

THE

Nova-Scotia Magazine,

FOR MAY, 1790.

THE SENTIMENTALIST'S DESCRIPTION OF POMPEIA.

[From *President Dupaty's Travels through Italy.*]

I AM filled with astonishment in walking from house to house, from temple to temple, from street to street, in a city built two thousand years ago, inhabited by the Romans, dug out by a King of Naples, and in perfect preservation: I speak of Pompeia.

The inhabitants of this city were asleep, when suddenly an impetuous wind arose, and detaching a portion of the cinders which covered the summit of Vesuvius, hurried them in whirlwinds through the air over Pompeia, and within a quarter of an hour entirely overwhelmed it, together with Herculaneum, Sorrento, a multitude of towns and villages, thousands of men and women, and the elder Pliny.

What a dreadful awakening for the inhabitants! How must they have cursed Vesuvius, its ashes, and its lava! Imprudent men! why did you build Pompeia at the foot of Vesuvius, on its lava, and on its ashes?

In fact, mankind resemble ants, which, after an accident has destroyed one of their hillocks, set about repairing it the next moment.

Pompeia was covered with ashes. The descendants of those very men who perished under those ashes, planted vineyards, mulberry, fig, and poplar trees on them; the roofs of this city were become fields and orchards. One day, while some peasants were digging, the spade penetrated a little deeper than usual; something was

found to resist: it was a city: it was Pompeia.

The King of Naples ordered the search to be continued; but whether from bad management, or the indifference of the employers, or whether it be that the air does in fact attack and destroy these ruins as soon as they are touched, in thirty years, they have only been able to clear one-third of the city.

On coming at Pompeia, the first object that presents itself is the quarter of the soldiers.

Figure to yourself an oblong square of buildings, containing a multitude of separate apartments, with a front supported by a portico, which is continued round the building.

These columns, which are but slight, are fluted and painted red; they produce a pretty effect.

I entered several of the rooms, and found in one of them a mill, with which the soldiers ground their corn for bread; in another, an oil-mill, in which they crushed the olives. The first resembles our coffee-mills; the second is formed of two mill-stones, which were moved by the hand, in a vast mortar, round an iron center.

In another of these rooms I saw chains still fastened to the leg of a criminal; in a second, heaps of human bones; and in a third, a golden necklace.