

city with irresistible force, and filling all its edifices nearly to the roof, hardened as it dried into a coarse tufa. To exaggerate the horrors of such a catastrophe is, perhaps, impossible. "The rumbling of the earth beneath—the dense obscurity and murky shadow of the heaven above—the long heavy roll of the convulsed sea—the strident noise of the vapours and gases escaping from the mountain-crater—the shifting electric lights, crimson, emerald green, lurid yellow, azure, blood red, which at intervals relieved the blackness, only to make it ghastlier than before—the hot hissing showers which descended like a rain of fire—the clash and clang of meeting rocks and riven stones—the burning houses and flaming vineyards—the hurrying

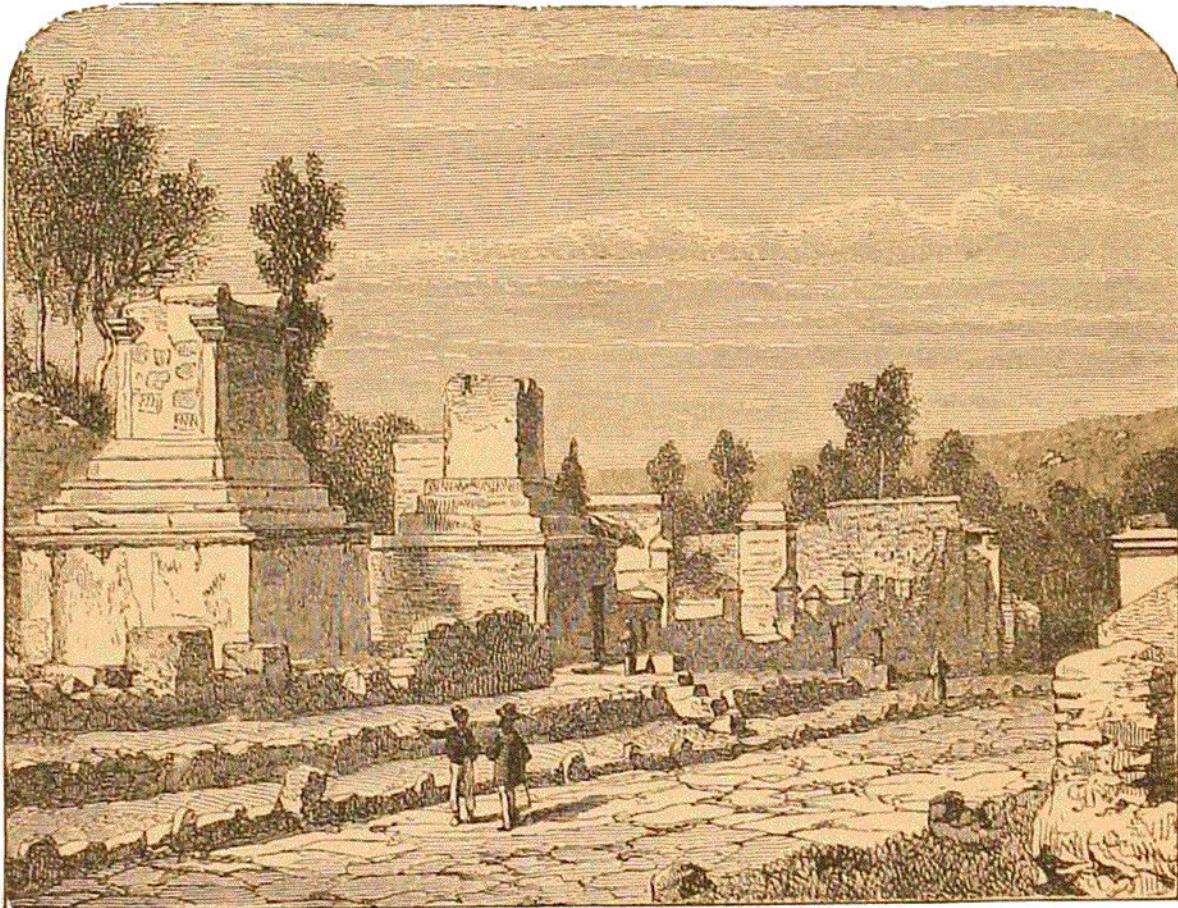


FIG. 143.—STREET OF TOMBS AT POMPEII.

fugitives, with wan faces and straining eyeballs, calling on those they loved to follow them—the ashes, and cinders, and boiling mud, driving through the darkened streets, and pouring into the public places—above all, that fine, impalpable, but choking dust which entered everywhere, penetrating even to the lowest cellar, and against which human skill could devise no effectual protection; all these things must have combined into a whole of such unusual and such awful terror that the imagination cannot adequately realize it.”*

In this eruption the seaward flank of Vesuvius was wholly destroyed, and of the ancient crater the only remains were a narrow ridge, on the south side, now called *La Pedamentina*, and that part of the wall or rampart which, under the name of *Somma*, encircles about two-fifths of the new cone. This cone is the modern Vesuvius, and the source of nearly all the later eruptions.

* [“Buried Cities of Campania,” p. 41.]