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N O T E S

OF

A RESIDENCE AT ROME,

IN 1846.

BY A PROTESTANT CLERGYMAN,

REV. M. VICARY, B.A.

LONDON :

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NOTES  
OF  
A RESIDENCE AT ROME.

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CHAPTER I.

THE MEDITERRANEAN.—GENOA.—LEGHORN.—ELBA.—APPROACH  
TO ROME.—DESIGN OF THE WORK.—APPEARANCE OF THE CITY.  
—CHURCHES.—JEALOUS POLICY OF THE GOVERNMENT.—DE-  
SCRIPTION OF THE CHURCHES.—THEIR ORNAMENTS.—RELICS.

AFTER the long and harassing journey through France, the monotonous scenery of which supplies but little to relieve the tediousness of the way,—where the reminiscences are not of romantic beauty, but of diligences, hotels, and dishonest bills,—how delightful it is to find oneself upon the blue Mediterranean, with a sky above us that tells we are fast approaching the sweet south! The moment we leave Marseilles we enter into a new world; and the prospect from the quarter-deck of the steamer, of rocky islets and the receding mainland,

with its villas, castles, and convents, almost repays the toil we have already undergone.

As "Il Ercolano" advances with a rapid pace, and cleaves the waters, leaving far behind her track of foam, we discern some of the peaks of the hills of France, or enter upon that uninteresting part of the Continent where the Rhone pays its tribute to the ocean. But even now the barks plying along, some lazily with the oar, and others with crowded canvas, contribute to keep attention alive.

Night soon calls us to the cabin, where our associates are some of the *élite* of old England; all wending their way to exchange the murky days and biting winds of their northern clime, for the brilliant sunshine and flowery land of Italy. Our steamer was a credit to the enterprising Neapolitan company; nothing could exceed the accommodation and attention to be met with on board. If any of my countrymen evince a regard for comfort and cleanliness I should recommend before all others the "Ercolano:" they will have cause to be thankful for the suggestion. "*Credite experto.*"

"Will you pass the Alps without a look?" says a fellow-passenger, as the awaking morn rolled back the mists from the water, and the clouds that

lay heavily upon the headlands. What a glorious sight! the spirit becomes elevated, and rises far above itself, as it contemplates these "palaces of nature." Rugged and bare as they are, caught by the eye, as far as it can reach, until they descend into the ocean, piled one upon the other until they end in clouds, they discover to those accustomed to the lowlands of Britain unequalled views of magnificence and grandeur. The Alp and Apennine vary much in their characteristic scenery. The former mount into the clouds, and seem, like another Atlas, to bear the weight of the heavens; but the Apennines, whose feet are also washed by the wave, shoot up like the pinnacles of an eastern temple, tapering to points of wondrous symmetry and elegance. To the "hoar Alp" Nature gave boldness and sublimity, while she seems to have reared "the lofty Apennine" with a greater regard to finish and effect.

The glimpse of Genoa is unrivalled. It is a circle of beauty. Palaces and gardens, churches, towers, and terraces, meet the eye in every quarter. The town is built upon a descent, and the houses and streets are consequently seen to the utmost advantage. As the genial sun of November shed its cheering light upon the panorama before me,

I shall never forget how the lovely scene was heightened by a musician coming silently under the stern, and joining with his melodious voice the soft tones of his guitar. The united influence upon me was that of calmness and repose, much needed after a fortnight's fatigue. All told me that I had come to a land of beauty and pleasure—to another Calypso's isle. Though some time has elapsed, I almost hear that music still. The impression it made was indelible. It was our welcome to the south.

Leghorn, or, as the natives call it, Livorno, has little to attract notice, save that it is a well-built town and a flourishing port. What we could see of Tuscany from the neighbourhood shewed a highly cultivated country and a contented people. The place is, however, uninteresting, lying low, and having no objects to cause a moment's delay to the tourist.

Elba is passed. It was night, and we could only discern the high land standing in relief against the moonless sky. With what interest Napoleon has invested every place connected with his extraordinary career! As long as we could catch a glimpse of the dark form of the island, every eye was bent towards it. Once a small unnoticed spot,

the *prestige* of his name has connected it for the future and for ever with fame.

We are at length in the dominions of the Pope, safely moored at Civita Vecchia. It is a small but good harbour, however nothing in the way of trade seems to be going on. I should have expected otherwise, but I do believe that her commerce is paralysed by the unenterprising, sluggish spirit which marks everything in the States of the Church. The method of keeping time, by which the inhabitants make themselves ridiculous, is one of the peculiarities of the place.\* The town is small, and contains no objects worthy of note. "The waveless sea" stretches on both sides as far as the eye can wander, and, except a few fishers' barques, bears nothing on its bosom to add interest to the scene.

The distance to Rome is not long, and a few hours on a road paved by the old Romans brings you to the walls of the Eternal City. What associations are evoked when one is about to enter the capital of the great commonwealth, which for so

\* In the States of the Church the day is not divided, as with us, into two intervals of twelve hours. Their time runs on to twenty-four hours; so that the stranger is at first a little perplexed, when asking, "Il tempo di giorno," to have some such answer as the following: "Tredice," or, as it might happen, "Vente tre et mezza."

long a period was mistress of the world. The halo that surrounds her history receives new brightness, by which every page vividly returns to the mind. The deathless names with which every era of her existence abounded, winning their fame in the field or the forum, rise before us. We cannot forget that we tread the scene of the peaceful triumphs of a Horace or a Virgil, as well as that once cumbered with the ruthless spoils of a Titus or a Cæsar. The very soil seems sacred ; and we tread the stones that resound to our footsteps, with something of the same feeling, but vastly more absorbing and intense, with which we walk the eloquent churchyard. It is the land which Scipio covered with laurels, and which contains his ashes ; which gave birth to Cato, and still

“breathes—burns with Cicero.”

We come, as it were, to do homage to these great names, and to bend over those tombs, whose lone occupants have made the place the first in gallantry and glory—“the city of the soul.” Such are the reflections that rise as we cross the Ponte di S. Angelo, with the Tiber flowing beneath, and enter the modern city.

It is not my purpose, as it would be useless, to describe the majestic ruins which are scattered in

profusion around. They have had many pens in poetry and prose, which describe them faithfully, and leave no detail untouched. Winckelmann will tell you of their antiquity, while Byron invests with all the graces of sentiment and feeling these noble monuments of a noble race:—

“ Out upon time, for 't will leave no more  
Of the things that come than the things before ;  
Out upon time, for for ever 't will leave  
But enough of the past for the future to grieve.”

I hasten to another subject, to which my attention was directed during a considerable sojourn at Rome, namely, the church, government, and ceremonies. Modern Rome, as the city of the Popes and the capital of the Catholic Church, receives almost as much interest as the old city did from her deeds of arms. It is the busy hive which has for centuries sent forth her missionaries to accomplish her religious or political purposes ; and her triumphs have been often as signal and as sanguinary. It is the capacious nest where those “ Orders” have been hatched, which have enacted a conspicuous part in the history of Europe,—the Dominicans and Jesuits,—names as much given to fame as the philosophic sects of old. At the present time, also, when the Church of England

has been assailed, and deserted by some of those who should have built her up, a glance at the interior of the Roman Catholic institution may not be unacceptable or without its use.

Upon entering the Eternal City nothing is so striking as the number of churches, which are successively exposed to the eye of the traveller. Enter at what gate you may, (and Rome in this particular is almost a second Thebes,) and almost the first object that is sure to attract your notice is a church, placed probably in such a locality to remind the traveller that he is arrived within the city of the Church—the renowned capital of the Supreme Pontiff. As you enter the Porta del Popolo from the north, immediately within, to the left, you pass the handsome edifice dedicated to Santa Maria; and within two hundred yards, opposite, you gaze at two exactly similar and uniform churches, each terminating the angle of two streets running in the direction of the gate; the Via Ripetta and Via del Corso. If you pass from Marseilles by the Mediterranean, and stand first on the sunny south at Civita Vecchia, as you enter Rome by the Vecchia gate, the stately temple of St. Peter's, with its magnificent colonnades and aërial dome, bursts upon the view. The gate of

St. John Lateran leads you at once to the superb cathedral of that name. The first edifices you encounter from the Porto Lorenzo, upon traversing the now unfrequented part of the road until you enter the modern city, are churches—so perfect a holy land is this, were you to judge from appearances. But this is not all; as you diverge from the gates, and go further into the city, a church meets you at about every two hundred yards. The number consequently is very great, greater than that of any other city in the world.

I have been assured that there are three hundred churches; and a priest, whose acquaintance I made, informed me, that, were it necessary “to perform mass” at a new church every day in the year, it could be done without any difficulty. He added, no doubt, to the parochial and public churches and basilicas, the chapels of the convents and palaces, hardly any of which can be called private. Although the Roman calendar is large, it may seem a matter of some difficulty to find *fresh* saints, who should have the honour of each church’s dedication. But the matter is easily managed; the same saint presides over several, the name only has some variation or adjunct. Thus we find churches “di Santa Maria,” to “Santa Maria en Trastevere;” others

dedicated to St. Peter, again to "San Pietro in Vincoli."

It is indeed the land of churches, as well as of the Church. All the resources of the Papal government are directed to the building and keeping in repair their houses of worship. Instead of providing for the maintenance and well-being of the poor, or promoting objects which may have in view the improvement of the country and the development of its great resources, any money that may abound in the exchequer is invariably expended in this ecclesiastical mania. As an instance of this, for the last few years, a cathedral, only inferior in dimensions and design to the great monument of Michael Angelo's skill, has been building with great activity,—that of San Paolo, on the Via Ostia. The expenditure upon this is enormous, the building being coated with the richest marble; and the mosaics, paintings, and statues, which profusely decorate the interior, are of a high order, so that it has been found necessary to let funds for the purpose accumulate, and to carry on the work only by degrees. The funds which are thus uselessly bestowed might with much greater wisdom be applied to objects of undoubted utility. To improve the navigation of the Tiber from Rome to Ostia,

would be productive of the greatest prosperity to both these cities. That classic river is only navigable for boats of about twenty tons burden, and has evidently disimproved from the times the Cæsars bore upon its waters the ponderous spoils of Egypt. A railroad, also, from Civita Vecchia, a distance of forty miles, could easily and expeditiously convey merchandise and passengers from that excellent port. This would be a national benefit, and would, without contradiction, steadily and to a large extent increase the revenue. These subjects have been brought under the notice of government, but, from the peculiar shortsightedness and narrow views which have ever characterised the measures of the Papal executive, they have been either postponed or abandoned. The reason of which is evident: the march of improvement,\* and the general change in the minds of men and things which have strongly marked the last quarter of a century, have been viewed with jealousy and alarm by the occupants of the Vatican. They fear, and perhaps not without foundation, that the elements of change and innovation, which have been working amidst society,—in commerce, science, and literature, would, if they were suffered to approach

\* These remarks apply chiefly to the late government.

the Roman capital, be at once transferred to the religious system, which, enthroned here, as a great heart, sends forth its streams to so large a portion of the world. Their strength consists in "resisting change;" and they are but too well aware, that, if its influences were but once permitted to operate, the religion of Rome, with its mitred prince, and all the proud superstructure which has held in vassalage for ages both the minds and bodies of men, would run the hazard of crumbling to the dust.

The method of expending the revenues of the state, to which I have alluded, might be defended, nevertheless, if the wants of the people required those churches, and it was clear those at present existing in the city were incapable of accommodating their numbers. But the state of things there, is, as we have seen, quite adverse to such a proposition. Fifty of the churches of Rome would be more than sufficient to afford every convenience, and supply all spiritual necessity.

With the exception of the older basilicas, and including chiefly the beautiful structures of St. Peter's and St. John Lateran, the religious edifices of Rome, viewed from the exterior, quite disappoint the beholder. They are, in general, exceedingly plain, and almost devoid of ornament.

The rich Gothic ornament, which we meet in the older abbeys and cathedrals of the British isles, is totally wanting. The lofty tower, or the tapering spire, has never found favour with the Italian architect. Those exquisitely carved windows, serving so well to admit "the dim religious light" upon the sacred aisles, are not to be found. The delicate tracery—the elaborate care which has been bestowed upon the French cathedrals, picturesque as it is in the extreme, and captivating to the eye, has never found its way to the city of the Popes. Upon a plain front there are inscriptions declaring the saint to whom the edifice is dedicated, and perhaps, also, the name of the pious builder. An unpretending cross upon the summit only proclaims its sanctity. But when we open the hanging door, and step within, the scene is altogether changed. We pass as it were from a wilderness to a garden—from our cold world into fairy-land. A large hall, supported upon marble pillars,—the purest and most valuable from the hills of Greece,—terminating in a raised altar, formed with exquisite taste, of the richest materials, opens upon the view. Statues, the works of the most eminent artists, repose in profusion around; any one of which would be the wonder of the collection of

any of our nobility. The walls are covered with paintings, representing Scripture pieces, or the legends of saints, beautiful in execution and imposing in effect. They are the efforts of immortal names. Raphael, Guido, Annibale Carracci, Carlo Dolce, Guercino, are soon and easily recognised. Some of the noblest productions of the great masters are to be found in these sacred repositories, generally as altar-pieces. And if the artist or amateur departs from Rome without inspecting them, one and all, he will find that the purpose of his journey to this "mistress of arts, as once of arms," has been but half accomplished. Indeed, we owe to the monks and secular clergy that encouragement of the sister arts of statuary and painting, which has left so much for posterity both to imitate and admire — arts which had languished, or perhaps been lost during the darker ages, amid the din of arms and the reign of ignorance, but for the timely aid they received from the discerning inmates of the cloister and the aisle. Their Order itself has produced no mean painters. The frescoes in several churches are by them, and the works of Fra Bartolomeo at Lucca and in other places have procured for the author no inconsiderable name.

Although in these edifices statues, perhaps from the chisel of a Michael Angelo, and paintings, probably the creation of a Corregio, arrest the attention of the beholder, much still remains to surprise and delight. The pavement is generally to be found of mosaic, in which beautiful patterns are worked with extraordinary care. Pictures, also of the same material, will be found, having all the force and freshness of the finest oil painting; with this difference, too, on its side, that it is almost imperishable. Many of the mosaics from the times of the Emperors are to be found in the museums or in private collections, retaining undiminished their colours and beauty. So cleverly are the mosaic pictures of the churches executed, that it requires close inspection and a practised eye to tell the difference. This especially applies to the superb specimens that grace the walls of St. Peter's. A copy of Raphael's *chef d'œuvre*, the Transfiguration, in this minute material, has been considered almost a fac-simile of that great triumph of genius.

But, after all, it is perhaps upon the altar and chancel that the greatest care has been bestowed. These are in general placed in the centre of the cross of the ground-plan. Marble is mostly the

material of which they are composed—but such marble! Of red, purple, or green, crossed by the most brilliant veins, and finished with the highest polish. In not a few the rich blue and gold of the *lapis lazuli* is blended with the fine hues of the *verd antique*. These are all formed of the pillage of the Roman temples; and when we consider that the conquerors of the world ransacked their empire for the purpose of furnishing materials to beautify the abodes of their gods, we may conclude how rare and rich they are. Gilding, and sometimes even solid gold, lend their aid to this holy of holies. An ark of precious stone, of onyx, or alabaster, contains the revered *hostia*, and candelabra of various but correct designs surmount the altar; on the centre of which, but a little space behind, is to be found either a colossal crueifix or an image of the Virgin.

These altars are, without exception, hollow, and are the receptacles for what the monks and people deem of the highest value—the relics and the bodies of saints. Gilt letters upon a medallion (“*Hic jacet corpus,*” &c.) tell who the fortunate possessor may be: they are the safeguards of the churches, and the treasury of the priests. In these places, and not in the silent tomb or narrow grave,

repose the bodies of the apostles, martyrs, and canonised Popes. Some of them, upon certain days of the year, the *festa* of the peculiar saint, are exposed to the reverence of the multitude or the gaze of the vulgar. Where a saint of notoriety sleeps, a small light is kept constantly burning, but barely visible through a small orifice in the front. The sacristan will tell you that it has never been extinguished from the period that the earthly labours of the saint terminated. The effect upon the mind is curious: we are impressed, as it were, that the spirit of the departed keeps watch and ward over the precious relics, and gives a portion of animation and life to the frail and perishing records of the dead. To the unreflecting, also, it may in some degree convey the notion of the soul's immortality, and that, though centuries have wrapped the silent ashes, the living principle has for the same long period resisted their sway.

## CHAPTER II.

CHURCHES.—THE DOME.—ITS PAINTINGS.—MONUMENTS.—PLENARIA INDULGENTIA.—ITS TENDENCY AND CONSEQUENCES.—DESCRIPTION OF ST. PETER'S.—BRONZE STATUE OF ST. PETER.—DIMENSIONS OF THE CHURCH.—BASILICA OF ST. JOHN LATERAN.—ITS RELICS.—THE PANTHEON.—PRESERVED ENTIRE.

