

tors, are but the common occurrences in the sieges of great cities in ancient times, and speak rather of the general state of the world than of anything special on this occasion. The same tale might have been told in many other instances, had any historian survived the massacre to tell of the ruin of his native place.

In A.D. 79, according to the vulgar reckoning, Pompeii and Herculaneum were overwhelmed during the memorable eruption of Vesuvius described by the younger Plinius. After being lost for many ages, a portion of these buried cities was restored to light during the last century; and the excavations made have afforded us a large knowledge of the domestic life and manners of heathen Italy. The great resemblance in all remains of Roman greatness or colonization, even in far distant countries, leads to a conclusion that the fashions of the metropolis spread even to its remotest provinces. The remains of the buried cities fully confirm the complete depravation of morals described by the Latin satirists; and amid proofs of great proficiency in the arts of painting and sculpture, we find ornaments, pictures, and even household utensils so licentious, not to say obscene in their design, that it has been thought proper to close the doors of the room in which they are deposited at Naples, allowing only those to enter who need the view for the sake of scientific research. This tells much of the state of manners among the middling ranks, for Pompeii evidently must have been inhabited chiefly by them, since the houses are small, and the town generally bears the stamp of a place of second rate importance. Had a Hebrew prophet been called upon to give an account of the ruin of Pompeii, it would probably have been in such terms as those used in describ-