

o'clock," he says, on Sunday the 8th of August, "there was a loud report, which shook the houses at Portici and its neighbourhood to such a degree, as to alarm the inhabitants and drive them out into the streets. Many windows were broken, and as I have since seen, walls cracked by the concussion of the air from that explosion. . . . In one instant a fountain of liquid transparent fire began to rise, and gradually increasing, arrived at so amazing a height, as to strike every one who beheld it with the most awful astonishment. I shall scarcely be credited when I assure you that, to the best of my judgment, the height of this stupendous column of fire could not be less than three times that of Vesuvius itself; which, you know, rises perpendicularly near 3700 feet above the level of the sea." (The height by my own measurement in 1824 is 3920 feet). "Puffs of smoke, as black as can possibly be imagined, succeeded one another hastily, and accompanied the red-hot, transparent, and liquid lava, interrupting its splendid brightness here and there by patches of the darkest hue. Within these puffs of smoke, at the very moment of their emission from the crater, I could perceive a bright but pale electrical fire playing about in zigzag lines. The liquid lava, mixed with scoriæ and stones, after having mounted, I verily believe at least 10,000 feet, falling perpendicularly on Vesuvius, covered its whole cone, part of that of Somma, and the valley between them. The falling matter being nearly as vivid and inflamed as that which was continually issuing fresh from the crater, formed with it one