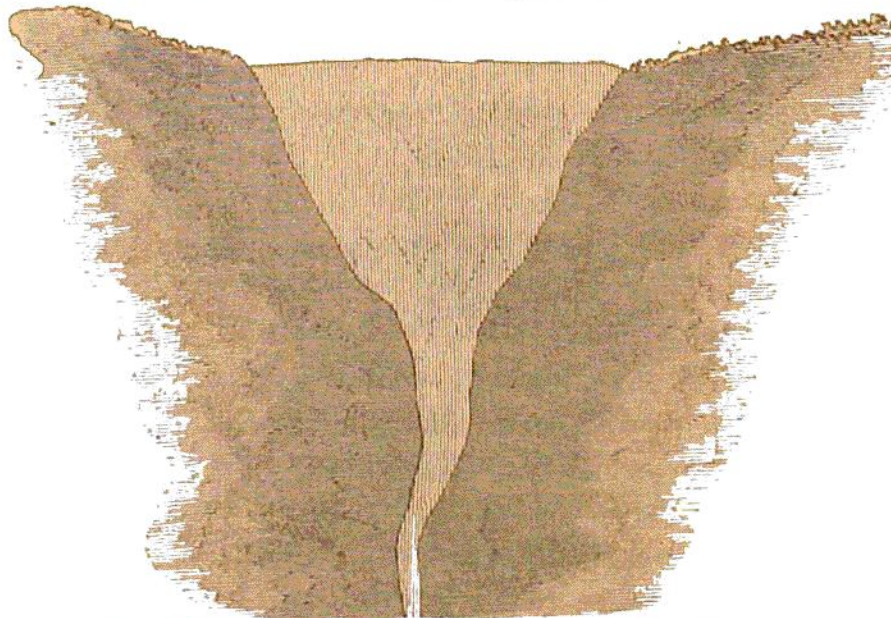


FIG. 128.—INTERIOR SECTION OF A CIRCULAR CAVITY.

The populous and thriving town of Polistena, built upon two declivities on either side of a small river, was wholly destroyed. Not a house, not a foot of wall, was left standing. The ground gave way on the river-bank, dragging down with it the houses. Half the inhabitants perished beneath the ruins: the survivors has-