

with which the chaplain of Oliver Cromwell imbued the grandees of the British Commonwealth with the light and life of "the oracle of the sanctuary."

THAT God hath withdrawn himself and left this his temple desolate, we have many sad and plain proofs before us. The stately ruins are visible to every eye that bear in their front yet extant, this doleful inscription—"Here God once dwelt." Enough appears of the admirable frame and structure of the soul of man, to show that the divine presence did sometime reside in it; more than enough of vicious deformity, to proclaim he is now retired and gone. The lamps are extinct, the altar overturned; the light and love are now vanished, which did the one shine with so heavenly brightness, the other burn with so pious fervor; the golden candlestick is displaced, and thrown as a useless thing, to make room for the throne of the Prince of Darkness; the sacred incense, which sent rolling up in the clouds its rich perfumes, is exchanged for a poisonous hellish vapor, and here is, "instead of a sweet savor, a stench." The comely order of this house is turned all into confusion; "the beauties of holiness" into noisome impurities; "the house of prayer into a den of thieves;" and that of the worst and most horrid kind; for ever, lust is a chief, and every thief a sacrilege, continual rapine and robbery are committed on holy things. The noble powers which were designed and dedicated to Divine contemplation and delight, are alienated to the services of the most despicable idols, and employed in the vilest thoughts and embraces; to behold and admire lying vanities, to indulge and cherish lust and wickedness. What! have not the enemies done wickedly in the sanctuary? How have they broken down the carved work thereof, and that too with axes and hammers, the noise whereof was not to be heard in building, much less in the demolishing this sacred frame! Look upon the fragments of that curious sculpture which once adorned the palace of that great king, the relics of common notions; the lively truths of some undefaced truth; the fair ideas of things; the late legible precepts that relate to practice. Behold! with what accuracy the broken pieces show these to have been engraven by the finger of God, and how they now lie torn and scattered, one in this dark corner, another in that, buried in the heaps of dirt and rubbish; there is not now a system, an entire coherent truth to be found, or a frame of holiness, but some shivered particles. And if any, with great toil and labor, apply themselves here to draw out one piece, and there another, and set them together, they serve rather to show how exquisite the Divine workmanship was in the original composition, than for present use to the excellent purposes for which the whole was designed. Some pieces agree, and own one another; but how

soon are our inquiries and endeavors, nonplussed and superseded! How many attempts have been made, since that fearful fall and ruin of the fabric, to compose again the truths of so many several kinds into their distinct orders, and make up frames of science, or useful knowledge; and after so many ages, nothing is finished in any one kind! Sometimes truths are misplaced, and what belongs to one thing is transferred to another, where it will not fitly match; sometimes falsehood inserted, which shatters or disturbs the whole frame. And what is by much fruitless pain done by one hand, is dashed in pieces by another; and it is the work of a following age to sweep away the fine-spun cobwebs of a former. And those truths which are of greatest use, though not most out of sight, are least regarded, their tendency and design are overlooked; or so loosened and torn off, that they cannot be wrought in, so as to take hold of the soul, but hover as faint ineffectual notions, that signify nothing. Its very fundamental powers are shaken and disjointed, and their order towards one another confounded and broken; so what is judged considerable is not considered, what is recommended as eligible and lovely, is not loved and chosen. Yea, the truth which is after godliness, is not so much disbelieved, as hated in unrighteousness. and shines as too feeble a light in that malignant darkness which comprehends it not. You come, amidst all this confusion, as into the ruined palace of some great prince, in which you see here the fragments of a noble pillar, there the shattered pieces of some curious imagery, and all lying neglected and useless among the heaps of dirt. He that invites you to take a view of the soul of man, gives you such another prospect, and but says unto you, "Behold the desolation;" all things rude and waste. So that should there be any pretence to the Divine presence, it might be said, If God be here, why it is thus! The faded glory, the darkness, the disorder, the impurity, the decayed state in all respects of this temple, too plainly show the greatest inhabitant is gone.

GEMS FROM PIOUS AUTHORS.

In judging others a man labors in vain, often errs and easily sins; but in judging and looking into himself he always labors with fruit.—*Thomas A. Kempis.*

A fountain itself would dry up, if it were not nourished by the supplies of subterraneous waters; and the perseverance of grace depends purely upon the supports and supplies of uncreated essential life and goodness.—*Shaw.*

To comprehend the breadth and length, and depth and height, of the love of Christ, we must first take the dimensions of our sins.—*Adam.*

Trials are medicines which our gracious and wise physician prescribes because we need them, and he proportions the frequency and the weight of them to what the case requires. Let us trust