

no sensible variation of level in that sea during the last two thousand years.\*

Thus we arrive, without the aid of the celebrated temple, at the conclusion, that the recent marine deposit at Puzzuoli was upraised in modern times above the level of the sea, and that not only this change of position, but the accumulation of the modern strata, was posterior to the destruction of many edifices, of which they contain the imbedded remains. If we now examine the evidence afforded by the temple itself, it appears, from the most authentic accounts, that the three pillars now standing erect continued, down to the middle of the last century, half buried in the new marine strata (*c*, fig. 69.) before described. The upper part of the columns, being concealed by bushes, had not attracted, until the year 1749, the notice of antiquaries; but, when the soil was removed in 1750, they were seen to form part of the remains of a splendid edifice, the pavement of which was still preserved, and upon it lay a number of columns of African breccia and of granite. The original plan of the building could be traced distinctly; it was of a quadrangular form, seventy feet in diameter, and the roof had been supported by forty-six noble columns, twenty-four of granite, and the rest of marble. The large court was surrounded by apartments, supposed to have been used as bathing-rooms; for a thermal spring, still used for medicinal purposes, issues now just behind the building, and the water, it is said, of this spring was conveyed by marble ducts into the chambers.

Many antiquaries have entered into elaborate discussions as to the deity to which this edifice was consecrated; but Signor Carelli, who has written the last able treatise on the subject†, endeavours to show that all the religious edifices of Greece were of a form essentially different; that the building, therefore, could never have been a temple; that it corresponded to the public bathing-rooms at many of our watering-places; and, lastly, that if it had been a temple, it could not have been dedicated to Serapis, the worship of the Egyptian god being strictly prohibited, at the time when this edifice was in use, by the senate of Rome.

It is not for the geologist to offer an opinion on these topics; and I shall, therefore, designate this valuable relic of antiquity by its generally received name, and proceed to consider the memorials of physical changes inscribed on the three standing columns in most legible characters by the hand of Nature. (See Frontispiece.) These pillars, which have been carved each out of a single block of marble, are forty feet, three inches and a half in height. An horizontal fissure nearly intersects one of the columns; the other two are entire. They are all slightly out of the perpendicular, inclining somewhat to the south-west, that is, towards the sea.‡ Their surface is smooth and uninjured to the height of about twelve feet,

\* On the authority of Captain W. H. Smyth, R.N.

† Dissertazione sulla Sagra Architettura degli Antichi.

‡ This appears from the measurement of Captain Basil Hall, R.N., Proceedings of Geol. Soc., No. 38. p. 114.; see also Patchwork, by the same, author, vol. iii.