THE shape of the churches is, with few exceptions, cruciform. This seems to have been the ancient figure, at least we recognise it in churches of an early date. Any churches that are erected in modern times are uniformly of this figure. Besides the great altar, placed opposite the door, there are in general six others,—at either side three,—only a little inferior to the principal one in size and embellishment, having each their crucifixes, paintings, and arks: upon these the priest offers up the mass upon ordinary days. Upon Sundays, and the great festivals of the year, the bishop, or priest, attended by his clergy, celebrate their imposing rites with all the graces of motion, decorum, and order, calculated so well to

impress the multitude, and which are to be found only in their perfection at this capital of the Roman Church.

Over most of the churches there is a dome, in proportion to the size of the edifice. The interior of this is adorned with mosaic, or elegantly painted; and the effect is excellent, from the light that is admitted at the top being diffused equally around. The subjects, too, that are chosen to decorate this part, if we except the blasphemy of representing God the Father, are of the most suitable kind, such as the Saviour surrounded by angels, the Resurrection, and the Apotheosis of the Virgin. It is upon this part, and upon the roof, that we generally find the paintings of God, — a practice calculated to give such scandal, and so much opposed to the principles of Christianity. To represent the adorable Being who presides over all things, is an egregious fallacy in human reasoning; but to degrade Him, who is all perfection, and of whose nature we can form no adequate conception, into the human form, into the likeness of sinful flesh, is so palpable an error, and the tendency of which is so evident, that it seems almost impossible to think how men acquainted with revelation could

be guilty of it. "No man hath seen God at any time." Moses saw but a symbol or emblem of the Divinity: Elijah beheld no form, and heard but the still small voice. To degrade, then, the Supreme Spirit into "dust and ashes," instead of being calculated to give exalted notions of Him, has a direct tendency to corrupt the root of all religion, and to weaken its force upon the mind. There is, in fact, a littleness, almost amounting to idiocy, in attempting to paint the Creator. But when men give way to their irregular fancies, they do not know where to stop. Resolving to give the Deity a form, they adopt the human, concluding that it is perfect; whereas reflection might have told them that it is not necessarily perfect, since we find it but too often a clog and burden to the mind, incapable frequently of seconding its wishes, and, by the diseases and accidents to which it is subject, depressing, almost destroying, its immortal fellow. God is generally represented as an old man with grey hair. The pictures that the great masters have given us of the Saviour are generally redolent of beauty and dignity; but the attempts to represent God are, as may be imagined, a total failure. In the Scriptures the features of our

Saviour's character are so strongly marked,—his meekness, resignation, and love,—that these traits have been embodied by the painter's skill; and his incarnation renders the attempt easy and successful. But, from the general absence of particular description in Holy Writ concerning God, and from the inspired writers dwelling upon what was of more importance to man,—his attributes, his majesty, glory, omnipotence, and eternity,—the painter has had recourse to the miserable expedient I have mentioned to represent the Holy One, about whose throne are clouds and darkness, and who dwells in light inaccessible.

Another part of the church upon which the architect, or the monk, has contrived to display his powers of invention and embellishment, is the ceiling. This, with scarcely an exception, is painted with interesting pieces, in the most brilliant colours, and generally with the greatest taste; or, divided into compartments alternately painted and carved, and being covered with the richest gilding, attracts most gratefully the eye. We find the significant coat of arms of the Popedom, the keys, recurring frequently, perhaps with that of some noble house, and the interjacent lines filled up with a pattern which probably has been copied

from some masterly antique, brought to light by modern research, or the creation of their own fertile genius. The eye rests with singular and undiminished pleasure upon the noble roof of the church of "Ara Cœli," occupying the summit of the immortal Capitol. The roof of St. Mary Maggiore is all gold, having been formed from the first-fruits of the Spanish-American invasion; the effect is splendid, viewed now in the great hall, and now in the side aisles. In churches where there has not been this display of art and outlay of the precious metal, we hardly miss their absence, from the finely-coloured and attractive paintings which occupy their place. We shall find upon this part, both of sacred edifices and private buildings, that the great master has not disdained to exercise his art, and confer a share of his genius. The roofs of the Vatican galleries and chambers have been painted, to a great extent, by Raphael; some of Guido's frescoes remain upon those of the library in the same extensive and celebrated palace. The beautiful "Aurora" of the latter also occupies the roof of the Rus-pigliori Palace, on the Quirinal Hill.

It is strange that in this country so large a part of our buildings, so well calculated for an

effective display of well-chosen subjects, should be left almost universally cold and bare. It is a part to which the eye constantly recurs, and we easily know that one of the great physical distinctions between man and the lower creation is, that, from its organic formation, the eye is adapted to contemplate objects on a level with, or superior to itself.

This custom of painting the ceiling is very ancient, and is exclusively Italian. In the ruins of the "golden house" of Nero, in the neighbourhood of the "Forum Romanum," the roof of both corridors and chambers has been evidently painted with considerable skill; and even after the lapse of so many centuries, they discover great beauty. It is a well-known fact, that Raphael studied these elegant remains, and copied them upon the Vatican apartments. The ceilings of the houses at Pompeii, the disinterred city in the Neapolitan dominions, have also a great variety of scenes in oil or fresco. How wonderfully had civilization advanced among these refined people, when we find their abodes so completely and elegantly adorned, surpassing us no less in the variety and richness of their furniture, than the profusion of ornament which both courts and houses even now exhibit to our view.

With the monuments, I shall have completed the description of the sacred edifices of Rome. These are to be found in great numbers in almost all. In general, as may be easily imagined from a country abounding in the finest marble, and supplied with first-rate artists, they are very impressive and beautiful objects. They occupy a considerable space in every church, and serve to excite reflections in the devout mind, of the instability of life, and, at the same time, form a fine contrast to the various other objects indicative of hope and immortality with which these buildings abound. The form that is most observed is a slab with an inscription, surmounted by one or more statues. The execution of some of these is admirable, and their likeness to life, and representation of the passions—of grief, hope, or despair—striking and correct.

The Pantheon contains the busts and monuments of the great authors and painters of Italy, and may be called the Westminster Abbey of Rome. Raphael here reposes. The monuments of the Popes are in St. Peter's, and are unquestionably the finest in the world. These are interwoven with Canova's genius, and are the very specimens where modern art has been successful in its efforts to equal ancient perfection.

There is something remarkable in the inscription of the ordinary monuments. We are always told, not only the years that the person lived, but also the months and days. There is, besides, an absence of what we might expect in the monument of a Christian. It is not detailed, in letters which shall defy "Time's effacing fingers," that they died in the faith and fear of God, relying upon the Redeemer's mercy, and assured of felicity; on the contrary, we find an inflated account of the life of the person to whose memory the monument is sacred, with every worldly thing magnified, and everything religious concealed. Nay, in some, we find it gravely reported that they "danced elegantly;" while others describe their progress in "arithmetic" at an early age.

Under all the churches are capacious vaults, which are used as receptacles for the dead. A round stone, of two feet in diameter, is removed, and the deceased, cold and coffinless, is huddled in. Extraordinary to relate, male and female are not interred together; they occupy a separate charnel-house. Upon one stone, the words "*Pro Viris*," upon another, "*Pro Mulieribus*," are written. Thus, where the ties of affection and the bonds of love have been broken by death, the kindred hearts

are denied this last consolation,—that in death they will be undivided. It affords a gloomy comfort, but *it is a comfort*, that we shall sleep the unbroken sleep of the tomb pillowed with those we love. The heart, in its last moments of agony and pain, has, in some degree, its path of terror smoothed by the reflection, that it passes away to join the one that beat responsive to its own,—that, as their hopes, joys, fears, were united upon earth, so their ashes may be mingled in the grave.

After an early examination, upon retracing my steps, an object caught my eye which had at first escaped notice. I observed over the door of almost every church, in large white letters on a black ground, the words “*Indulgentia plenaria perpetuo pro vivis et defunctis.*” This startling announcement is generally upon a board,—like a sign over an hotel, declaring what sort of entertainment is to be found within. There seems to be an absolute rivalry upon the subject. In some we find it placed more prominently than in others; while it is not forgotten, if the letters become defaced, to have them carefully renewed.

What an extraordinary announcement in a Christian temple—“the utmost liberty for the living and the dead !” No doubt, this subversion

of the principles of Christianity drives only at one object — the replenishing of the coffers of the Church. It is the prostitution of religion for purposes of gain, and upon a subject which is sure to have no lack of customers, as conscience will urge millions to the absolving shrine, and affection call as many to purge the ashes of their dead. The words are on St. Peter's, and thus are stamped with all the authority of the Vatican.

If the announcement is fully acted on, the question may be well asked, What are its effects? Immorality and irreligion must, I conceive, be the inevitable result. If a man under the influence of sin, or committing actual crime, knows where he may without any inconvenience (where there is an absolute competition to serve him) wipe out all these stains and scars, and return to innocence, participating in full pardon,—if the accounts he owes are settled so easily, the long bills ignored by the ecclesiastical jury, with whom the *heaviest* arguments are the best,—it is to me a great doubt, whether, with youth as it were invigorated, and conscience cleansed, he will not return with renewed zest to his original life; and thus a sort of holy book-keeping be kept up, the account of

debtor and creditor regularly proceeding, and as regularly settled.

If individuals in courts of law could, by undergoing some nominal penalty, have no fears of the consequence of crime, and might obtain full exemption from punishment, would the state of society be as inviolable, and men's property and persons as secure, as when that law vindicates itself, and its red right arm is bared for punishment? It is so with human nature,—equally the case with the conscience. Where punishment, the dread of future recompense, can be bought off on such easy terms, vice in its varied forms is likely to flow with an unobstructed course, and exert its evil influence upon the great mass of society. The objection once made, “Who can forgive sins but God alone?” is exactly reversed in Papal Rome. It is hard to know what the character of Roman morality is—it is difficult to read the heart. The very name of the City of the Church will serve as some outward check. I speak only of the genuine consequences of the practice.

Although the principle involved be so opposed to true religion, it is for many reasons the very last thing that the priesthood would be likely to

abandon. Let as much light as possible be thrown upon it, they will still cling to and clutch it. The "*Plenaria Indulgentia*," thus openly advertised, serves two important purposes in the economy of the Roman Church. It gives the great body of the people an exalted idea of the priesthood, and being the true "*thesaurus theologicus*," it recruits the finances, and oils the wheels of the whole system. And then how comprehensive is its circle; it includes the living and the dead,— "*vivis et defunctis*." No matter how unsubstantial the theory, its results are gratifying. It may be truly said of them "*Quod volumus faciliè credimus*," or more pertinently in the present instance, "*Populus vult decipi*." Its manifest use will maintain it, and the infallibility of the Church comes in to check any doubt that may arise concerning it — a mode of stifling argument, that has been devised in modern times, to chain the reason and the will to the chair of the Popes.

And yet this doctrine, which throws so slender a veil over irreligion and crime, is a cardinal one in that religious system that has fascinated some of the ministers of the Protestant Church. Are the prevailing motives those of the Church of Rome? Do they secretly, but irresistibly, long

after the power which the former exercise—a principle that gives strong impulses to weak minds—or does the baser object of certain gain move the springs which have influenced their conduct?

As I have principally spoken of churches in this and the preceding chapter, I will add a brief account of three of the most celebrated which adorn the city of Rome—St. Peter's, St. John Lateran's, and the Pantheon. St. Peter's, both in extent and magnificence, must stand at the head of all. In the sense of religious edifices we may apply to it the boast, "*Mater et caput omnium ecclesiarum.*" The architecture is essentially Roman, comprising a lofty front profusely ornamented, and an extensive vestibule, over which rises the ærial dome, which bears the impress of Michael Angelo's great mind. Colonnades extend on both sides, judiciously concealing from view some disfiguring buildings in the neighbourhood, and enclosing a fine amphitheatre, in the centre of which stands one of the largest Egyptian obelisks, and on either side a fountain of very beautiful structure. These constantly jet forth their crystal stream, forming a variety of hues in the bright sunshine, and descending upon the earth as the gentle dews of heaven. They are, as it

were, emblematical of the virtue constantly flowing from the Vatican; but the "limpid clear" is a flattering representation of the form of religion which has its highest altar within the neighbouring walls.

There are three bronze doors, the largest of which is only opened upon the great festivals. The effect is sublime as you enter the interior; probably roof was never placed over a grander hall. The view is unintercepted until it rests upon the pontifical altar, directly beneath the dome; beyond which it is again rivetted by some gigantic monuments. A canopy, sustained by bronze spiral pillars, ninety feet high, is suspended over the altar, not in the least out of proportion with the other vast details of the edifice. The two sides of the cross\* form extensive chapels, still under the same roof, and making one perfect whole. There are other chapels, also, on either side, with their marble altars and matchless pictures.

The great wonder of St. Peter's is its extent—its colossal proportions. Amazement is the feeling that is universally excited:—

\* Of the ground-plan, which is the usual figure—the form of a cross.

“ But thou of temples old, or altars new,  
 Standest alone—with nothing like to thee—  
 Worthiest of God, the holy and the true.  
 Since Zion’s desolation, when that He  
 Forsook his former city, what could be  
 Of earthly structures, in his honour piled,  
 Of a sublimer aspect? Majesty,  
 Power, glory, strength, and beauty, all are aisled  
 In this eternal ark of worship undefiled.”

All this extent is, with the utmost skill and taste, adorned with unrivalled statues, paintings, and mosaic. In fact nothing has been ever admitted into St. Peter’s but what is first-rate in its way. Here are the greatest monuments of Canova and Thorwaldsen: Raphael’s “Transfiguration,” Guido’s “Lucifer,” and Guercino’s “St. Petroncille” are copied in mosaic, almost equalling the noble originals. Medallions of the Popes, full of character and vigour, and retaining the resemblance, no doubt, to exactness, are profusely spread upon the supporting pillars. We may even mark upon the features the character of the mind,—whether ambition was the ruling passion, or avarice was the secret spring, or whether religion has impressed upon its lines the stamp of devotion. Monument succeeds monument, each of beautiful workmanship, of the purest marble, and the most exquisite design. Statues of the founders of the religious orders

occupy niches, and are expressive figures, but inferior in point of execution to those I have just mentioned. Among the monuments will be found one to the descendants of the Stuarts, the last of whom was in orders at Rome, and was styled "the Cardinal Duke of York." Their titles are mentioned, and, amongst the rest, we are not a little surprised to find them called "Reges Angliæ."

Above is spread the roof, carved, gilt, and painted. It is raised to a great height. The colours are fresh, but not glowing or gaudy, nor are the objects too profuse for the most delicate taste to find fault with. There is just enough light admitted, such as the solemn and sacred nature of the edifice requires. St. Peter's body is said to rest under the great altar, before which a great number of lamps are kept constantly burning. Many of the canons pass through the aisles; and here and there a devout group, engaged in deep devotion, are on their knees before their favourite shrine.

The chief object, however, of attraction in the church seems to be a bronze statue of St. Peter. This figure is seated on a chair, and raised on a small platform. It is the only figure in that position to be found in any of the churches: from

this circumstance, as well as the expression, and its apparent antiquity, the conjecture of those seems to be well founded, who assert that it is a statue of Jupiter Capitolinus, which has been re-baptized by the Pope. Be this as it may, it never received more devout reverence as Jupiter than it does now as the St. Peter. The figure sits in solemnity and silence, while every devout Catholic is sure to crowd around him. As soon as his devotions, which take place near the altar, are concluded, he rises, and kisses the foot, or rather great toe, of the apostle. The toe is considerably worn. Much of it has disappeared by the contact of the lips. I have seen a father, when he had impressed his lips upon the sacred part, holding up his little children to perform the same ceremony. The old *regime* is thus handed down unquestioned from sire to son. It is the most exceptionable worship which I have seen at Rome.

I often considered what a figure some of those clergymen who have deserted us would make here, should they be called to the Eternal City. To this custom of all good Catholics they would of course conform: "*Aut Cæsar, aut nullus.*"

The dome is said to be as large as the Pantheon,

although it is raised above you in so lofty a position. It is covered with figures in mosaic, which have a fine effect viewed from the church below. To give an idea of its size, and distance from the spectator, the pen in St. Mark's hand is ten feet long; yet the figures, to the eye, preserve all their natural proportions. Around the base from which it rises are written the words "*Tu es Petrus; et super hanc petram edificabo ecclesiam meam, et tibi dabo claves regni cœlorum.*"

The dimensions of the church of St. Peter's are,

Greatest length . . . . .	673 feet
Transept . . . . .	444 „
Height to top of cross outside . . . . .	448 „
Height of the nave . . . . .	146 „
Breadth . . . . .	88 „

The basilica of San Giovanni in Laterano is celebrated as having given its name to the Lateran Councils that have been held there. Attached to it also is the Lateran Palace, formerly a celebrated residence of the Popes. The church is older than St. Peter's, having been founded by Constantine, but, with the exception of one part, it is comparatively a modern building. Viewed from the exterior, the structure has an imposing effect, a new and fine front having been added. There is, how-

ever, neither tower nor dome. The magnificent obelisk, in my opinion, has vastly more interest than the neighbouring church. This is the largest to be found at Rome, is of one piece, and deeply cut with hieroglyphics, from which time has not taken an atom of the freshness and sharpness.

