

The crater, from which a column of vapour constantly escapes, is about a quarter of a mile high, and three-quarters of a mile in circumference. The varied and picturesque scenery of this extraordinary mountain, the physical changes now in progress, as well as those which have taken place in periods far beyond all human history or tradition, but of which natural records still remain, are sketched by Mr. Lyell with the vigour and fidelity which characterise all the productions of his pen.\*

16. PHLEGREAN FIELDS, AND THE LIPARI ISLES.—The volcanic district of Puzzuoli and Cumæ, on the bays of Baiæ and Naples, is called the Phlegrean Fields, and in it are situated Monte Nuovo, Monte Barbaro, the Solfatara, and the temple of Serapis, of which I have already spoken. This tract presents a series of cones and crateriform basins; some of which contain lakes, as those of Avernus and the Lucrine. These volcanic mounds are formed of felspathic tufa, occasionally containing marine shells and carbonized wood, and are covered by beds of loose tufaceous conglomerate. They are supposed by Mr. Scrope to have been produced by numerous submarine eruptions, each from a fresh focus, on a shallow shore.† The Solfatara constantly evolves aqueous vapour, with muriatic and sulphureous exhalations. The celebrated incrusting springs (page 60) derive their properties from the

\* Principles of Geology, vol. ii. p. 415.

† Scrope on Volcanoes, p. 179.