

daily by the dilapidation and falling-in of its sides. It measured, at first, according to the account of some authors, 2000 feet in depth from the extreme part of the existing summit; but Mr. Sarpo, when he saw it, soon after the eruption, estimated its depth at less than half that amount. More than 800 feet of the cone was carried away by the explosions, so that the mountain was reduced in height from about 4200 to 3400 feet."

March 11, 1828.

September 18, 1831.

August 1834.

March 6, 1838.

April 22, 1845.

November 13, 1847.

February 6-28, 1850.

May 1855. Accompanied by a destructive discharge of lava.

May 1858.

December 1861. On this occasion a number of small cones opened in

the rear of Torre del Greco, along a fissure of about 2000 yards in length, and continued in eruption for several days. The town was nearly destroyed.

February 1865.

November 1868. This eruption began on the 16th. Vast streams of lava poured down the mountain-side, taking the same course as in 1855, and filling up and overflowing a ravine called *Fossa Vetrana*. In the first twenty-four hours it accomplished a distance of 2180 yards. Afterwards its progress was slower, but it invaded the cultivated region, doing serious damage, and threatening the villages beneath. On the night of the 16th, the vapour-clouds assumed the shape of a gigantic pine-tree, as described by Pliny. Discharges of stones and ashes were numerous, and several new cones, in active eruption, opened at the foot of the great cone.

Having thus recorded the eruptions of Vesuvius, from the earliest known period down to the present time, nothing more remains but to describe its scenery and physical characteristics. For this purpose we invite the reader to ascend the mountain in company with Mr. Babbage, and avail himself of that eminent savant's experiences to form a just and accurate conception of its successive landscapes:—\*

When he reached the summit of the cone, the sun had not risen. An obscure twilight still prevailed, as he and his companion stood upon the irregular edge of a vast gulf, spread out below at the depth of about 500 feet. The plain at the bottom would have been invisible but for an irregular network of bright red cracks extending over its entire surface. At intervals the silence was broken by the upward rush of a flight of red-hot scoræ from the diminutive crater within the large one. These missiles, however, though projected high over the summit of the cone, never fell far beyond the margin of the small cavity whence they issued.

Those who have observed the blood-vessels of their own eye by the aid of

\* [Babbage, "Passages in the Life of a Philosopher," pp. 216-222.]