The chancel of the church is fitted up with a number of seats, the ecclesiastics being very numerous. These are also occupied by the candidates for the ministry on Easter Monday, when a solemn ordination is holden by the cardinal bishop.

The front aisle is a noble hall, terminating in a picturesque altar. In the centre of the aisle is a superb bronze monument of one of the Popes. Statues of the twelve apostles occupy niches here, and are larger than life. They are well executed, and have much spirit, but the marble is of a coarse nature. Some persons have said that the figures are so perfect, that they only want a Prometheus; but I am by no means of that opinion. Above these are beautiful frescoes; the subject, the Gospel history. The walls are rich in monuments, many of them very ancient, and on this account they are interesting; but they can by no means compare with those of St. Peter's, as objects of beauty or taste.

St. John Lateran's abounds, more than any other church in Rome, with relics. Above the principal altar are contained in silver busts the heads of St. Peter and St. Paul. There is here also the seamless coat of our Saviour. Whether is this, or that of Treves, that has called Ronge into life and activity, the genuine one? One must be false: who shall decide? Here also is preserved the table off which our Saviour ate his last supper, and many other relics of equal sanctity. These are exposed for the veneration or worship of the people every Holy Thursday.

Strange it is that the Catholic world, who repose confidence in relics, should question their genuineness so little. The evidence of their identity should be unbroken and unquestionable. By an unbiassed mind, in such an inquiry, infallibility should be esteemed for just as much as it is worth. Are these the real heads of St. Paul and St. Peter? At their martyrdoms, was it likely that the infuriated Roman soldiers would preserve them carefully, when they could see no distinction between them and the commonest felon? \* At the time of

\* Tacitus calls the Christian religion "superstitio exitiabilis;" and, speaking of those who were brought before the tribunals in Nero's time, he says, "that they were condemned not so much for the burning of Rome, as for being the enemies of mankind."

[Pliny

persecution, could even the believers, feeble and few, venture to give the bodies burial? But we know the primitive Church valued the soul, and not its earthly tenement—resisting unto blood, in hopes of winning the prize. When the empire became Christian, in the time of Constantine, it is possible a search for relics might be made. But who then could collect, from the countless heaps of dead—from the catacombs, or the charnel-house—the bodies and limbs of apostles and martyrs? Roman Catholics forget that for this purpose no less than two distinct miracles would be required—one to discover them, another to preserve them. The effect of the latter would be constantly required. Upwards of eighteen centuries must have long since reduced them to “dust and ashes.” A very few years reduces the body to its kindred elements: the frame of that structure, the skeleton, may last a century, or perhaps longer; but it is absurd, contradictory to all experience, to think that it should reach our time. If it were made of

Pliny, writing to Trajan, says, “I have asked them whether they were really Christians, and, on their persevering in their confession, I have commanded them to be led forth, not doubting that inflexible obstinacy ought to be punished.”

“*Affecti supplicii Christiani, genus hominum superstitionis novæ et maleficæ.*” Suetonius, Nero, cap. xvi.

iron, it had been long since reduced to impalpable dust. It is vain to defeat decay or to cheat time. Hence those relics that we see in the churches are supposititious—of necessity frequently renewed. So that, instead of a Peter, or a Paul, exposed to the worship of the multitude, it is very possible it may be a blameless citizen, or an unblushing libertine.

Amid all the churches of Rome, perhaps the most remarkable is the Pantheon. It is a Roman temple which has come down to our days entire. Addition there is none, although the wretched taste of some Popes has despoiled it for the embellishment of St. Peter's. It was, as the name implies, formerly appropriated to the worship of all the gods, as it is now dedicated to that of all the saints. Its modern name is "Santa Maria degli Angeli." It is a perfectly circular building, the roof being in the form of a dome.

Its chief ornament is the noble portico,—the study of the architects of every age,—the pillars of which are of great size; the order, Ionic. The doors leading to the interior are colossal, and bespeak the genius of the founders. On the *façade* the name of Agrippa is as fresh as if it were but recently cut.

This temple, in fact, bears us into the midst of the Romans, and it does not require much effort of imagination to believe the worshipers at each of the altars the patricians or plebeians of old, bearing their offerings or paying their daily service. It contains the busts, and in some cases the bodies, of the distinguished men of Italy:—

“Sanctuary and home  
Of art and piety—Pantheon!—pride of Rome!”

This temple has undergone but little apparent change from the use to which it was formerly devoted. Jupiter, Mercury, and Juno have taken to flight, but the self-same pedestals and shrines have found new occupants in St. Joseph, St. Anne, and the Virgin. It is to be hoped that the Roman Catholic makes the due distinction between the sign and the thing signified; but it is very difficult to draw a reasonable line of distinction between the old and the modern worshiper. Says a modern tourist, “The great and invisible spirit—the source of all things—is perhaps as little in the contemplation of the modern, as of the ancient worshiper of the Pantheon.” There can be no doubt, if some of the old tombs were to give up their dead, the Roman would see nothing wanting

to complete his worship,—the temple, the altar, and the image are at hand. He would, assuredly, without a question or a doubt, take his place among the rest.

The altars are numerous; there is a niche for each statue, and pillars of rich marble support the canopy overhead. These altars are eminently chaste and beautiful; there is nothing gaudy, such as we find in the temples of India, but everything is indicative of a taste at once judicious and refined. The light is admitted by a circular orifice in the roof, and is thus diffused equally throughout the building. There is no glass, but the fleecy clouds, or deep blue of the firmament, look without obstacle on the interior. The floor is mosaic, but the patterns are coarse, although the material is costly.

There is an air of dignity about the Pantheon, “simple” but “sublime,” which appeals forcibly to the mind. Its very silence is impressive. Spared by the hand of the Vandal and the Goth, like the majestic oak of the forest, it has withstood the changes and the blasts of time. It stands amongst the remains of Rome like a Niobe, surveying amidst the desolation the ruin that has seized upon temple and tower in this metropolis of

nations. Her pillars are untouched, her altars unbroken, while they have left but

“Two or three columns, and many a stone,  
Marble and granite, with grass o’ergrown.”

Having descended to us thus entire, it is to be lamented that a purer worship does not occupy its walls. When the images of the old mythology were broken, it is to be deplored that modern martyrology so soon supplied their places. If these altars were untenanted save by the Bible, the word of God filling the place of the work of man, if the practice of pure Christianity flowed within the walls, it had not inaptly represented the peaceful triumphs of the cross, and had well foreshadowed the full prostration of the pagan ritual before the sublimer precepts of Christ.

## CHAPTER III.

THE CLERGY, SECULAR AND REGULAR.—VERY NUMEROUS, AND DESTINED TO THE CHURCH FROM CHILDHOOD.—THE CARDINALS.—GALLERY OF CARDINAL FESCH.—MODE OF ELECTING THE POPE.—INQUIRY CONCERNING THE RED HABIT OF THE CARDINAL.—BISHOPS.—MONSIGNORES.

As in other Catholic countries, the clergy at Rome may be divided into secular and regular. As may be conceived in a city the centre of the Church, and the seminary of its learning, they are very numerous, and form a large proportion of the population. Every twentieth person you meet is of the sacerdotal class; and, from the peculiarity and variety of their costume,—from the cardinal to the curate,—they form not the least interesting spectacle at Rome.

At Rome we see Romanism as it is; the mechanism by which it not only governs its immediate dominions, but by which its power is extended to other states. Its government is sacerdotal, if I may so speak, *i. e.* persons who are in orders

Charles Buchanan,

occupy all the offices of the state; and the executive—they who administer the laws—is composed of the same body.\* It is, therefore, necessary to impress the multitude with an idea of their character and sanctity. Hence all the dignitaries, from the cardinal downwards, never appear in public, but in their respective ecclesiastical dresses. The habit of the cardinal is showy in the extreme; that of the bishops plain, but distinctive; while the dresses of the regular clergy vary considerably. We meet black, brown, white, and grey, with hybrid habits between these. Of the former, some drive about in gay equipages, and enliven the Corso or the Monte Pincio by the butterfly colours of their carriages or liveries. You can scarcely imagine a greater difference between individuals, than there is between the various ranks of the clergy in the city of the Popes. The cardinal is analogous to a nobleman. He is a prince of the Church; his style is "*Vostra Eminenza*;" and by him plebeian contact is regarded as much an evil as by the aristocratical circles amongst us. But the poor Franciscan or Capuchin is "wide as the poles asunder" from his eminence, in gesture,

\* The present Pope, among his other wise reforms, has begun to admit the laity to a participation in these offices.

manner, and dress. The latter is of the coarsest material; a stocking is too great a luxury for his feet; and he would at once lose *caste*, if he were seen reclining in a *calesso* or *carrozza*. The broad-brimmed hat shelters the easy visage of the cardinal from the burning rays of the Italian sun; but the skull-cap of the monk leaves the face to assume what colour it may by solar influence.

In the parishes nearly all things are done and settled by the clergy. Disputes are arranged and feuds checked; but this seems to be done, notwithstanding, more by the force of advice and persuasion than from the *prestige* attachable to their name or character. Certain it is that the Irish priests exercise a more complete control over their flocks, and the latter succumb to the dictates of the former with far less hesitation, than I observed to be the case in the papal dominions. The reason of which lies probably in this, that, the priest being maintained and fostered by the state, each party is independent of the other; but in Ireland the case is reversed, where the relation of priests and people is of the most intimate nature, deriving its chief strength from that species of the voluntary principle which prevails amongst the Roman Catholic persuasion.

Again : the difference is very marked with regard to the persons chosen for the ministry. In this country, generally, they are taken from the middle or humbler classes : at Rome, for the most part, the gentry supply its ranks, and the nobility, with no small degree of ambition, take orders in the Church ; nay, even the head of a princely house forfeits the hope of transmitting his name and honours, and, allured by the Popedom in the distance, exchanges the coronet for the hat of the cardinal. Except in the mendicant orders, it is scarcely possible for a poor or humble individual to enter the Church. It is required that he should have, not only enough to support him during the years of study, but also something in the way of property, which he might call his own. No doubt the income looked to is small, but it is sufficient, as I suppose it was intended, to guarantee the respectability of the priesthood.

To every parish church not only a rector and curates are attached, but many others (priests), who share in the duties and emoluments. They are called canons, deans, &c. : in some of the larger churches as many as twenty will be found chanting the mass and officiating together. In the

basilicas they are still more numerous, as at St. Peter's, where, besides the dignitaries, we find a confessor of almost all the languages in communion with Rome. At a certain hour upon every day, the English, the French, the German, the Austrian, will find a confessor of his own nation, who will freely absolve him in the temple where "*Petrus,\* Princeps Apostolorum,*" both reposes and presides.

Persons intended for the priesthood are dedicated to its service from childhood: their habits are thus early formed, and, by a long and rigorous education, they acquire the power of parting with every consideration, and place their pleasures and their hopes in the profession to which they look forward. The innocent recreations, intended by nature as an exercise whereby body and mind receive equal accessions of strength, are pastimes of the world, and must not be shared in by the embryo priest. It is amusing to see them, as they pass by youths of their own age, how anxiously they look back upon them, as they are engaged in their juvenile sports. The rigid rules to which they are restricted cannot banish the feeling of companionship from their breasts;

\* So called in the dedication upon St. Peter's.

and the voice of nature within them occasionally renders them deaf to the calls of the professor.

From their earliest years, also, they are equipped in complete ecclesiastical dress: they are perfect parish priests in miniature, with the black flowing robe, the slouched hat, and shoes adorned with white buckles. You might imagine them the priests of the Pigmæan nation, who had sent them as emissaries to Rome. You meet them of various sizes, from the boy "just breeched," to the youth entering his twentieth year.

It is wonderful how these children have acquired, even in their features and gait, the gravity of their order. As they pass you in the *strada* or *piazza*, from the air of dignity they assume, and the look of consequence they bear, you can scarcely refrain from believing that they have not just concluded some service, or are hastening to their clerical duties. Even their parents and friends look upon "*il piccolo prete*" with a sort of veneration. Although not anointed or admitted to orders, he is looked upon as "set apart" for the priesthood, as one that will hereafter withhold or dispense the vengeance of Heaven. He is preferred before his brothers, and

in their views this dear tie is transferred from them, with its mutual regards, to their church.

Strong and habitual as these restraints are, it is a question worthy of consideration, whether the end in view is attained, and if the priests are equally qualified by study as by inclination for the ministry. There can be little doubt but that all men are not alike qualified for the sacred office, from the various tempers, dispositions, and constitutions which nature gives to men. Much may be acquired by habit,—the heart to a degree changed: but is the stamp which is impressed upon it by nature—the peculiar thoughts which are the wonted offspring of the mind, and constitute the identity of the individual—capable of substantial alteration?

“*Naturam expellas furcâ, tamen usque recurret.*”

The indiscriminate selection, then, for the priesthood is founded upon a wrong principle, and seems to forget the fallen nature of man, and to be little influenced by adaptation and ability. Consequently, amongst the priesthood must be found, as the evidence of past ages has evinced, the man a prey to ambition or to infidelity, the libertine or the enthusiast. Preferable is the mode in use amongst us, and which bears the sanction of St. Paul: if

any one "of good report" desires the office of the ministry, let him be admitted to it. Let inclination and natural ability be the reasons for entering on the responsible office, and recruit not the service of the Church by a sort of proscription, which leaves to the person himself neither choice nor refusal.

The cardinals amount to seventy-two, but the Sacred College is seldom full. They were instituted by the Popes, taking Moses as the precedent, to share with them the duties and responsibility of their exalted station; or this definite number may, with greater probability, be taken to represent the disciples of Christ. Some are in constant attendance upon his person, but the greater part occupy fine palaces, in some of the best situations of Rome.

It is unnecessary to say that the Pope is selected from their number. These are appointed at his "*mero motu*," but generally men of ability and character are the objects of his choice. A prince, however, or other nobleman taking orders,—whatever his acquirements may be,—is sure of arriving at this distinguished honour. Both branches of the clergy are equally eligible. The late pontiff, Gregory XVI., was of the regular

clergy\*—a monk; so are also Mikara, Oriola, and many others. As a preliminary to appointment, the enjoyment of some property is indispensable, as the salary to be derived from the papal finances—about eight hundred pounds per annum—is not sufficient to support the dignity of the clerical aristocrat. All the offices of the government are filled by cardinals; they are the governors of cities and provinces, bishops and archbishops, at home and abroad. They affect a great state, and surpass the nobility of the country in their establishments and equipage. The ordinary dress is a black coat bound with red lace, knee-breeches, and red stockings, over which is thrown a brilliant scarlet cloak. The head is covered by the usual broad-brimmed clerical hat, but the colour is also red, from which hang gracefully a couple of silk tassels, of the same tinge.

The carriage of the cardinal is also accompanied with the same display. It is a large vehicle, and

\* This order was a branch of the Benedictine, rather on the decline in Italy. There is, I believe, but one established house at Rome. The name of the order is, if I spell it rightly, *Camaldo-lesi*. Although living for the most part in the towns, they partake somewhat of the nature of the *eremita*; the brothers, even in the same house, living each by himself.

resembles very much our stage-coaches. The panels are painted dark red, with yellow stripes upon the pole, axle, &c. They each bear the owner's coat of arms on a large scale; as the painting is well executed, it really does not look tawdry. The horses are two, and jet black. They bear upon their heads red ornaments of worsted, which also appear in other parts of the harness. A burly coachman, dressed in the gayest livery, barred like our butterflies, sits on the box, and whips his black steeds through the streets once trodden by the *Pontifex Maximus* of old. Three servants obtain a precarious footing behind: two hold on by the straps; the last, who thus forms a sort of triangle, preserves his place by a grip with each hand of his brother footmen. These, also, wear the same showy livery.

Frequently I have met one of their "eminences" at a short distance in the country, taking the air on foot, while the carriage he has left keeps pace with him in the road. He walks on, while the two footmen tread in his steps. They are treated with much deference by the population, and not to doff the hat when you meet one is regarded as a mark of disrespect.

Many of the cardinals are men of ability, and

publications from their pen are not uncommon. Like the rest of the nobility, their taste is the accumulation of pictures and statues. Many have good collections. The gallery of the late Cardinal Fesch, in the Strada Giulia,\* is amongst the best at Rome. Possessed himself of the most discriminating taste, he spared no expense in his collection. It is remarkable as well for the excellence as for the variety of the pictures. The other galleries are mostly of the Italian schools; but in the Fesch gallery, that of the Flemish and Spanish is very extensive and remarkably fine, combined with a varied and superb display of Italian originals. The visitor can no more forget "The Repentant Magdalene" of Vandyke in this collection, than the "Ecce Homo" of Guercino in the Corsini gallery. The late proprietor attached a high value to this picture, and kept it constantly in his studio, in company with some half-dozen chefs d'œuvres. It proves that Vandyke's power was not confined to portraits.

Some of the Sacred College have also built spacious palaces, which are exceedingly beautiful, and the principal ornaments of the localities in

\* Since the death of the possessor the greater part of the picture that composed this gallery have been dispersed.

which they are placed. But I could not hear of their founding useful institutions, or bequeathing their wealth to purposes of national or public utility. Ostentation seems to be with all the ruling principle. They are ignorant that the connexion of their name with some hospital or college would form a more noble and enduring monument, and would transmit it more lastingly to the gratitude of posterity.

