

For a long period the mountain remained tranquil, and we hear of no fresh outbreak until A.D. 203, which is described by Galon and Dion Cassius. A third took place in A.D. 472, which spread clouds of fine ashes over all Europe; and a fourth, recorded by both Procopius and Cassiodorus, in the reign of Theodoric, king of the Goths, A.D. 512. These eruptions were accompanied by streams of lava, which inflicted terrible devastation on the surrounding country.

A fifth eruption is said to have occurred in 685; a sixth, in 993; a seventh, in 1036, when the lava-torrents reached the sea; an eighth, in 1049; a ninth, in 1138–39, when the discharges of lava endured for eight, and of ashes for thirty, days; a tenth, in 1306; and an eleventh, in 1500, when a crater was formed, five miles in circumference and 3000 feet in depth.*

The interval between the eleventh and twelfth eruptions was marked by an amazing event in the Phlegræan fields—the sudden formation of a mountain, ever since called *Monte Nuovo*, 460 feet in height, and upwards of a mile and a half in circumference. The depth of its crater is 421 English feet from the summit of the hill, so that its bottom is only nineteen feet above the sea-level. The cone partly occupies the site of the Lucrine Lake, the crater of a pre-existent volcano, almost entirely filled during the explosion of 1538.

Von Buch is of opinion that Monte Nuovo was formed, not by the ejection of pumice, scoriæ, or ashes, but by the upheaval of solid beds of white tufa, previously horizontal, which were pushed up so as to dip away in all directions from the centre.† This opinion, however, is controverted by Sir Charles Lyell, and he asserts that the mountain is composed of pumiceous mud, which hardened as it dried, just as some cements, made of volcanic ashes, are known to consolidate with facility.

The twelfth eruption of Vesuvius occurred in December 1631,

* [Della Terre, "Storia del Vesuvio," 4to, 1775; Lobley, "Mount Vesuvius" (London, 1868). The two latter eruptions are not mentioned by Sorrentino, who says the crater of Vesuvius remained empty from 1139 to 1630.]

† [Sir C. Lyell, "Principles of Geology," bk. ii., c. 24.]