

POMPEII.

And thou, sad city, raise thy drooping head,
 And share the honors of the glorious dead.
 Had fate reprieved thee till the frozen north
 Poured in wild swarms its hoarded millions forth,
 Till blazing cities marked where Albion troil,
 Or Europe quaked beneath the scourge of God,
 No lasting wreath had graced thy funeral pall,
 No fame redeemed the horrors of thy fall.
 Now shall thy deathless memory live entwined
 With all that conquers, rules, or charms the mind.

—MACAULAY.



ABOUT a mile inland on the shores of the Bay of Naples are to be found the ruins of a once flourishing city known by the name of Pompeii. Farther north, at a distance of a few miles, there towers above the surrounding country one of the largest volcanoes in the world which has, for upwards of eighteen hundred years, been in constant activity. It is to this mount that is due the world-wide celebrity which Pompeii at the present day enjoys. Few there are to whom the name Pompeii is not as familiar as those of many of our modern places of note; not that this town stands conspicuously out in the history of its country as having been the scene of some success or defeat of the Roman arms, nor that it has been remarkable in the days of old for its wealth and great commercial facilities, but because it is to this day, owing to an eruption of the neighboring volcano, a lasting memorial of Roman art and Roman architecture, and one might almost say a living picture of the home life of that people. Buried beneath more than twenty feet of volcanic matter, for nearly two decades of centuries, there yet remains in a good state of preservation many things which would arouse the curiosity of the dullest amongst us, and which should even be entitled to our

highest admiration. Thus the ruined city, although in its palmy days it played no important part in the history of Rome, is, as regards that nation, truly of great historical value, since it furnishes us with an insight into the domestic life of the Pompeians, who, from their comparative proximity to the Eternal City must be considered as typical Romans.

Before coming to the city in its ruined state, let us glance briefly at its previous state, its destruction, and then notice the peculiar circumstances under which it met its most appalling fate.

The history of Pompeii, other than what is to be derived from its remains, is not very extensive. There was nothing extraordinary in its career to single it out from the many prosperous towns which then lined the western coast of Italy. It was situated in the rich province of Campania, a district far-famed, even yet, for its beauty of landscape and fertility of soil, and whose fields are clothed almost perennially with a cloak of living verdure. So fortunate in being thus placed in the midst of prosperity, it was also favored by its location with respect to the sea. In its early days it seems to have figured somewhat as a commercial centre, and, therefore, to have been one of the coast towns. This appears hardly reconcilable with its present position, removed as it is by about a mile from the shore. The apparent shifting of site is