The mode in which the Pope is elected to fill his exalted station is both interesting and curious. The elective body are the cardinals, pronounced so by a decree of Alexander III. The clergy and people were invested with the suffrage, until it was abrogated by that Pope. "Nine days are allowed for the obsequies of the deceased Pope,\* and the arrival of the absent cardinals; on the tenth they are imprisoned, each with one domestic, in a common apartment, or *conclave*, without any separation of walls or curtains; a small window is reserved for the introduction of necessaries, but the door is locked on both sides, and guarded by the magistrate of the city, to seclude them from all correspondence with the world. If the election

\* Gibbon, iv. 401. I use his words, as he expresses it better than I can, and I believe the practice has undergone no change.

be not consummated in three days, the luxury of their tables is contracted to a single dish at dinner and supper; and after the eighth day, they are reduced to a scanty allowance of bread, water, and wine. During the vacancy of the Holy See, the cardinals are prohibited from touching the revenues, or assuming (unless in some rare emergency) the government of the Church; all agreements and promises among the electors are formally annulled, and their integrity is fortified by their solemn oath and the prayers of the Catholics. Some articles of inconvenient or superfluous rigour have been gradually relaxed, but the principle of confinement is vigorous and entire; they are still urged by the personal motives of health and freedom to accelerate the moment of their deliverance; and the improvement of ballot, or secret votes, has wrapped the struggle of the conclave in the silky veil of charity and politeness."

All Catholic nations have contributed members to the Sacred College, but the great majority is now, as it has always been, composed of Italians. Wolsey and Richelieu—the one the produce of the English, the other of the Gallic soil—have been famous ere now. Cardinal Weld was an Englishman, and is dead but a few years. The only

English cardinal at present is an ecclesiastic of the name of Acton. He is easy of access, of bland manners, and very useful to the English residents. His holiness seldom engages in anything concerning the religious or political matters of the British Isles without taking the opinion of Cardinal Acton.

If our relations with Rome were of a more intimate nature, it is probable that the nuncio we should have would be one of the most wary of the cardinals; and however the equipage, the red hat, and the red stockings might excite attention, it would be a matter to be lamented that the persecuting and intolerant church should have its recognised representative in our free metropolis. It is a spectacle that the people of England would be unlikely to endure. At the same time, a representative of our own at Rome, however the same feeling would naturally resist any proposition of the sort, would be attended with considerable advantage. I do not now, with reference to this diplomatic post, speak of church matters—of this different views will be entertained; but I refer merely to the benefit of an accredited agent of our government to the English residents. It requires a residence in Italy to become acquainted

with the underhand and disingenuous nature of the Italian character. No men, at least to a great extent, are so low in the moral scale; nowhere can there be found a greater want of integrity, truth, and honesty. In their dealings with Englishmen the three last principles are entirely thrown overboard; and reckoning our countrymen as persons well able to bear it, they do not scruple to make use of unfair dealing. Numberless cases of flagrant injustice have come under my notice; I mean cases of contract for houses and lodgings \* violated and falsified, and among classes where one would not expect it,—so universal is the taint, or the appetite, to over-reach John Bull. The English consul has no power where natives are concerned, so the maltreated Englishman is left to have recourse to laws whose language he is not conversant with, and whose justice all precedents assure him is one-sided.

The wealthy English pay these enormous demands, or pocket their affronts; but to the artist or the invalid, the person of small means, they are most serious evils. The Romans know that

\* These remarks apply chiefly, if not altogether, to the persons who let apartments and houses; the character of the artisan and shop-keeper is the reverse of this.

we have no one to apply to, and hence, in almost every case, there is some breach of faith, with its consequent annoyances. This system would all be put an end to, the ill-got gains of the Papal subjects would cease, if the *Inglese* had their ambassador, armed with powers to decide and punish.

As I often contemplated the cardinals, arrayed in their rich red dresses, I was perplexed to account for the origin of the colour which they have assumed. Is it a religious distinction? The surplice is an emblematic garment; its pure white, without spot or stain, typifying the spiritual purity of the wearer. Does the red robe of the cardinal point to the doctrine, that, "though your sins be as scarlet," yet, by the inexhaustible fountain of absolution, flowing in this centre of the Catholic body, they shall become "white as snow"—that by one of their order are held the keys which loose or retain sins? or does it represent the character of their Church, which has shewn itself in many an age and in many a country sufficiently sanguinary? The black flag announces that no quarter may be expected; the yellow, that the plague-spirit is hovering over the devoted vessel; and so, when we see this colour universally tinging the chieftains of

the Church, it is impossible to disconnect it from the reflections which St. Bartholomew, the Waldenses, and the Inquisition give birth to.

The author of the "Decline and Fall" gives a somewhat different account:—"The senators of the Catholic Church, the coadjutors and legates of the Supreme Pontiff, were robed in purple, the symbol or emblem of royalty; they claimed a proud equality with kings; and their dignity was enhanced by the smallness of their number, which, till the reign of Leo X., seldom exceeded twenty or twenty-five persons."

The dress with which rectors and curates appear in public is plain and appropriate. Over their black coat, according to the taste of the wearer, they throw a light and scanty cloak of black silk, which does not reach farther than the knees. They are never without their ample-brimmed hat, which is turned up and attached to the crown in one part. They, however, dress with great taste and precision; in fact, nothing is more attended to. Every dignitary and "regular" has to particularity what he is entitled to, and that he takes care to display to the public gaze, set off with every advantage. After a residence of a few weeks, you may immediately tell, by their garb and gait, the dignity of the dif-

ferent ecclesiastics, from the pompous cardinal to the humble, indifferently-clad subdeacon.

Bishops do not realise the anticipations that may be formed of them; they reserve for the cathedral their more showy robes; they walk or drive through the Corso as a priest, with the exception of a sterling gold chain worn outside, which holds suspended a well-executed crucifix of the same metal. Into the band surrounding the hat are also introduced a few gay colours; and if the bishop has the dignity of Monsignore, his legs are encased in purple stockings.

The Monsignore is an honour conferred by the Pope. It is about the same rank as a knight in other kingdoms; it is alike bestowed on men in orders and on civilians. Monsignore wears the hat of the priest and also his head-gear; but he wraps his shoulders in a light purple cloak, and his legs are set off to advantage in silk stockings of the same Tyrian dye. His state is also manifested by an attending servant, who walks after him wherever he goes, or acts as footman if he be rich enough to afford a carriage. He looks like a faded cardinal, or you might take him for one of the domestics of the latter, to whose lot had fallen the cast-off and well-worn habiliments of his eminence.

We must not, however, judge from appearances, as the title of Monsignore is not unfrequently a step towards the more ambitious honour of the cardinal. The late president of the English college, Dr. Baggs, had received this dignity, and was considered in a fair way towards a place in the Sacred College; he, however, accepted a bishopric in England in 1844, and bade farewell to Rome and greatness. The late governor of Rome, Zacchei, was also a Monsignore—a thin, cadaverous-looking man, but who had a good deal of the gentleman in his features and deportment.

## CHAPTER IV.

CARDINAL LAMBRUSCHINI.—CARDINAL MIKARA.—THE REGULAR CLERGY.—DOMINICANS AND JESUITS.—THEIR ACTIVITY AND ZEAL.—CAPUCHINS.—FRANCISCANS.—CONVENTS.—OTHER ORDERS.—NUNS AND NUNNERIES.

LAMBRUSCHINI was the Papal prime minister during the reign of the late Pope. Of the whole body of the cardinals he is the most remarkable and striking. There are many that exceed him in years, for his age is only between fifty and sixty, but none in personal appearance. His carriage is erect and manly; his head fine and intellectual; he possesses an eye, dark, but full of fire, bespeaking equally vigour and decision. The forehead is high and beautifully formed, indicating no want of mental faculty; his features are handsome, and lose none of their expression in the disfiguring dress he wears. In fact, every line of his face declares him a man to whom nature has given no ordinary ability, as it also tells that that endowment has been cultivated by study and education. He

looks like one who has the cares of a state upon him, and I should say he was not unequal to the task. I have only seen him at the Sistine Chapel or at St. Peter's, and though on these occasions he was not inattentive to devotion, if I might judge from the expression of the face, the duties of his station and the demands of the Church were endeavouring to intrude upon, and obtain some occupation of his mind. In fact I pitied him, when, during the ceremony, custom compelled him to kiss or embrace his neighbouring cardinals—whose looks were so devoid of intelligence, so diametrically opposite to his own. I can say with some confidence, from what I have seen of the man, that he discharged the various duties of his office, with no less humanity than zeal, and that, though the encroaching and jealous policy of former centuries may not have been absent, its cruel or sanguinary spirit had no place in his bosom.

Lambruschini possessed the unlimited confidence of the late Pope; he was more than his prime minister, he was his cabinet, his "*alter ego*." Gregory never engaged in any serious matter without having first availed himself of his advice; and instances are not wanting where he had failed to fulfil a promise, or had broken a pledged resolu-

tion, because it did not meet with the concurrence of his minister. The Pope was a cautious and a timid man, and, though not devoid of penetration, felt the want of all these qualities, which he found to his hand in his favourite cardinal. Although in so high a position, he did not abuse it. There seemed to have been a reciprocal affection; the Pope's estimation of him was well known; and during the processions Lambruschini frequently used to turn, as it were, to see that his aged sovereign and bishop was duly attended and taken care of.

Lambruschini is decidedly patriotic, and has done more than any man, in modern times, to repair the shattered edifice of Romanism. But it is a question, whether his inflexible character is best calculated to promote the objects he has in view. The ground he takes is too high, and less adapted to the present aspect and position of the Roman Church, than altered times and circumstances warrant. He forgets that Romanism is on the decline, and that the weakness, if not the imbecility of age, has beset her, while his policy and plans would become more the meridian of her strength. In the long disputes with Russia he never yielded—a ridiculous warfare with a potentate so power-

ful and energetic as the Czar. The front that he has generally opposed to France has been bold and uncompromising. It is very possible that Lambruschini will one day occupy the pontifical throne: the Roman Church will have a Pope of worth and probity, but the Roman people a decided enemy to reformation and free institutions.

Cardinal Mikara,\* a Capuchin, and Bishop of Fieschi, is also a clever and stirring ecclesiastic. I cannot speak of his personal appearance, but he has the character of being a clear-headed and an accomplished man. He is probably the most enlightened of the cardinals, and possesses a spirit more in accordance with that of the age than any other member of the Sacred College. He has, on more than one occasion, shewn a willingness to reform the institutions of the Church, but, from the cold manner with which his propositions were received, although we should hope that they have since made some progress, it augurs that he has not many followers.†

\* The death of this prelate has taken place since these pages have been in the press.

† Cardinal Mastai, who has ascended the pontifical chair as Pius IX., who had previously given no general publicity to his views, probably because he felt the inutility of doing so without the power to second them, seems to have adopted the line of conduct and liberal

To the liberal principles of Gonsalvi he adds an anxiety to make the Church less offensive to the great body of Christians who differ from her; to make her more suited to altered times, if not more conformable to actual truth. Some years since, in a convocation, where the subject in debate was the miserable state of the Papal finances, and the consequent difficulties of the government, he made some propositions, startling for their boldness and novelty. Some of the college had suggested retrenchment in the public departments, and some additional taxes; but he said, "Can we call for economy in the management of the military or any other bodies which are necessary or can be ill spared by the country, while we ourselves are buried in luxury? Can we deprive the people of a necessary while our establishments are enormous, and ill adapted to ecclesiastics—our dress expensive—our equipage adapted more for princes than

policy of which, on more than one occasion, Mikara is said to have been the advocate. The commencement of his rule augurs well, and if he be sincere, and not tied down by the interests of contending factions, the result must prove highly beneficial to Italy, and tend in no mean degree to exalt his own name. The task, however, is a Herculean one. Whether the department be the state or the church,—the system religious, political, or social,—it will require a head that can plan, and a hand that can grapple with abuses.

priests? Believe me, retrenchment should begin at home—the example of economy should be set by us.”

By so doing, he remarked, there would be a lighter burden upon the public funds, and that they would by degrees right themselves. He also added, that the ceremonies and processions of the Church were too numerous and expensive, and that there was great room for improvement in these institutions, as well as in the other parts of the government.

It is desirable to see one of those, who, as Pope, may possess so great an influence in Europe, putting forth opinions equally creditable and just. The true method to reform the Roman Church, and to crush the abuses with which she abounds, is by a movement in the centre of the body. More signal will be its effects, and more permanent, when those changes are promoted by that eminent body to whom are entrusted her sacred and civil government.

The regular clergy form the great majority of Roman ecclesiastics. They are in high favour with the people and with those in power; the late Pope having been of their order, and being also well represented in the Sacred College, they are a

powerful body. It seems difficult to say which of them has the greater influence. Probably this may rest with the Jesuits, but it results from various causes; they have the education of youth altogether in their power, they are strong in the Collegio Romano, and are paramount in several other institutions in the capital.

In these seminaries they inculcate their doctrines with the usual skill and pertinacity which so much distinguish the followers of Loyola. There the plastic mind is formed by those acute judges of human nature; and while it imbibes secular learning, it also imperceptibly, but irresistibly, receives that colouring from the institutes of its professors, which attaches it to them in after-life, from the principle of early association and youthful obedience. The education of the scions of noble houses, the patrician, and the plebeian, are equally in their hands. This of course enlarges the foundation of their society, and propagates their tenets and their power; but it nevertheless is not forgotten that they are an order which has been suppressed by the supreme head of the Church, and which has frequently undergone grave suspicion.

The power of the Dominicans was formerly un-

limited: this arose principally from its supplying confessors to the various courts of Catholic states. This does not continue, but persons of eminence consign the care of their consciences, now, to any of either ranks of the clergy to whom they may feel disposed. Generally the priests, canons, or curates connected with the parish have this spiritual trust confided to them, while the government of their convents, the instruction of youth, or the burial of the dead, give sufficient employment to the regulars.

The Jesuits are recovering from the disgraces and defeats they have received at Rome, as well as in other places. They are “up and stirring,” frequently to be met on the thoroughfares, with thoughtful brows and hurried steps. The business of conversion is committed to their hands. Many thousand foreigners visit or sojourn in the city; to these the Jesuit frequently finds access, and by degrees winds himself into the good graces of his new acquaintances. He lends them books,—not actual Roman Catholic pamphlets, but those which combine the “*utile cum dulci*,”—which, perhaps, while they would descant upon some local subject, or something remarkable in the neighbourhood, gradually undermine the faith of Protestants.

Then, when they have wound themselves into your confidence, they act more openly, and put into your hands a book upon "the faith" (*il fede*), or a tract illustrative of the sole orthodoxy and purity of Rome. It is wonderful with what zeal they go about the business, and then it was so purely accidental—so unpremeditated.

I have been told that in some cases they are successful, and an English family, or some of its members, forsake the religion of their fathers, and enter into communion with Rome.

These cases are uncommon, as we may infer from the unequivocal sounds of triumph that were raised when Mr. Scott Murray lately became a convert. They are, however, not the less vigilant and prepared for any business which demands energy and perseverance. Wherever the post of danger is, there the Jesuits will be found. If a schism appears in a province, their missionaries are sent to bring about measures of conciliation, and to heal division. If the Church has a political motive in view, she finds no agent more adapted to her purpose, from his general knowledge of the world, and skill in penetrating character, than the follower of Ignatius. If barbarous lands require apostles to spread the Gospel, none will be found

equally fitted, by education and art, to combat and overcome the difficulties of the situation, with the obsequious members of the same order.

They, indeed, may be well called "the forlorn hope" of the Church, placed always in the front of the battle, elated by success, and but little dispirited by defeat. The dress of this order does not differ in much from the local clergy, but they may be always observed having the cravat half covered with a piece of white muslin.

The Capuchins and Franciscans are very numerous, and have several houses. Of the former the chief is near the Piazza Barberini, and numbers, with the principal and officers, about 200 members. Cardinal Mikara, Bishop of Frascati, a liberal-minded ecclesiastic, is one of the number.

Both these orders are maintained chiefly by having entrusted to them the burial of the dead. When a person dies, they are sent for, and become the sole undertakers. Fifty or a hundred of their body attend, walking two by two after the body, chaunting occasionally in a solemn strain, through the frequented streets, some service for the dead, while the interval is filled up with conversation. It may be the virtues or the foibles of the deceased, that they descant upon, but often some

brother's remark wakes a smile in his neighbour, so that they seem to engage in their melancholy duty with no very depressed feelings. They are paid each from a *paul* to a *scudo*, according to the poverty or wealth of the individual.

The habit of both Capuchin and Franciscan is much alike—a coarse brown frock or cloak drawn tightly to the waist by a band, having the appearance of a rope or cord, but of a much softer texture. A capacious hood is thrown over the shoulders, which is used to cover the head; sandals without stockings complete the figure. Some wear a small skull-cap, while with others the winds of heaven play as they list with their dark or grizzled hair.

