

play of coloured light in their recesses, which, after having amused and astonished the curious of our time as recent discoveries, are now ascertained to have been the forgotten haunts of Roman luxury. In the interior, an uneven but cultivable surface rises at either end of the island to the height of 1000 and 2000 feet respectively; the eastern or lower promontory having been, according to tradition, the favourite sojourn of Tiberius, and its dizzy cliff the scene of his savage executions. While few other spots could have combined the requisites of solitude and difficult approach with such actual proximity to the seat of government, Tiberius was not insensible to the charms of its climate, and even the attractions of its scenery; to the freshness of its evering breeze, the coolness of its summers, and the pleasing mildness of its winters."\*]

Five or six hours suffice, in the summer season, for a steamboat to transport the tourist from the Port Santa Lucia, of Naples, to the island of Capri. On disembarking in the island, he will immediately engage a small boat to carry him to the Grotto Azzurra, where his astonished eyes will rest delighted on a truly faëry spectacle.

[On reaching the entrance, the tourist must lie down while the boat is driven under a rocky arch, about three feet high, and so narrow that it seems to the unobservant a mere crevice in the rugged cliff. The threshold crossed, he sees before him a scene which surpasses the airiest creations of the Arabian Nights, and even those caverns under the "sunny pleasure-dome" which Kubla Khan of old made his residence in Xanadu,—

" Where Alph, the sacred river, ran  
Through caverns measureless to man  
Down to a sunless sea."—(COLERIDGE.)

The rippling wave, and the walls and roof of the grotto, assume an exquisite, an indescribably lovely ultramarine colour; produced, no doubt, by the light from without, which the water absorbs, and reflects *upwards* into the grotto. The effect of this rich blue lustre spreading over rock and wave is something magical.†

The length of the grotto is 165 feet; its maximum breadth, 100 feet; its maximum height, 40 feet; the depth of water about 8 fathoms. It produces a singular impression on the mind of the spec-

\* [Merivale, "History of the Romans under the Empire," v. 345, 346.]

† [A picturesque description of this natural curiosity will be found in the "Lettres inédites de Mendelssohn" (Paris, Hetzel), letter xxxi., p. 156; also, in Mr. Charles Lever's novel of "The Bramleighs of Bishop's Folly."]