

a very sensible Manner; so that every Day appeared a Month, till I should deliver my Letter, and see what Success it would meet with. For had it succeeded, I should have gone immediately, and drawn those Things, which, not being taken care of, though of great Curiosity and Erudition, will soon be destroyed.—However, as I could do nothing more, and having a great Concern for those fine Things in a perishing Condition, I left them a Paper of Directions how to manage. If they do not observe them, the greater Misfortune will be ours, to hear that what Time, Earthquakes, and the Ravages of the Volcano have spared, are now destroyed by those who pretend to have the Care of them, &c.

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V. *Extract of a Letter from Mr. George Knapton to Mr. Charles Knapton, upon the same Subject.*

I Shall not trouble you with any Account of the Curiosities of *Naples*, they being so well known, only of one which is something out of the common Way, the antient City of *Herculaneum*, which was swallowed up by an Earthquake. It is now under a Town called *Portici*, a quarter of a Mile from the Sea, at the Foot of *Vesuvius*; and has no other Road to it, but that of the Town-well, which is none of the most agreeable, being in some Parts very streight, in others wide, and cut in a most rude Manner. Toward the Bottom, where you go into the City, it is very broad, which they have made so, to turn the

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Columns, which were brought up: For I spoke to an old Man, living next Door to the Well, who told me, he was one of those employed in digging there; and that they began 27 Years ago, and worked Five Years: That the best Part of the Duke *di Belbofi's* present Estate was found there; the most principal Things were, Two Columns of Oriental Alabaster, which were sold for 50,000 Ducats: That they had found also many fine Statues, the best of which were sold, and some he had sent to *Lorraine*. I saw Five, which they have put up in the Market-place, all clothed Figures, one in a Consular Habit, the others Women: They are all well drest, and in a fine Taste, but want the Heads. In the Duke's *Villa*, which is near and by the Sea-side, are Two others intire, both Women; one seems to be a *Livia*: Also the Fragments of a naked Figure, which wants the Head and Arms, of a good Style. These, with some Ornaments and Fragments of various sorts of Marbles, are all that is to be seen there, of what has been dug up.

Having given you some Account of what is taken out of this subterraneous City, I shall now proceed to what remains in it, and our Journey down to it. At our coming to the Well, which is in a small Square, surrounded with miserable Houses, filled with miserable ugly old Women, they soon gathered about us, wondering what brought us thither; but when the Men who were with us, broke away the paltry Machine with which they used to draw up small Buckets of Water, I thought we should have been stoned by them: Till, perceiving one more furious than the rest, whom we found to be *Padrona* of the Well,

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by applying a small Bit of Money to her, we made a shift to quiet the Tumult. Our having all the Tackle for descending to seek, gave Time for all the Town to gather round us, which was very troublesome: For, when any one offered to go down, he was prevented either by a Wife, or a Mother; so that we were forced to seek a motherless Batchelor to go first. It being very difficult for the First to get in, the Well being very broad at that Part, so that they were obliged to swing him in, and the People above making such a Noise, that the Man in the Well could not be heard, obliged our Company to draw their Swords, and threaten any who spoke with Death. This caused a Silence, after which our Guide was soon landed safe, who pulled us in by the Legs, as we came down. The Entrance is 82 Feet from the Top of the Well: It is large, and branches out into many Ways, which they have cut. We were forced to mark with Chalk, when we came to any Turning, to prevent losing ourselves. It gives one a perfect Idea of a City destroyed in that Manner: For one there sees great Quantities of Timber, in the Form of Beams and Rafters, some lying one Way, some another; some, as they broke in the Fall, others intire: These are sticking in the Sides of the Ways, and are become a perfect Charcoal; but those in moist Places, and where the Water oufes, you may run your Hand into, and work like a Paste, and they have more the Colour of rotten Wood. The Walls are some tumbled slanting, others crossing them, and many are upright. One sees great Quantities of Marble, as Bits of Window-cases and other Ornaments, sticking out on all Parts. There seem to be, in

one Place, the Ruins of some magnificent Building, which they have dug round; for there appear the Bases in white Marble of square and round Columns, which are all of a Size; and, what is surprising, they have not examined whether they have any Columns on them, which one Stroke of the Pick-ax would have done. I scraped away the Earth at the Side of the Base of a Pilaster, and found the Wall covered with a very beautiful Marble, but could not reach to discover what was on the Top of it. There are but Two Columns that appear, one of a red Marble, the other of Brick covered with Stucco, and fluted. In one Place there are about 14 Steps, which resembled the Seats of a Theatre. Some of the Walls have the Plaster remaining, and are painted, the Colours still fresh. *We found many Ways filled up, which they had done to save the Trouble of carrying out the Earth.* I observed that they had not gone near the Bottom of the Ruins, for fear, I suppose, of the Springs; for in some Parts they seem to be as low as the Water in the Well. One sees nothing but pure Earth mixed with these Ruins; whereas the Surface of all that Part of the Country, quite to the Sea, is covered with the Cinders of *Vesuvius*. One sees the Buildings were of Brick covered with Marble; for I found no other sort of Stone there, but thin Plates of Marble of all sorts in great Quantity. Neither are there any Bases or Capitals of large Columns; Two Feet Diameter is the most. Captain *Emmory* brought away a small Capital of a Pilaster, which is very curious; it being much the same as was used by the *Goths* in *Italy*. This makes me think, that they revived the ancient

barbarous Style, used before the Introduction of the *Greek*, for the Capital: This is certainly more antient than the Time of the *Goths* in *Italy*. It was the only one of the kind we saw there.

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VI. *Extract of a Letter from Mr. Crispe to Mr. George Knapton, upon the same Subject as the Two preceding Papers.*

Rome, April 24. 1740.

AT *Portici* I saw some antique Paintings, which have lately been taken out of the Ruins of *Herculaneum*: Two of them, about 12 Feet Square, with their painted Frames or Borders round them, are as fresh and perfect as if done Yesterday; much more so, I assure you, than some of *Raphael's* in the *Vatican*; and for Excellence, and fine Taste, they are, I think, beyond any thing I have seen. One of these is called the *Pomona*, because, among other Figures, there is a Woman sitting crowned with Fruits and Blossoms. The other is *Theseus*, having just killed the *Minotaur*, who lies dead at his Feet; a Figure of a Youth is kissing his Right Hand; *Ariadne* and another Figure stand at his Left. The Figures in both these are as big as Life. There is a Third, somewhat less, of *Chiron* teaching *Achilles* on the Harp, if possible, still beyond the Two former. There are above 50 other Pieces, some whole Figures, some Heads, some *Mascheras*, some Landskips, some Architecture.

I was to visit the Ruins under-ground, where I saw several Pieces that were taking down; particularly