The Capuchin looks very venerable with a patriarchal beard, which he seems to have copied from the Moses of Michael Angelo in the church of St. Peter in Vincoli.\* Some, at least, would be apt to think so, but to me his overgrown moustache and *barba intonsa* seemed to speak more of a military than of a religious character. Very different

\* Michael Angelo supplies us with one of those rare examples, where men have successfully cultivated the sister arts of architecture, statuary, and painting. In all he attained to incomparable excellence. The "*monumentum perennius ære*" in each department are, St. Peter's, the "Last Judgment," and the statue of Moses. The beard of the latter, however, is somewhat exaggerated.

in this respect is the Franciscan; with the same dress as to colour, shape, and material, he presents his chin and upper lip shaved with as much care as if a *frisiseur* had presided at the operation. This is solely to distinguish the orders. Indeed, cleanliness one would think would be enough for this purpose, as the Franciscan must have in this particular greatly the advantage of the Capuchin, covered as he is with hair, and that in such a climate as that of Italy.

The majority of these men betray but little intelligence or acuteness in their countenances. It is a question to me whether their qualifications in many instances embrace anything further than a capacity for chaunting the burial service, and going through the ordinary routine of their establishments. Living in inactivity and seclusion, they can be of no great use to the community, and, one would think, a burden to themselves. As to clerical duties, the parochial clergy are quite sufficient to discharge them. Hence they live to themselves, leading a life of self-denial, and confer no share of their talents or labours upon the community.

At the same time, the services that the monks have rendered must not be forgotten. To their

exertions during the dark ages we are indebted for the preservation of literature and art. But for them we should look in vain for some of the choicest remains of antiquity, or the interesting records of their own stirring times. Many a great painter would perhaps have forsaken the canvas and easel for the pursuits of husbandry or war, had he not found a discerning patron in the retirement of the cloister. But, at the same time, the question may well be asked,—whether the large number of convents is not productive of more injury than benefit to the countries where they are situate? Could not the talents or the time of the inmates be as usefully applied in other avocations, and could they not serve the common Father of mankind in private stations, as well as restricted by an unbending discipline and in a common abode?

The necessaries of life are cheap in Italy; a few “*baiocchi*” will procure enough of bread and wine to support an individual. This with them is easily procured, without bodily labour and the sweat of the brow. Consequently these convents are always full: according as sickness or age thins the brotherhood, so surely do successors speedily arise to take their easy and vacant places.

The Irish have a house near the Ludovisi villa, which belongs to the order of St. Francis. The patron is St. Isidore. The community is small, consisting of a guardian and about a dozen young men, invested with the habit. At the conclusion of a few years they receive ordination at Rome, and return to the Island of Saints. This convent is commodious, has an extensive garden, and is capable of containing a much greater number than now occupy it; but its resources seem to have decayed, as the general appearance of the place and the dilapidation of the premises testify. It does not seem to have any connexion with the Irish college. Its festival day is St. Patrick.

I have inspected several of the convents; and found a considerable degree of comfort in the interior. The sites are well chosen, and the chambers large and commodious. All are under the management of a principal or guardian, and consist of novices and admitted brethren. A chapel is of course attached to each, in many instances not inferior to the parish churches both in size and embellishment.

The refectory is a large room; and a library is generally attached, the walls of which are, in nearly every case, adorned with excellent frescoes.

Thus, food for body and mind is alike provided but the cravings of the latter probably hold no proportion with those of the former. I rarely saw a student occupied in the library; the benches were bare, the books reposing in silence. Not but that there was a goodly store of them; the folios of the Fathers were mingled with many modern and agreeable works. Intellectual employment, I conclude, never occupies a thought of the great majority; their reading is generally turned to the breviary and the lives of the saints.

However, in most of the "houses," discipline and forms take the place of intellectual pursuits. They rise early and go through the set religious duty, and conform to the rigorous or relaxed institutions of their peculiar order. The day is begun and concluded with a considerable part of the breviary—"the office," as it is called—accompanied with the usual recommendation to the Virgin and the saints. At the angles of the staircase wooden crucifixes are placed; these are devoutly kissed as often as the brother either ascends or descends; and thus the morning or the evening is consumed with various exercises, postures, and ceremonies.

The Benedictines and Dominicans congregate

also in considerable numbers, but they are not so much in public as the members of the two former orders. The dress of the Dominicans is a grey habit, with a hood of a dark colour. They have churches of their own, where they officiate and receive the emoluments. These orders have, from time to time, produced some remarkable men; in many instances, they appear to be men of birth and education. The "generals" of all these orders reside at Rome; they organise houses in other kingdoms, and decide finally all matters relating to their society.

The Augustins do not appear to be so numerous, although they are evidently a strong body, and are in possession of some fine convents and churches, viz. the remarkable church in the Via Augustini, which receives as many offerings as any other single edifice in Rome.

There are various other orders, as might be expected, at Rome, varying in habit, life, and rules. There are Carthusians and Carmelites, the order of St. Basil, &c. Some wear a large red cross upon the left breast or upon the shoulder. I have met some monks in the streets who have the crown of the head quite "shaven and bare," and also the hair upon the back of the head and

temples, leaving a ring of about two inches in width only. This is meant to represent "the crown" which they are to have hereafter, which they are allowed now to wear in anticipation. Upon this, of course, no covering descends. I take it that these men are regarded as peculiarly holy, and possibly esteemed so by the people, although I could not see that they were treated with any peculiar respect.

Convents for females, or nunneries, are just as numerous. They have also the saints who preside over their institutions, and who give their names to the order. St. Ursula, St. Agatha, St. Clara, are of the number. I can speak but little of these institutions. They are absolute prisons, and they alike retain the inmates and exclude the public; but they are large edifices, and they must have corresponding establishments.

Their rules are most strict and unbending. When the Roman daughter takes the veil in them, she truly bids adieu to the world. She never again looks upon the beautiful landscape, glimpses of which her youth had caught from each of the seven hills, combining the green champaign with the blue mountain, the rapid Tiber, and the classic ruins of her native land. The breeze from the

Appenine shall never more fan her cheek, but the confined air and the close room gradually remove the hues of health—separated not only from her acquaintance and companions, but from her childhood's home, and a dark line drawn, ever, between parental communication. The father at set times may converse with his daughter, but their eyes shall behold each other no more. Her stern resolve has broken the ties that bound her to the world. They are to each other as the language of the dead, as the voices of spirits. She departs to her living tomb, probably to eat her heart; and he to his home—as fanaticism or nature prompts—to rejoice in his offering, or to deplore his loss.

Nothing can be more melancholy and monotonous than the life of the unhappy nun. All those pleasures derivable from the prospect of nature and the cheering influences of society she is deprived of. She is separated from these influences which improve the character and strengthen the mind; and, we may say, being out as it were of the school of trial and probation, is actually less fitted for the approach of death, and the great change that is to take place, than those who mingle in the world, and discharge the

duties imposed upon them by Providence. She is the creature of custom—the victim of a habit which results from mistaken, if not corrupt, views of religion. It is the part only of a system which maintains an ecclesiastical structure, built on observance and ceremonial; whose principle is to spread out religious truth before the eyes, and not to cultivate it in the heart.

The convents are prisons; the windows are closely barred, the doors locked: and lest the meditations of the inmates should be disturbed by the passing crowd, a shed projects at right angles with the base of the windows, so as to completely obstruct their view. The clergy are, of course, admitted to these houses, where mass is celebrated at all the usual times. The lives of the inmates are said to be sincere, and they engage in the duties of their order with earnestness and zeal — of which, indeed, any other evidence need hardly be required, than their voluntarily quitting the world, and, to a great extent, its enjoyments, at the price of domestic exile and personal liberty.

When old age, or more probably disease, puts a period to their existence, neither winds nor night dews shall fall over the peaceful head.

There are the cold damp of the vault, but none of

“ the momentary dews,  
Which, sparkling to the twilight stars, infuse  
Freshness in the green turf that wraps the dead.”

The distance is but short from the chamber above to the vault below. The hands of the sisters close her eyes, and by the same are soon completed her secret obsequies.

The loss of health must follow as a matter of course in these institutions. Rome, during the summer months, is visited by a frightful agent, malaria, which deals fever upon all who come within its influence. This and the sirocco make the air peculiarly prejudicial to life. Those who are able, leave at these times the stricken city for the hills or the sea-coast; but with what effect must it tell upon those who are immured within the walls of a confined building! In no monastery do the monks totally seclude themselves; they “take the air,” and look healthy and well: while those to whom nature has given weaker constitutions are forbidden by the rules to strengthen or preserve it, but are left by that Church, “void of natural affection,” to pine and perish in secret.

## CHAPTER V.

CEREMONIES AT ST. PETER'S—THEIR EFFECTS.—CHRISTMAS.—PROCESSION.—GREGORY XVI.—GUARDIA NOBILE.—TEMPORAL AND SPIRITUAL CHARACTER OF THE POPE.—PAPAL BENEDICTION.

THE superb cathedral of St. Peter's, at all times abounding with objects of unequalled interest and beauty, is never more engaging or more attractive than upon the two great festivals of the Christian world—that which is designed to commemorate the birth, and the resurrection of our Lord.

The sojourner at Rome, at every repeated visit, makes some new discovery, by which some new light breaks in upon the soul—removing all previous doubt, if any existed, of the majestic proportions, and, at the same time, the harmony reigning throughout every detail of this unrivalled Christian temple. It is beautiful in its grand proportions, viewed as the shadows of eve steal into the building, adding infinitely to the

massive and marble-cased pillars, like giants' arms sustaining the fretted and gilded roof, and investing with fresh sublimity that dome—the miracle of modern architecture — “to which Diana's wonder was a cell.”

Beautiful it is, also, when the golden tints of the Italian sun enter the sanctuary, as it admits its evening beams through the lofty windows—shedding its mellowing influence on all things around, and imparting, perhaps, its warm glow upon some picture of Guido or Carracci, and, Prometheus-like, giving a life and inspiration to the figures, so as almost to cheat the imagination; while, in the holiness and silence of the place, we for a moment expect them to start from the canvas, and again to hold converse with the things and beings of this world.

In a distant part of the building a figure, the creation of a Canova, seems to be really engaged in devotion, as the cold lines of the marble receive some reflexion of the warm tints of life; while, in other statues nearer to our view, sprung from the wand of the same magician, they seem at least to have been once animated with the breath of life, and call forcibly to mind the pale and slumbering form, “ere the first day of death

has fled," bearing still upon the features all the traces and stamp of beauty—the last glimpses that affection may steal, when all that still remains is equally recognised and loved—just

“E'er decay's effacing fingers  
Have swept the lines where beauty lingers.”

But, in my mind, St. Peter's is never seen to more advantage than when one of the pompous and imposing ceremonies of the Roman Catholic church is celebrated within its precincts. The great head of the Church—the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic world—presides, attended by the cardinals, and with a long train of prelates and priests.

On these occasions nothing is left undone which can produce an effect. There is everything to captivate the eye, to engage the feelings, and to arrest the imagination. The effect of such studied and imposing ceremony, where nothing can be added to the appearance, but grace, ease, and decorum reign throughout, is to many minds overwhelming. Self-command is lost amidst the glitter, the crowd, and the solemnity; and while the eyes and the ears are engaged, reason is also led captive, and reflection falls bound to do homage at the chair of

the Popes. With persons of such a character this change is not unfrequently made, with regard to their former religious opinions and future inclination. But they are persons of an uniform frame of mind, whose tone of thought is vacillating and indecisive; superficial observers of things themselves, their principles are not fixed upon a basis capable of resisting influences that make their approach even by the feeblest avenues of sense. They are persons whose habits have been averse to contemplation, or who, perhaps, are physically incapable of dwelling upon the objects of the past, or considering the hopes of the future. The spiritual worship of the Deity is a topic too abstract and refined for their ideas. If religion must subsist with them, it is to be carried on only by sensible images; and the more numerous, novel, and imposing, and at the same time adapted to their office, are the objects presented to their view, the more complete is their effect upon their character and opinions.

But very different is the effect upon differently constituted minds. The individual who has come to the conclusion, by a process of plain reasoning, that religion is a business of the heart, concerning alone that part of his being which is immortal and

invisible, cannot look without wonder at those rites which are clearly out of place in a system of worship, which the best test, experience, has proved can subsist without them. But the feeling that is excited in his mind is more than this: contempt for those who can introduce into the house of God forms, accompanied with music and military display, little, if anything removed from the representations of the opera. And even by the majority of the spectators, native as well as stranger, these things are looked upon more as an imposing pageant, as a gratification to the eye, than with any specific object of strengthening the tone of religious feeling, or improving the heart.

As to devotion, generally speaking, it does not seem to be present; and that reverence which speaks from the features, but is principally visible in the eye, when man feels his humility, and acknowledges his dependence upon his Maker, is certainly only to be observed at that brief interval—a moment, however, which has everything added to invest it with greater solemnity—when the host is elevated, and, on these interesting occasions, by the Pope himself.

The cardinals, who in great numbers are pre-

sent, are engaged in chatting; and the crowd, or the congregation who attend, discuss matters having no connexion with the spectacle before them—the news of their social circles, or the last tidings of importance from the two influential theatres of England and France. In short, it would appear to be enough to be present at these ceremonies,—a taking part in them does not seem to be regarded as either necessary or indispensable. A virtue seems to flow from the pontifical presence, and a sacredness communicated from the place, of which all are partakers. As handkerchiefs and garments from St. Paul's person were miraculous in their effects, so does the successor of St. Peter impart a holiness to the air of his cathedral, which supersedes the necessity of prayer, and of which all who breathe feel their consciences lightened, and their hopes strengthened or increased.

So unexpected by me was this absence, not of decorum, but of devotion, that I acquainted an English priest near me with my surprise. He answered, that the Italians find it hard to divest themselves of their flow of spirits—the undoubted heritage of the inhabitants of the South—even in their sacred things; that this was a part of their national character, as that of our nation is a gra-

vity, belonging not only to the sanctuary, but introduced more or less into the ordinary dealings between one another.

This may be, to some extent, true. As soon as we get to the Continent, there is nothing that will be earlier remarked than the vivacity of our French neighbours; and this trait is, no doubt, surpassed by the gay and unrestrained feeling pervading the population of Italy's sunnier clime. But the contrast stole upon me unawares, as I looked at the splendid scene and gorgeous ceremony before me, of the silent congregation of our own English churches, attentive to every word, and betraying in every look and gesture that spirit of devotion which is kindled by a feeling that they are then addressing that Being who holds their lives in the hollow of his hand, and fed by the reflection that their words are then ascending, like the evening incense, in thanks for the past, and firm reliance for the future.

But to return to the subject of the present chapter. A little before nine o'clock on Christmas morning, one of the three great doors of St. Peter's, that nearest the Vatican Palace, opened, and a procession, without any parallel in my experience, entered from the stairs called "*Scalæ Sanctæ*."

It was composed of a long retinue of cardinals, priests, and religious attendants; in the midst of whom, the sun around whom these lesser planets all revolved, came the Pope himself.

Gregory XVI., at the time that I had frequently an opportunity of observing him, appeared to be an old man, but he wore his age well. Although the "*via media*" between eighty and ninety had been passed, his form was still erect, and betrayed but little of the infirmity which usually follows in the footsteps of years. The furrows which generally mark the cheek of the aged were only perceptible; and the decay of fire in his eye had left much remaining, evidencing equally acuteness and intelligence. Though he was old, yet was he "strong and lusty;" his "age was like a lusty winter, frosty, but kindly."

The dress of the Pope is rather chaste than splendid. It consists of an under robe of white satin; another of the same material, with a not very rich gold fringe, open in front, of the nature of a cossack, is thrown over, and reaches to the knees. Over this there is placed a tippet or hood, having the cross worked upon the ends, and profusely ornamented with the Papal arms, the keys. He wore white satin shoes, having a small cross

worked upon the front of each; they were as nicely made, and in every particular resembling those that a lady would appear in at a ball-room. He wore upon his head a small skull-cap of satin also, which was not removed during the entire time of his presence in St. Peter's.

The cardinals entered first—the number present was about fifty, adding greatly to the interest and splendour of the scene by their magnificent dresses. Some wore mitres—by far the largest part; and a few the round skull-cap of crimson silk. The dress is a long and flowing robe of very fine crimson cloth, with a train of silk of a somewhat paler hue, which is sometimes extended, and sweeps the ground; at others, twisted by the chaplain within the smallest possible compass. Stockings of red silk, and black shoes with silver buckles, complete the figure.

The dress of the bishops is satin, interspersed with gold lace, the figure of the cross being visible upon the back, and upon the extremities of a hood or robe depending from the shoulders. Each bears a large gold chain, from which hangs a cross of the same precious metal. The *prelati*, or *monsignores*,—persons not necessarily bishops,—form also a part of the procession. They seem to be digni-

taries of the Church, or a higher order of the priesthood. They wear the vestments of an officiating priest, but are also distinguished by purple stockings. These have no trains; that of the cardinal sometimes hangs loosely on the ground, at other times presents the form of a rope.

