

1 The forum, the great theatre, and the little theatre, the temples of Neptune, Mercury & Venus
2 must have been very elegant and magnificent in their day. The streets, many of them are
3 narrow, and the ruts of the chariot wheels are worn deeply into the lava pavements. Workmen
4 were engaged in making still farther excavations. We went into some of the rooms recently
5 brought to light. It is astonishing how fresh and new these old works appear when the ashes
6 and sand are just removed from them. We next visited the amphitheatre, a structure similar to
7 the colosseum, but less in size and of less extravagance of finish – yet it is a wonderful affair.
8 Verily, those old settlers were fond of fun. We were shown into a room near the Sea Gate of
9 the old city which has been fitted up as a museum. Here were many interesting things found in
10 making the excavations. Skeletons of horses, dogs, and fowls. Also several casts of plaster of
11 Paris in glass cases. It appears that the thin mud which with the ashes overwhelmed the city
12 had enveloped the bodies of the victims and, having become hard, the bodies went to dust, but
13 left a matrix of their exact form in the surrounding matter. The engineer having charge of the
14 excavations conceived the project of pouring liquid plaster of Paris into these cavities and
15 afterwards in removing the mould, he had a perfect form of the individual that had been so
16 unfortunate as to prepare the thing for him. These casts are of great interest. The skull is
17 embedded in the plaster so as to retain it in its proper position. The bones of some of the
18 hands are visible and the exact position in which the person died is shown with great precision.
19 A mother and daughter had fallen so close together that the plaster cast united them. It was a
20 sight that we shall not forget very soon. In another small room a skeleton remains on the
21 ground undisturbed. The dirt having been carefully removed from it. The room is said to have
22 been a bed room. We now resumed our carriage, having spent over 3 hours in our wanderings
23 in Pompei. On our way home, we stopped at Herculaneum. Here the inevitable eight franc
24 performance had to be repeated. A guide lead us down a flight of marble stairs some 20 feet.
25 Then, handing each of us a lighted candle, we followed him down a wet and slippery zig-zag
26 stairs 45 feet deeper into the ground, being 65 feet below the street. Here we were shown the
27 well, the digging of which led to the discovery of the site of this old city. We passed along wet
28 and narrow galleries to the ruins of the theatre. The guide spoke French, and we were much
29 edified as he was perfectly familiar with the whole arrangement. Here was the orchestra
30 where the musicians blowed their trumpets 2500 years since; there the stone seats on which
31 the tickled audience sat to see the performance and listen to the music. After satisfying
32 ourselves that it was just as all theatres should be, we retraced our steps to day light and were
33 taken a short distance down a street toward the sea and, passing by an iron gate, went down
34 into the open excavation. Here a portion of this ancient city has been brought to light. It has a
35 strong resemblance to the ruins of Pompei except that the architecture is more decidedly
36 Grecian and the frescoes in many places having the Grecian fret in place of the Arabesque
37 borders of Pompei. Spending an hour here, we were glad to resume our carriage and arrived
38 home at 6 o'clock very much fatigued with our days work.