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complete body of fire, which could not be less than two miles and a half in breadth, and of the extraordinary height above mentioned; casting a heat to the distance of at least six miles around it. The brushwood of the mountain of Somma was soon in a flame, which, being of a different tint from the deep red of the matter thrown out from the volcano, and from the silvery blue of the electrical fire, still added to the contrast of this most extraordinary scene. After the column of fire had continued in full force for nearly half an hour, the eruption ceased at once, and Vesuvius remained sullen and silent.'

(36.) The lightnings here described arose evidently in part from the chemical activity of gaseous decompositions going forward, in part to the friction of steam, and in part from the still more intense friction of the dust, stones, and ashes encountering one another in the air, in analogy to the electric manifestations which accompany the dust storms in India.

(37.) To give an idea of the state of the inhabitants of the country when an explosion is going on, I will make one other extract:—"The mountain of Somma, at the foot of which Ottaiano is situated, hides Vesuvius from its sight: so that till the eruption became considerable it was not visible to them. On Sunday night, when the noise increased, and the fire began to appear above the mountain of Somma, many of the inhabitants of the town flew to the churches; and others were preparing to quit the town, when a sudden violent report was heard, soon after which they found themselves involved in a thick