These altogether are very numerous, and form a long procession, in the centre of which, in a handsome chair or throne, his holiness is borne by several men, clad in crimson dresses with trousers fitting tightly to the leg. Those holding office in the Papal cabinet walk nearest his person—his prime minister, secretary, and chamberlain.

The "*guardia nobile*" follows, always attending the Pope's person during the great festivals of the Church. This is a splendid body of officers and men, accoutred in the richest style, but an unexpected accompaniment to the establishment of a bishop of the Church, one of whose chief requisites is humility. They consist solely of the nobility of Rome. Privates and officers alike must be equally removed from plebeian blood. They make a fine appearance, and add not a little to the effect of the ecclesiastical display. Their uniform is a red coat covered with a profusion of lace, and white leather trousers, large boots, and cocked

hat, being on the whole not unlike the dress of our staff officers. They have no duty but attendance upon his Holiness on the great festival days. Prince Barberini is the commander of the corps.

An official bears an enormous fan, composed of feathers, which he occasionally waves to and fro for the purpose of cooling the air; and four others bear a splendid canopy of silk, which is raised above the Pope's head, and held still in that position as they solemnly pass on through the spacious and peerless aisle.

The points of precedence are observed with great particularity, and some time is consumed in observing the necessary forms, both at the entry and departure from the cathedral.

On these occasions there is usually a large attendance of troops in St. Peter's. On the present day there were two lines of grenadiers reaching from the door to the pontifical altar. Between these the procession moved slowly on to the chapel, which forms the farthest part of the cross of the ground-plan. There the place is cushioned and carpetted, and a throne raised for the Pope. The Pope then descends from his chair, and is led by two of the cardinals to the throne, where he

at once assumes his seat. The "noble guard" form lines on either side, and, what one would hardly expect in so august a presence, remain covered. The cardinals take their seats, and his chaplain at the foot of each, occupy a single bench reaching down either side of the high altar.

As soon as all are seated, divers salutations take place between the cardinals. They bow to and embrace each other; and this, unaccompanied with any audible expression, gives them something of the appearance of automatons. They go one by one to pay homage, or to make their obeisance to the Pope, probably to renew their fealty, when his foot is reverently kissed by each. At this time part of the service goes on at the altar, but slowly, as if for the purpose of not interrupting the cardinals' duty to their superior.

One is quite at a loss to conjecture what these bowings and salutations to each other have to say to a rite avowedly maintained as a part of the worship of God. No one except a spectator can have any idea of them. Matthews, in his "Diary," compares them, for which there was some excuse, to Noodle and Doodle in the play, and at the same time makes a remark, which one would hope is not founded in truth, that at the moment the deity

that fills their hearts and occupies their thoughts is his holiness the Pope.

To the right of the high altar, upon a temporary platform, the choir of St. Peter's are present, and chaunt a long part of the service. The number, however, is not large, nor the singing by any means so good as at the vespers on some of the great "eves," or in the Sistine Chapel. No organ or instrument of music lends its aid to their voices.

To the right and also to the left of the same altar, but extending more towards the large aisle, and consequently rather distant from the Papal presence, enclosed seats are raised for the accommodation of the ladies. These are almost exclusively kept for the "*forestieri*."

All ladies who would presume to approach so holy an individual, and the great patron of celibacy, must conform to certain rules in order to be spectators upon these festivals. Particular attention must be paid to dress; black must be the prevailing colour. Bonnets are strictly forbidden—the reasons I could not learn;\* but, instead, a black lace or muslin veil must be thrown over the

\* They are a modern contrivance; probably they savour too much of the "Reformation."

head. This, I suppose, is to shade their features, or to prevent the fascinating glances of the daughters of England or France from having too great an effect. Among those who have foresworn the sex, for ladies to appear in all their loveliness might risk the breach of vows; and, as one looks at the sun without danger through a smoked glass, so the veil has been well devised to counteract any mischief that might accrue from the blaze of bright or blue eyes.

The whole spectacle is now particularly interesting, and cannot be easily forgotten by those who have been fortunate enough to witness it. The importance of the personages, the novelty and variety of the costume, where the dress of the Italian peasant has something equally characteristic with that of the princes of the Church, cannot fail to make a lasting impression even upon the inattentive observer.

The scene is also not wanting in the magnificence which attends the best European courts. Upon a long bench are the ambassadors of nearly all the kingdoms of Europe, clad in superb uniforms, the representative of each monarch bearing upon his breast the orders which he has obtained from his master's hand.

It is, in fact, the holding of a court rather than a service of the Church. The Bishop of Rome truly presides at the altar, but beside him is the tiara; he wears the mitre, but he is the crowned head of the best part of Italy. It is an odd anomaly, the union of the civil and the sacred sword, the carnal and the spiritual things blended together in a manner without precedent and without parallel. There is an intertwining of the kingdom which is of this world with that which is not, which leaves one in great difficulty to discover how the several parts can be managed to adhere, or by what means they have been dovetailed together. The time may arrive, probably, when the Italians may make the distinction between regal and episcopal duties. The present order of things has gone on so long, and has been so admirably managed,—which the most powerful feelings in the human heart have been enlisted to promote,—that they have neither the time nor the inclination to examine whether they are in the possession of the shadow or the substance of freedom.

Yet these are the descendants of the Romans, who bend obediently to the Pontiff's aim? They that kept the world in subjection are succeeded in their soil by a still noble but unambitious race.

Power has passed away from them; their empire has shrunk to but a small dominion; and in its present state it exhibits but few of those glorious institutions of freedom, found under the kings, the consuls, or even the emperors. But who shall say what advances in national prosperity and individual happiness await them under the wise guidance of a ruler such as now occupies the Palace of the Vatican?

But the scene is, indeed, well calculated to drive all other emotions out of the mind. The noble temple, which is at once the tomb of “the Prince of the Apostles”\* and the cathedral of his successor, is before you, filled by a personage who has played so important a part in the interests of the world—to whom millions look up with a feeling kindred more to devotion than respect—who is the keystone in that ecclesiastical arch, which has its materials throughout the habitable world,—the prince, the head of the Church! How many are looking upon him with awe and reverence, with feelings very different from that with which we

\* So the Catholics think, and Peter is so called in the dedication on the exterior of the church. However, an authority higher than that of the Pope, the Scriptures, tells us that there was no supremacy, but a perfect equality among the apostles of our Lord.

contemplate kings! The latter may commute or forgive offences against the laws of the state, but this not only resides within the power of the Pope, but the sins against a higher tribunal are forthwith effaced from the conscience by the "*absolvo te*" of the possessor of the Vatican. This feeling will account for the crowds the occasion has called together, and for the silent attention which pervades the multitude.

The appearance of the whole church is now particularly striking. Groups are formed through various parts of the immense building, some considering carefully a picture or statue, or resting impatiently until the procession shall be again formed. Occasionally your eye will rest upon the attendants of the cardinals, carrying the wide-leaved red hat, with its tassels hanging loosely down, and their cloak of the same gaudy colour. The *Inglese* are also very numerous, apparently tired out and anxious for the close. Here were to be seen several of her Majesty's uniforms of the regiments of the line, staff-dresses, or those of the county deputy-lieutenants. These uniforms are particularly useful on the Continent, and are a passport to everything in church or palace.

But by half-past twelve o'clock high mass is

concluded, and his holiness ascends, with a firm step, the pontifical altar, while the thousands present fall on their knees, and the military lower their arms. He stretches out his arms towards the vast multitude, and in a loud and sonorous voice pronounces his blessing. There is then a moment's pause ; but soon the din is heard again, and all parties prepare to leave St. Peter's, and the cardinals, &c. to take their allotted places in the closing procession.

The procession is formed in the same manner as in the morning. The space between the military is speedily filled by ecclesiastics ; the cardinals, in great number and variety, with their trains well twisted, attended by their chaplains, each bearing a mitre, take their posts. The Pope's chair is in readiness, and he soon ascends it, smiling complacently upon those who are near him. The canopy and the fan are erected, and bishops, priests, and sacristans follow in the rear. Now the mitre is removed from the Pope's head, and a crown or tiara is placed thereon. He for a while takes leave of the bishop, and appears in the character of a temporal prince, or crowned head. This crown is not showy ; the groundwork is white silk, upon which are many diamonds and

some other gems : there is but little gold. The top is surmounted by a cross of brilliants.

As the Pope is carried through the throng, slowly and solemnly, his hands are ever moving, forming the sign of the cross in the air as he passes along. There are not less than five hundred ecclesiastics in this procession ; and when the novelty and splendour of the dresses are considered, the effect of the display may be judged of. The gigantic roof of St. Peter's is spread above, and the lofty dome hangs over all as a canopy. The gorgeous embellishments of the pillars and walls also lend their effect to this matchless spectacle. But the door is now gained, and with the same order and silence the procession files off to the Vatican on the right. The Pope retires, and the cardinals one by one drive away in their showy and splendid equipages.

## CHAPTER VI.

CEREMONIES AT EASTER.—THE POPE RECEIVES THE EUCHARIST SITTING. — ELEVATION OF THE HOST.—THE POPE BLESSES THE PEOPLE FROM THE BALCONY OF ST. PETER'S.—CHURCH OF THE AUGUSTINES.—IMAGE OF THE VIRGIN. — IS MUCH CELEBRATED. —ITS OFFERINGS.

THE ceremonies upon the *Giorno di Pascha* (Easter Sunday) are very similar to those which take place at Christmas. The same part of St. Peter's is fitted up, and the same accommodation provided for all who are disposed to attend. But upon this occasion there is rather more pomp in the procession, and the cardinals are more numerous. The great central portal is also thrown open, the only occasion throughout the whole year, to admit, as it were, the Pope triumphing by reason of the resurrection of our Lord.

The whole troops of the garrison also attend, each with their very fine bands. Of these a considerable number are to be found within the walls,

but the majority are drawn up in lines in the piazza in front. These have their colours, and all the implements of war. The dresses of the troops are beautiful, and in this respect they make up for the want of spirit which is said to characterise the Papal army. They look martial, although they are not so. They are not present for the purpose of checking an *émeute*, but for the purpose of display. A finer-looking body of men, and better accoutred, it would be impossible to find; but still they are lamentably deficient in the characteristics of an army—energy and resolution. They are the descendants of the conquerors of the world, so that climate or blood has not degenerated them.

It must not, however, strike us with surprise that the army of a spiritual ruler—kept not so much for the purpose of preventing aggression, as for keeping its own population within bounds—should be deficient in those characteristics which are found among more enterprising and powerful nations. The offices of peace have been more successfully cultivated than those of war, and the minds of the people more directed to the church than the camp. Rome, too, generally endeavours to prevail more by moral force than

physical power. Hence this department has, of course, been neglected; but it by no means implies, that, if it became necessary, and due care were taken, her soldiers would be found deficient in virtue or valour.

The Papal ensign floats on the Castle of St. Angelo, once the mausoleum of Adrian; and already a few guns announce that the ceremonies are about to commence — the tomb, as it were, opening its mouth to herald in the day. Shortly after the procession forms, and is seen slowly descending the *Scalæ Sanctæ*; in the midst of whom the Supreme Pontiff occupies his usual elevated position, attended by his ministers and cardinals. They soon enter the great portal, pass along the noblest hall in all the world, and all take their allotted seats. The *coup d'œil* is very imposing. The ecclesiastics of all ranks are much more numerous than upon Christmas Day, and, as is always the case during the *Santa Settemana*, the attendance of foreigners greatly augmented. The ambassadors' seats are filled with the representatives of the courts of Europe; while the military and clerical habits, in a peaceful union blended, meet the eye at every turn of the cathedral. The choir are in their places, and one of the most

distant balconies is occupied by the best regimental band, whose music is heard, however, but at one moment during the entire service.

There is little or no variety in the ceremonies. The cardinals kiss and salute each other as usual, and they each renew their homage to the Pope. Their chaplains sit at the feet of each, in look and gesture evidencing the most complete obedience. High mass commences, a cardinal and some bishops assisting. Occasionally the fine and clear voices of the choir chaunt some of the parts, coming upon the ear with a full effect through the massive halls.

In Italy every one is born a musician, so that it is an easy matter to obtain first-rate artists; but the Pope's choirs have always had the character of the highest excellence. At one time their united voices come so as to almost overwhelm you; at another moment, the sweet clear tones of a single individual speak to the feelings, as if we were addressed by a being of another world.

I remarked upon the altar some splendid communion plate. The chalice is gold, and set with gems, and is a present, as I learned, from the last of the Stuarts.\* This day is remarkable on

\* Who was in orders, and a Cardinal at Rome.

account of the Pope receiving the eucharist. It is an interesting spectacle, as his method of receiving it differs from all the world. It is usual to receive the elements in a reverential posture, and so do nearly all denominations of Christians. But the Pope, presuming upon his intimacy with our Lord, from his office of vicegerent, always receives it sitting. The cardinal who officiated at the altar, and the bishop, approached his Holiness, bearing the paten and chalice. The Pope received with much apparent devotion, but with a vast deal of ceremony. As they approached and retired from him, they bowed repeatedly. During all this time there was a solemn silence, and all were attentive. None of the cardinals or other officials present were communicants. It seemed to be enough for all that his Holiness should partake of it.

The part of the service of the day, however, which was particularly solemn and impressive, was the elevation of the host. For this purpose, Gregory XVI. was conducted from his chair of state to the high altar. When he had repeated some prayers, he laid his hands on the vessel which contains the host: immediately the vast multitude, military, priests, and people, bent on their knees

to the earth. A deep silence followed. The Pope slowly lifted up the host, while a burst of instrumental music from a distant part of the church produced a startling effect.

Nothing could be more remarkable and imposing than the scene at this moment. The thousands who are present, some of whom a little before were engaged in devotion, some in conversation, seemed rivetted to the earth under the influence of one feeling; the figure of the Pope alone standing erect, with his snowy hair stealing from under the mitre, dressed in his gorgeous robes, with his hands uplifted, containing what was by him and them conceived the very body of their Lord. The people looked as though they had been stricken or paralysed by disease, and he, as another Moses, bidding them look upon him and be healed. Motion, nay, almost life, seemed to have left them, while their high priest appeared alone to live, stretching out his hands to heaven in their behalf. The Pope was now seen to great advantage. He seemed to be engrossed in his work. Decision and devotion marked the lines of his features; he looked as though he had an onerous task confided to him, and that it was all-important that he should discharge it well.

A ceremony such as this, conducted with the most laboured regard to effect, is very apt indelibly to impress weakly constituted minds. At these very moments, overwhelmed as much by the novelty as the grandeur of the spectacle, the affections are won to this religion of pageantry and parade, and the resolution is perhaps formed to henceforth take refuge in its bosom. The senses are fascinated, and the reason becomes with them a willing victim. They assert at once that it is the splendour only of truth—the magnificence worthy of Jehovah. But if that mind could for a moment hesitate, and examine upon what weak foundations the whole system is built, the conclusion arrived at might be very different. That vessel, held with such care for the veneration of those around, contains only the simple substance of bread, if the testimony of the senses is to be depended on, and not the word of the priest. It is not the element itself that is so valuable, as the spirit with which it is approached. But religion, in its two great branches,—external and internal,—will always have its two classes of votaries. They who neglect the heart, will make up the defect by ample concessions to sense, and *vice versâ*. The latter will avail themselves of as many ceremonies

as are necessary to maintain religion, and not to overwhelm it under an unseemly load.

Immediately after the elevation the procession is formed, and the Pope and his splendid retinue retire from St. Peter's. The ceremony of the day, however, has not yet closed. All are anxious to obtain a place upon the steps in front of the portico, or at least a place in the piazza, as the Pope upon this day is accustomed to bless the people from the great balcony.

Probably one-fourth of the population, on these occasions, is to be found in the front of St. Peter's. The peasantry, with their picturesque dresses, checkered the crowd, having come in from many miles around the city. The regular clergy, with their peculiar habits, are seen at hand in great numbers, shewing by their looks and demeanour a great anxiety to participate in the expected blessing. The gay uniforms of the military relieve the darker dresses of the crowd, and their arms, polished to perfection, glitter in the dazzling sunshine. Banners wave in the Vatican circus—hurrying the mind back involuntarily to the cohorts and centuries of other days. Here and there a mother holds her children in her arms, and her eyes are ever fixed upon the place where his Holiness is to

appear; while the foreigners, French, English, and Russian, evincing more curiosity than devotion, are fully as desirous as the natives to obtain good places, and to watch the exciting scene to its close.

After twenty minutes had elapsed, the venerable figure of the Pope was descried, and forthwith all the great multitude fell upon their knees. The position he occupied was so elevated that it was almost impossible to catch his words; but he stretched out his hands towards them, and pronounced the benediction, imploring that the blessings of Heaven might rest upon them. His heart was in his words, and he looked down, as well with affection as with authority, upon the people who acknowledged him as at once their prince and priest.

One of the cardinals then threw down a few "indulgences," for which there was a complete scramble. The people arose from their knees with lighter hearts and brighter eyes; the peasantry with a quick step returned to their abodes, and the mother joyfully led away her children, who had probably, for the first time, been blessed by the Pope.

