

Oppido, a considerable town, was built on the summit of an isolated mountain, whose escarpments were very steep, and its declivities exceedingly rapid. The town was completely demolished by the earthquake ; not a hand's-breadth of wall was left standing. However, the soil of the mountain did not yield ; only a kind of citadel or stronghold, which commanded the valley, fell into the lower gorge.

If the soil of the mountain on which Oppido was built resisted the violence of the shocks, such was not the case with the opposite hills. There, immense landslips took place, filling up the valleys with their wreck, and blocking the course of the springs, which accumulated in lakes all around the town. Similar effects were produced in the other valleys adjacent to Oppido.

A vast gulf opened on the declivity of a hill near that town ; to some extent its ravenous jaws were filled with masses of earth and a great number of olive-trees and vines which were precipitated into it. Yet the chasm, after all, remained 200 feet in depth, and 500 feet in width.



FIG. 133.—CHASM NEAR OPPIDO (CALABRIA).

About a league below Oppido stood the little village of Castellaccio, on the edge of an escarpment, which suddenly gave way, and fell into the depths of the valley ; the ruins of a few houses remaining on the mountain-crest were the only indications of its former site and existence. The village of Corsoletto underwent an almost similar fate.

We turn to the town of Santa-Cristina, situated nearly at the foot of the great mountain of Aspromonte,* and placed on a precipitous sandy elevation, surrounded by ravines and deep valleys. Its position closely resembling that of Terranova, the same doom befel it. The houses, and a portion of the mountain, were flung down

* [Rendered historically famous—we had almost said infamous—by the collision which took place there, August 29, 1862, between the troops of Victor-Emanuel and the volunteers of Garibaldi. The Italian revolutionist was severely wounded in the ankle, and made prisoner.]