

description ; and the shifting effects of light and shade could only be realized by the magic brush of a Turner.

The curiosities of Staffa were first made known to the world in 1774 by Sir Joseph Banks, the eminent naturalist.]

A natural cavern, which owes its formation to some volcanic convulsion of the surface, is the celebrated *Azure Grotto*, *Blue Grotto*, or *Grotta Azzurra*, excavated in a precipitous cliff of the island of Capri (the ancient *Capræa*), which lies at the entrance of the Bay of Naples, about three miles from Cape Campanella.

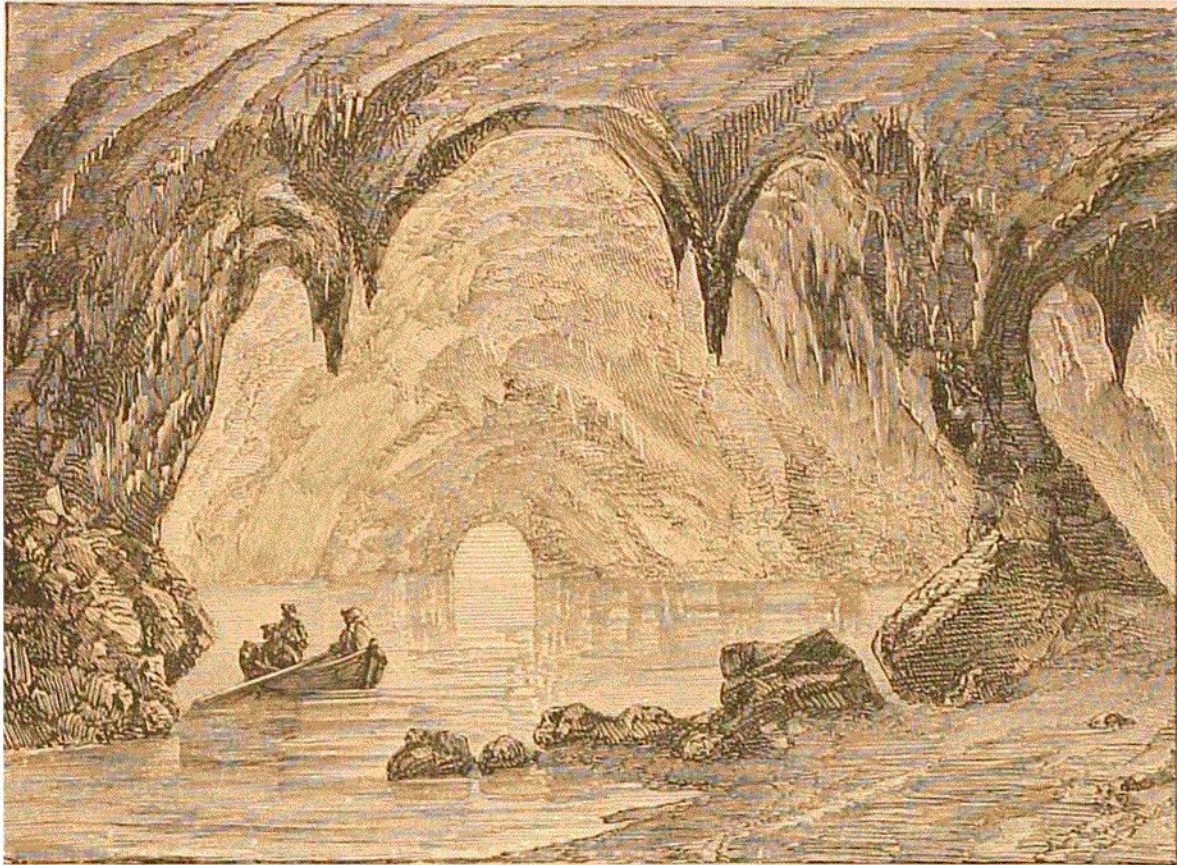


FIG. 175.—THE BLUE GROTTTO.

This lovely island was the retreat of the Emperor Tiberius during the latter years of his life, and the scene of his tyranny, his cruelties, his vices, and debaucheries.

[“Caprea at this time, indeed, was little better than a barren rock, the resort of wild goats, from which it derived its name, about eleven miles in circuit ; but it lay within two hours’ row of Misenum, the great naval station of the Lower Sea. Easily accessible from the mainland at one point, which it required little vigilance to secure, the island is singularly difficult of approach at every other. Its shores consist of limestone cliffs, sheer precipices, in most parts plunging directly into the deep sea. They are furrowed here and there by those caverns celebrated for the