The church of the Augustines is in the Via Augustini. It belongs to the monks of that name,

who have their principal establishment here. It is an extensive and not unornamental structure. The revenues are very rich, arising chiefly from offerings of the worshipers at the shrine of the Virgin. At some time or other you will find the various churches deserted, the congregation being reduced to the curate or the sacristan, but it seems to be a continual festival in the *Chiesa di Augustini*. Aged men and well-dressed women are ever arriving or retiring, and a goodly number are always to be found on their knees. The reason is, that the church is peculiarly sacred to the Virgin, and wonders have been worked, it is said, by her interposition.

The church is interesting, as it contains many monuments and pictures; the interior of the dome, also, being admirably painted. But the object which is sure to attract the especial notice of the stranger is the altar of the Virgin. There are several others, but that appropriated to her is the most frequented and remarkable. Placed upon it—the altar being the pedestal—is a well-executed marble statue of the Virgin. It is clearly not of a modern date; it bears the usual likeness, not the “*madre addolorata*” that lives in the canvas of Guercino, but bland and encouraging. The drapery is good and correct; but we find upon it

several valuable offerings of gold, silver, and gems. The bosom is covered with a splendid diamond necklace, and earrings of the same costly stone depend from the ears, presented, doubtless, by some wealthy or noble house.

I spent a long time looking at the worshipers in this temple. As soon as they enter, they at once repair to the Virgin's shrine, make their obeisance, repeat their prayers, and conclude with an affectionate kiss upon the foot of the statue, at the same time dropping a piece of money into a small box near at hand. It is singular with what reverence they approach; it could hardly be more if the Virgin herself were present. The crowds that frequent this place, and perform their devotions here, may be judged of from the fact that their kisses have actually worn out the original foot (the right), and the monks of the Augustinian fraternity have been under the necessity of replacing it with one of brass, the latter metal being probably the most abundant in the convent.

This would hardly be believed, but is a fact, and incontrovertible. It is not the only statue which has in part disappeared by the frequent kisses of the faithful—so singularly sincere are they in this *lip-service*. This was a caution equally

wise and justifiable, that the coffers of the church might not suffer diminution, and that the part so sacred might not cease to communicate its virtue.

The contemplation of this spectacle is calculated to raise an inquiry as to the nature and tendency of the Roman Catholic religion. Far be it from me to imagine that they have so far deviated from the path of truth, as to have engrafted upon Christianity pagan practices. I am sure they think the religion that they have had handed down to them too pure and too perfect, to require such anomalous aids; too simple, to be incorporated with superstition; and, above all, too true, to suffer any admixture with error. But I will simply detail what I saw—what is always to be seen in this church; and doubts, I fear, may be entertained whether these reflections are fully borne out. To accuse them of idolatry, I should be sorry. I will mention only patent facts; and if such a charge may be at all hinted, it is their fault, not mine.

The act of worship was undoubtedly paid to an image, a correct resemblance of the human form, chiselled by human art. Part of that image was reverently kissed. Orisons were breathed, sins confessed, and offerings were given. They bent before it, apparently telling the secrets of their

hearts, asking forgiveness, pleading their requests, or demanding strength. Their eyes were fixed upon the moulded marble; to the spectator disclosing the state of the heart fully as well as the language of the lips. Submission, dependence, entreaty, were legibly written there. Looking to it, it seemed as though it was deemed cognisant of their thoughts, capable of appreciating their service. The worshipers also, no doubt, retired with hearts easier and consciences lighter.

It may be said that none of that worship rested on the image, that it flowed from the type to the prototype, that it only represented a being to their minds in another place, and that, consequently, they are not justly chargeable with the act of idol-worship. Unquestionably to the educated and the learned practices so gross and indefensible cannot be imputed. I cannot for a moment imagine that the mind enlarged by study, or enlightened by prayer, would condescend to so puerile a practice. But with the great majority, the ignorant and unreflecting multitude, were these distinctions present? Religion to them has been ever one of sensible images, and probably spirituality has never influenced their worship. When they invoke the statue, it is a question whether their thoughts are

not circumscribed by its canopy. In the pomp of dress, in the glare of gems and gold, with the attending priests, and all the other parts which come in to arrest and engage the mind, did their thoughts at all wander beyond the marble representation of the human figure before which they knelt?

The fame of the statue is very great, and upon festival days no church in Rome has a more numerous congregation. They are not confined to persons residing within the parish, but the religious from various quarters of the city attend. The appearance of the church is very peculiar. Upon the lower part of the walls, the backs of the doors, and, in fact, upon every available space, offerings or testimonials to the Virgin of some sort or other are placed. In many cases these are hearts made of thin plates of silver, and in others are well-executed paintings of various curious scenes. As I was looking at both with an examinative eye, I ventured to ask a priest who happened to be near what they meant. He at once answered, that they were presented by persons who, suffering either by sickness or accident, had vowed something to the "*Santa Maria*" during their illness or danger, and upon recovery there attested the fulfilment of their

vows.\* The priest remarked that the persons had been cured or healed by “the intercession” of the Virgin.

The pictures were sometimes grave, sometimes grotesque, but, I have no doubt, were suggested by facts. (I should have mentioned that they are generally small.) Here you might see an unfortunate mason tumbling to the ground—“*vires acquirens eundo*”—from a lofty building, the ladder having given way; here a poor driver with his leg under a heavy waggon, the vicious horse alternately elevating his legs, and looking as if he would never stop till he had dispossessed himself of the vehicle piecemeal. Again, you might discover a ship tossed in a tempest, the sea all surge, and the men, like true Italian sailors, not guiding the helm or trimming their bark, but pale with terror and on their knees. Then, from the chapter of accidents to that of sickness: you might behold a poor patient recumbent in bed, bottles and pills in abundance, with features deeply dyed with gamboge or yellow fever. Rencontres with brigands are also to be found; guns making fearful destruction, and stiletos sticking to the hilt, where those heartless inhabitants of the forest

\* Called “*ex voto* pictures.”

or the mountain had left them. A person at first sight would be inclined to think half of them incurable ; but the greater the peril, the greater the honour to the church of the Augustines.

These, accompanied as they always are by more or less *scudi Romani*, are always welcome to the brotherhood. They are at once unquestionable evidences of their patroness's power, and proofs of the worshipers' gratitude. I have observed that these are never taken down ; and where there must be a rivalry among so many churches, since a sort of miraculous power is thus arrogated, the priest of the fane evidently looks up with pride to these honourable records.

These singular offerings are not confined to this church, but are to be found in many others. This church of the Augustines is in the neighbourhood of the post-office, and not far from the Corso.

## CHAPTER VII.

PROCESSION OF THE CIRCUMCISION.—ESPOSITIONE DELLA SANTA VIRGINE.—A WOODEN IMAGE IS BORNE ALONG.—CLERICAL CONVERTS.—PROBABLE ORIGIN OF THE PROCESSION.—PROCESSION OF THE HOST.

A PRINCIPAL part of the religious mechanism of Rome is the procession. As the name imports, it consists of a crowd of ecclesiastics and laymen, who make a progress through the city upon certain occasions with great pomp and circumstance. That of the host is common to other Catholic countries as well as Italy; but upon certain anniversaries these solemn processions peculiar to Rome take place, in which either a sacred banner, statue, or relic is borne along. They are numerously attended by both priests and people: by the latter this is esteemed as much a duty as attendance at church. The priests lead the front, bearing in a sacred band whatever the Church sends into public; they all wear their surplices and vestments. The

people go generally uncovered. They are ordered by the Church for the special purpose of keeping religion alive among the people, as well as to impress them with the importance of their spiritual guides. Frequently, on these occasions, an eloquent monk or curate ascends a rostrum, and addresses with great vehemence and fervour his moveable congregation. Whether one wills it or not, he must become a listener, as the crowd for the most part blocks up the street. However, there is no fear of falling asleep, as drones are excluded from this office, and the address is generally energetic and short.

It was on the Circumcision, January 1, 184—, that my progress in the *Strada de due Marcelli* was arrested by the procession of the day. It was headed by twelve priests, apparently not above the rank of rector, in their officiating dresses. Then came some religious attendants, or Church officers, bearing a painting of the Virgin, and behind them a black crucifix of moderate dimensions. Some large wax candles were also carried, although in the face of day.

As soon as the whole group had turned the corner of the *Collegio di Propaganda Fede*, the person with the picture of the Virgin drew near,

and they stopped: a table which they carried was arranged as a temporary pulpit, which a priest having ascended, he began to address the multitude. My knowledge of the Italian at the time was not very perfect, but sufficient to observe the scope of his discourse, and to what subjects he drew the attention of his hearers. The manner of the preacher was unquestionably sincere, as it was warm; his voice firm and commanding, and his action theatrical to a great degree. The Virgin was held on his right hand; to it during his discourse, with all vehemence and earnestness, he pointed. "*Santissima Maria*" was the theme, the beginning and the ending of his address, while far behind, unmentioned and unnoticed, was the crucifix. As he urged the topic of repentance, and pointed out the fitness of the day, commencing a new year, for reformation and amendment, he dwelt little upon the name of God, but that of the Virgin repeatedly occurred. "*Santissima Maria,*" ever and anon, in the language of the sweet south, fell on the ear from the not inharmonious voice of the speaker. The name of "*Gesu*" was but once or twice during the whole time mentioned. To the Virgin he pointed while he bade them date a new life from this period; to her he pointed while he asked

them to hope for the happiness of heaven. Upon her he turned his eyes, full and significant as they were, while bewailing the sins and guilt of his hearers: he invoked her protection, or implored her intercession. And as he concluded with a blessing that they might improve in Christian perfection, and attend the duties of the Church, to the picture he looked affectionately, imploring that that blessing might be confirmed.

The effect of this address upon the hearers was the usual one upon like occasions. Some appeared to take what he said to heart, and to profit by the occasion; while others hurried off to their occupations, right well pleased that the preacher had made such short work of it. It seems to be hardly possible to impress with seriousness the younger part of an Italian auditory. On these occasions they look like chained antelopes; but the more staid and elder part appear to regard the business with due decorum and becoming spirit.

Having received these impressions from those around me, I observed the speaker suddenly close his harangue. He descended from his temporary pulpit. The crowd dispersed, and the priests took their former place—leading the way. The picture of the Virgin was carried before them, and the

crucifix, as usual, took up its place behind. They moved on, and passed from my view, to address in some other street the populace of Rome.

It was about the middle of March, when the days at Rome begin to assume the heat of our summer,—and this particular, no less than the entire absence of those easterly winds so severely felt at home, convinces us of the genial climate of the south of Europe,—that I was on the look-out for one of the chief processions which annually takes place. It was kept holy-day. The people were arrayed in their best clothes. The *scultore* laid aside his fustian suit, and *il pittore* his bedaubed garments, each bearing indications of their respective professions; while many of the peasantry were to be seen in the streets—the men with their tawny visages and slouched hats, and the women equally dark, but set off to the best advantage with the white head-dress, gaudy stomacher, and bordered gown. Ponderous earrings and brooches shewed that their condition was not bad, even though the material were pinchbeck. It was easy to distinguish the citizen from the country women; the former are quite fair, the narrow streets and lofty houses keeping off the sun's rays, and serving to preserve their complexions. The windows of

the houses were thrown open, from which depended draperies of various designs and hues. Curtains and carpets, dissimilar in length and pattern, undulated in the breeze. One might have thought every house a haberdasher's shop, and that a ruinous competition was going on amongst them.

Every window was open, and in many cases already occupied; the persons in them displaying by their uneasy motions and anxious looks, how much alive their curiosity was. Several false alarms were given, as a more than usual crowd appeared, or a cardinal's carriage rolled along the stone-paved streets. On these occasions the beauties of modern Rome disclosed their dark eyes and darker tresses to the passenger, as they leaned out to catch the first glimpse of the expected pageant.

From the appearance of the city, the gay dresses of the crowd, and the no less novel draperies of the houses, combined with the attention universally displayed, it seemed as if all parties united to do the highest honour to some sovereign prince or national benefactor. It suggested to me the idea of a triumph of old, which was wont to tread the way to the Capitol, when the matrons or the daughters of Rome cast flowers in the path of the

elated victor. Probably the houses wore this very same appearance on those great days of ovation; and as the procession passed, it would only want the shouts that rent the air to complete the parallel. One would have thought, from observing the multitude, that they regarded it as an evil of very serious magnitude if it should escape unnoticed. They do, indeed, conceive that a salutary effect ensues from partaking in these services of the Church, just as the lower orders of the Irish attend every funeral in the neighbourhood, thinking it to be a meritorious duty.

After due delay, at length, I espied the procession coming from a street that connects the Propaganda with the Corso. Several men in blue calico habits led the way, and seemed to be the pioneers. A large and lofty image of the Virgin was borne upon a platform by a considerable number of men. Its weight was considerable, as they sweated under the load. It was, as I afterwards discovered, the altar-piece of a neighbouring parish church. The execution of the figure was good, and it wore that bland and patronising look equally illustrative of condescension and power. It was painted in gaudy colours—the eternal sky-blue and rich crimson, which are so misplaced in all the religious pic-

tures. There was a crown of tinsel upon the head—the emblem of empire; and the hands were stretched forth either in a posture of supplication or blessing.

To this image much virtue is attached; although not so durable as the several marble statues, it shares equally with them the confidence of priest and people. Although the *espositione* takes place but on one day of the year, the clergy do not hesitate to parade it through the streets as a sort of palladium in times of trouble or danger. Many interesting things are, no doubt, connected with its history—the cures wrought by it, &c.—could we only learn them. Be this as it may, it was borne with as much pomp, and guarded with as much care, as was of old the celebrated safeguard of Troy.

The priests in the procession were very numerous, consisting of rectors, canons, and curates. None of the fraternities were present. The priests wore their vestments—those with which they usually celebrate high-mass. I recognised some, also, with the yellow cloak shot with silk and gold, bearing upon the back a large impression of the cross. They also wore those small caps, which, because I suppose we usually associate them with children,

looked anything but ecclesiastical. Several of the cardinals' servants were present in their rich liveries, representing no doubt their masters, after the same manner that empty carriages are sent to funerals, while the proprietors eat or sleep at home.

Many young men walked by the side of the Virgin, in white dresses fringed with lace, which reached as far as the knee. These were probably young men about to be admitted into the priesthood, or who had already received some of the initiatory orders. They bore large flambeaux of wax, which in the bright sunshine emitted but a sickly glare. The great luminary, one would have thought, was enough to light them on their way, but like other things in their system, the gifts of Heaven are not sufficient, but its records must be read and interpreted by human light.

At the monasteries and convents the whole body arrested its movements as soon as the Virgin arrived opposite the door. The bearers then placed her fronting the religious edifice, while the priests commenced a short service, consisting of prayer, and concluded with a brief address. I observed that the whole company knelt and were uncovered; a custom with which, for the sake of

the people's feelings and prepossessions, it is necessary for even strangers in some degree to comply.

The spectacle was extraordinary, and I found it difficult to reconcile to myself that it was a Christian observance, or that the worship of the Supreme Being had any connexion with it. Such things at Benares or Pekin would not strike us with surprise, but to the Englishman they are marvellous, accustomed to modest Romanism at home. He is more inclined to conclude that it is another form of religion than that which noiselessly exists at Liverpool and London. However, the Roman Catholic religion would be the same everywhere, if they were possessed of the power. The provinces would "do as Rome does" if the priests were paramount. The latter, probably, look forward to the day when the Metropolis shall witness such processions as those I have described; and they think they have gone a step in the right direction, when, "*Proh pudor!*" some of the clergy of our Church, caught by the tinsel of statues, and fascinated by the splendour of ceremonies, have thrown away the Bible and taken up the breviary. The desertion is to be deplored, but the deserters are to be pitied. Such are always suspected in the

camp. Do they deserve a better fate in the Church? The "marks" of a true Church have called them away to Rome. The "mark" of truth is simplicity; it only becomes suspected by being buried under a load of observance and ceremonial.\* They can only bear what is old and honoured by time: like those who make collections and museums, they can admit nothing but antiques. But how old is the procession and veneration for images? Not coëval with Christianity, nor to be found in the primitive Church. Centuries had passed away, *the religion had become old*, before the Italians revived those obsolete customs of their pagan progenitors. Then age after age added something to the body of the Church, as it suited the expediency of the times or the invention of the Popes, till we see it deformed and defaced as it is to be found at Rome.

When the service was concluded at the monastery, the procession was again in motion, and passed down the Corso, every moment adding to its numbers. Every individual whom they met removed at once his hat, and remained uncovered until all had passed on.

\* To it we may apply what is said of beauty:—

“Beauty when unadorn'd, adorn'd the most.”

It was impossible for me, as I beheld this religious spectacle, to refrain from comparing it with some of the ceremonies of other climes, upon which the light of Christianity has not so deeply penetrated as to remove the darkness which involves the mass of their inhabitants. In the case before me, as in those to which I allude, an efficacy or virtue seems to accompany, or to reside within, the image. It was in both not only an object of interest but of duty to swell the numbers that attended, and to join in the showy rites in the progression from temple to temple. The respect in both cases appeared to a great extent to be similar, and we only required one or two additional circumstances to complete the parallel.

Let me put a case: suppose a native of the African wild, a stranger to the arts of civilization, and equally ignorant of revelation, and of its effects upon the European continent, were a spectator of the scene: it may well be asked what impression it would be likely to produce upon him. Himself accustomed to worship his rudely carved deities, or figures designed to represent the human form, with the priests ministering around the figure of the Virgin, with the people upon their knees near at hand, attention evident amongst all, devotion

in every eye, is it unlikely that he would regard it as a kindred religion? imputing the perfection of the figure, to which all seemed to pay homage, to improvement in the arts, and to the skill, of which he had numberless evidences around him, of the inhabitants of the country. Could it be inferred, or is it at all probable, that this ceremony of a Christian church would be likely to raise correct ideas in this person's mind, or approaching correctness, concerning the nature of that religion which has Christ for its author? Would he be at all surprised with its novelty, or bear away any impressions of its spirituality and purity?

In arguing thus, I am far from imputing idol worship to the multitude; but where the distinctions are so slight between worship and relative worship, it may safely be inferred that the practice is dangerous. If an untutored stranger, unacquainted with these rites, would recognise in them, apparently at least, a similarity to a certain extent with his own,—if sensible images are exposed to reverential gaze in both cases,—the tendency is of such a nature as to compromise the spirit of Christianity. The latter religion cannot hold any rite or doctrine in common with the former system. It is impossible they can kneel in the same temple.

They reciprocally forfeit each other's character, when one enters the confines of the other. Here is a true antagonism; and what is evidently false in heathenism cannot lose its character by being transplanted into an atmosphere of truth.

Perhaps the only rational account of the origin of the procession is to be looked for in national habits. Growing from age to age, they become part of a people's nature, and are less easily eradicated than diverted into a new channel. This has been the case here. Through those very streets where the Virgin and the saints are borne upon seasons of festival, in the palmy days of old Rome upon the "*fasti*," or at stated intervals, Bacchus, Jupiter, and Venus, or their household gods, were carried in solemn procession, attended by priests and followed by thousands of the people. Middleton mentions a pagan procession from Apuleius, which is not unlike a description of the present one.\*

"Mutato nomine de te fabula narratur."

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\* "Antistites sacrorum candide linteamine— ad usque vestigia strictim injecti. Deum proferebant insignes exuvias, quorum primus lucernam præmicantem claro porrigebat lumine, &c. Eas amœnus lectissimæ juventutis, veste niveâ prænitens sequebatur chorus, carmen venustum iterantes. Magnus præterea sexus utriusque numerus, lucernis, tædis, cereis."—Apuleius, quoted in Matthews' "Diary."

He speaks of their bearing forward the god, and tells us that a large number of persons of either sex followed with lamps and torches of wax, that they were distinguished by white garments, and that a graceful hymn was sung.

The modern custom of averting plague or disaster, by carrying the body of the tutelary saint through the city, has its undeniable prototype in the gods accustomed to be borne along when danger or defeat threatened the old commonwealth. The procession of the host is of common occurrence, and is a much more unpretending ceremony. When a person is dangerously ill the priest is sent for, who carries, with much state, the consecrated host to the house of the sick. A procession is formed, headed by one or more priests and several of the attendants of the Church, all clad in their officiating dresses. A few pious individuals generally join the solemn train. One of their number goes a short distance before with a bell, which he rings occasionally to announce the approach of the host. All within sound of this fall upon their knees, and remain uncovered until the priest and his attendants have passed on. This is a natural result of the belief in transubstantiation. Considering that the priest holds in his hands the real

presence, an act of homage and adoration is only what is natural, and to be expected.

But to this custom not unjustly may be attributed the careless and unrepentant lives of the Italians. The best of their days—the morning of life—is dedicated to pleasure; and while they follow the shadow, they renounce the substance of religion. A few words of contrition, and the receiving this sacrament, joined to the absolution of the priest, is reckoned as a passport to paradise. So clear is this that many, perhaps the majority, lead the life of a Nero, and look forward to have the black catalogue of years wiped away, like a Constantine, by an imposing, but momentary, rite.

## CHAPTER VIII.

PAINTINGS.—SUBJECTS CHIEFLY SACRED.—ST. ANTHONY PREACHING TO THE FISHES.—PICTURE OF ST. DENIS.—THE SISTINE CHAPEL.—THE LAST JUDGMENT.—THE MISERERE.

THE paintings in the Roman galleries have been often described. These collections abound with pieces of the most surpassing beauty, presenting nature under its various forms, such as it was never represented in any other country. The eye enjoys the exquisite feast; and in after years, when we are at home in our northern clime, the memory loves to recal and dwell upon the pleasure.

The arts are the last anchor of Italy. She has been shattered by the tempests of time, but the wreck that she has been left has been caused by the impotence, as well as the superstition, of her sons. Her muscular arm has become nerveless, and her masculine spirit has passed away under the domination of the Church. But bad government and wretched institutions could not divest the

Roman character of its excellence. Although the old road to fame was denied them, they are still first in that department to which the circumstances that surround them have inclined the bent of their genius. The only laurels that were left them they suffer no brows to wear but their own.

It is a pity that the painters have left us, with very few exceptions, religious subjects, and did not embody upon the canvas some of the glorious deeds of their great ancestors. Apocryphal subjects are to be found without number, but acts written upon their history's page have remained untouched under the custody of a Livy or a Cæsar. Monks in their sable costume, and saints undergoing the pains of martyrdom, are the usual products of their pencil. But they have not given us the eloquent head of Cicero, the dignified Cato, or the heroic conqueror of Carthage. To be sure the fault lies with the monastery and the priest. Such pieces as these would no doubt have been deemed heretical, and no excellence of finish or design could have rescued them from ecclesiastical censure. The painters painted for the taste of the times. The abbot or the prelate suggested the subject, and left the artist to imagine a St. Anthony or a St. Laurence. The Flemish school, not having been re-

strained by these rules, have left us many historical pictures, which prove their own taste, and have paved their renown. The Scripture history of course furnishes magnificent subjects. These, in many instances, have supplied noble examples, which are found in some oils and frescoes; but the saint was more in favour both with priest and people.\*

The churches contained originally the best paintings. The "Transfiguration," now in the Vatican, was an altar-piece. They have been, by degrees, purchased for private collections, or are to be found in either of the national museums, while their places were supplied by some less valuable pictures.

Paintings of the Virgin are the most numerous, and the crucifixion of course also occupies a prominent place. But it is extraordinary that the painter should adorn the sanctuary with some subjects, which, one would think, are not calculated to

\* The favour in which such pieces are held still prevails. I suggested to a clever artist to occupy himself with painting some stirring scene from Roman history, drawing his attention to some remarkable events of the times of the consuls and the Cæsars. He disregarded my representations, and mentioned a subject which had occurred to him, about which he was in raptures. This was St. Laurence at his martyrdom. What a fine subject, he remarked, for painting! — what scope for imagination! Now St. Laurence was roasted. He obviously alluded to his gestures upon the gridiron!

kindle devotion. I saw in a church near the Corso, called the Chiesa del Gesu, belonging to the Jesuits, an exceedingly well-executed painting of St. Anthony preaching to the fishes. I am sure it was for the moral the piece suggested, that it obtained a place upon the sacred walls; not that the painter or the priest imagined that St. Anthony actually enlarged upon a text of Scripture, and spoke an impassioned appeal to the inhabitants of the briny deep. He had long spoken to men in vain; he took this course to shame them into Christians. Be it as it may, St. Anthony stands upon the shore, while the sea breaks gently at his feet, each wave bringing a new shoal to his scaly congregation. His hands are stretched forth, and he has all the marks of a genuine and sincere advocate.

When Alexander arrived at the sea, he wept that the boundaries of conquest had so soon arrived; not so St. Anthony; more ambitious, he launches his weapons of persuasion against the hordes of the world of waters, imprisoning them by his arguments, and thus left the hero of antiquity in the shade.

Among the fish you can observe several sorts and species. The cod approaches with a beard like another capuchin, and plashes its neighbour to ob-

tain a nearer view of the holy man. The gurnet elevates its hard head, with its eyes fixed full upon the saint's visage; its character is easily known from the genuine brownish red which proclaims its identity. The salmon, with its silver scales, skims along the surface, and by the splutter that it makes seems to have had a sort of pharisaical devotion—a theatrical display to catch the eye of the preacher. Flat fish there are none. Probably turbot or sole would have discomposed St. Anthony; the spectators, too, might have supplied this deficiency. The larger “sea-beasts,” whales, or seals, have pursued their usual career in the ocean, but the smaller fry are innumerable.

Or it may be an *allegory*, for which we do not give the painter and his patron sufficient credit. Indeed it must be so, as St. Anthony must have known that water is a non-conductor of sound, and that fishes do not hear. It represents, then, the different classes of hearers—the conduct of the converts of his times.

The cod may be taken as the type of sincerity; its whole look and demeanour bespeak this. The gurnet is also the mark of a class. But I think the artist or the abbot would have us believe that the preacher could have but little effect there also,

its bony cranium resisting all his words; like many who listen to a sermon, and do not suffer the words to penetrate within. The salmon, it is obvious, indicates coxcombs; those who dress gaudily, and carry their worldly airs into the temples. The flat fish, deaf to his calls, manifestly points out men whom the cares or the pleasures of the world keep out of sight at the bottom. Again, observe the skill displayed. There are no eels listening; such slippery, tortuous persons hardly ever attend a sermon. Whales are absent at their usual avocations; such great sinners then, as now, no doubt, gave little heed to ministers. Viewed in this light, we may discover in this picture penetration and knowledge of human nature rarely equalled.

Near the Piazza Farnese, and nearly opposite the Collegio Inglese, stands a small church, which, though its ornaments are plain and unpretending, yet possesses some that are not a little singular. Over one of the altars hangs a large painting, which, by the freshness of the colouring, seems to be but of recent date. The subject is curious, and is sure to attract the observer, from perhaps more valuable pictures in its neighbourhood. It is a saint, who wears the dress of a prelate; but, extraordinary to relate, he has no head, at least upon his

shoulders. This, it would seem unnecessary piece of lumber, he carries in his hand. He steps as leisurely, and walks as erect, as if his former eyes directed him. But with the head, wrongly it would seem, called "the palace of the soul," all animation and activity have passed away. The eyes are closed, the cheeks pale, the lips set, the hair hanging languidly and loosely, making the whole appearance ghastly enough. It evidently hopes and fears no more. Reason, I must conclude, resides in the trunk. The head its owner carries in a manner very similar to a mother bearing her babe, and it is just as likely that the former should drop his charge as the latter. From this it would seem that the painting represents St. Denis after his martyrdom, who, the Romish legend tells us, after decapitation, took up his head and walked to a considerable distance. At the place where he lay down a church was founded to his honour. I fruitlessly endeavoured to explain this picture like the former, but in vain; none of my suggestions were at all available. We must therefore take the picture as it is, a record of a naked *fact*.

We know that such things are detailed in the legends of the Church, but it was more than I expected to find some of the most extravagant

rescued from the shelter of a learned language, and held up as a means to increase the reverence of the multitude. The nineteenth century with all its light finds such things renovated and restored; and the mixture of truth and error, fidelity and falsehood, to be found within the walls of the Eternal City, is, perhaps, the only institution which preserved its darkness and deformity through enlightened times, without receiving any of its salutary influences.

Although a party-wall only divides the palace of the Vatican from St. Peter's, and the Pope might without inconvenience avail himself of it for his devotions, we find under the roof of the former the private chapel of the Popes. This building is but of small extent, not being larger than one of our ordinary churches, and, what is extraordinary, scarcely more adorned. It is hard to think that the same mind that planned and finished St. Peter's directed also all the details of this simple edifice. Yet the fact is so. Michael Angelo was the presiding genius in this as well as the more gorgeous temple. But, although ornament is absolutely away, no marble pillars or massive monuments, nothing great in architecture or novel in design, yet in another way he has en-

riched it, and made it justly celebrated, namely, by the magnificent frescoes he has painted upon the walls.

The figure of the church is a parallelogram. It is entered by a fine lobby at the head of the *Scala Sanctæ*, the walls of which have some well-finished paintings, mostly representing the defeats which the Crescent sustained from the Cross. The greater part of the church, about two-thirds, is for the accommodation of the cardinals, plain benches covered with red baize extending around the walls; the remaining part is left for the public. During the Holy Week, when this church is particularly interesting, this space is crowded, and it requires punctuality to obtain admittance. It is not capable of containing more than three hundred. One half is assigned to the fair sex, while gentlemen group as they may in the latter.

There is no ornament whatever; the walls are perfectly bare; but Michael Angelo's pencil has inscribed upon them objects of greater interest and value. Upon the lower part of the church, occupying the entire wall, is painted in fresco the celebrated "Last Judgment." Upon both side walls tapestry and drapery are represented; and upon the tier above, the worthies of the Old Testament

and the prophets are delineated by the same master-hand.

My impression of the "Last Judgment" is that it richly deserved the praises which were lavishly bestowed upon it, but damp and time have made their inroads, and, added to these, want of care has told on this perishable mode of painting. The colours have become faded, and almost every figure in the original has lost considerably its freshness and effect. It is a "wreck," and seems to be no longer valued by the Pontiff, for an altar with a canopy has been erected against one part of it.

Every one, the travelled and the untravelled, is acquainted with the "Last Judgment," so that it is not necessary to say much concerning it. It represents our Saviour in the act of pronouncing judgment upon men, being risen from the dead—to those on his left, perdition; to those on his right, paradise. The figure of the Saviour is noble, full of dignity and power, but has none of the sweetness and benignity that Corregio and Carlo Dolci have given it. The figures and features of the condemned are strongly expressive of dismay and despair, while some of the other persons are calm and indicate no fear. There are demons intro-

duced, waiting to do their office. And the blue unearthly look of the element in which all the bodies\* are enveloped, fading into darkness palpable, as they rise from, or sink into the abyss, conveys to the mind a just notion of what the painter had in view. Such a subject no one could, or would, attempt except a Michael Angelo.

At the right, and slightly elevated, there is a small gallery for the Pope's choir. The number of musicians that form it are few, but *recherché* in their art, the very best voices that Italy can afford.

Upon three days during "the *santa settemana*" the *Miserere* is sung here, and all the *forestieri* repair to hear it. As but a limited number can attend, it is laughable to see the earnestness displayed to secure a place. Long before the appointed hour, three o'clock of French time, crowds

\* The figures, as originally painted by Michael Angelo, were naked. This gave grave offence to one of the cardinals, who used his influence with the Pope to have them clothed, which was eventually done, although against the remonstrances of the great painter. The latter had his revenge. He took an accurate likeness of the cardinal, and placed him in the piece amongst the damned. The cardinal complained, but the Pontiff, a man of taste, assured him that he would serve him if he could, but that his power did not extend *so far*.

of the *élite* of England and France stand with all imaginable patience on the *Scalæ Sanctæ*, while a file of the Papal grenadiers prevent for the time further ingress.

Beautiful women and fashionable men, it may be countesses and earls, stand side by side with priests and commoners, in one crowd with artists and invalids.

At length, the cardinals being seated, the doors are opened, and all rush forward in a general *mêlée*. Distinctions are lost and politeness postponed, the gentle sex shewing a vigour and spirit for which they commonly do not receive credit. Sometimes the Swiss guard is overset, and for some moments there is no little confusion. The ladies sit on the benches on the right, shrouding as usual their loveliness in veils, exhibiting nothing to the cardinals, but, perhaps, that most formidable feature, the eyes. The ambassadors' "boxes," shall I call them, are always well filled, whose uniforms and orders engage attention, and thus serve to occupy the time until the service begins.

The windows are closed and the church lighted with candles. Within the chancel is placed a sort of chandelier, with but two sides. It is of a pyramidal shape, on either side of which are placed

seven candles. This we shall find a significant instrument as we go along.

The Supreme Pontiff\* enters and is led to an elevated chair. He looked older and more infirm than usual; but the dim light, or the distance, made his cheek appear paler, as it threw its shadows strongly on the furrows of time. His spirits, however, appeared as usual, and his eye vivid as before.

Though the service is called "The *Miserere*," the fifty-first Psalm, commencing with the deeply solemn words, "*Miserere me, Dominus Deus*," is but a very small part of it. It occupies quite two hours: no priest or prelate took part, it was altogether chanted by the members of the choir. The words were throughout Latin, and embraced the prayers for the occasion, the Epistle and Gospel, together with the Psalms.

The singing was indeed magnificent. Sometimes all the voices were blended in unison, conveying to the ear a volume of sweet sounds, so beautiful, that, were I the best Catholic in the world, my admiration would have paralysed my devotion. Sometimes the deep bass of the singers came with thrilling effect; and at others, the clear

\* Gregory XVI.

and glassy tones of a single individual broke upon the stillness of the scene, like a spirit communing with our souls, conveying a message of mercy, or calling us to Heaven.

The deeply melancholy and self-abasing words of the *Miserere*, pleading for the sinner, and only claiming the heavenly attribute of mercy, were given with that taste and judgment which we might expect to find in the Pope's choir, and with a feeling that appealed to every heart, and accorded well with the present occasion, the day upon which the Saviour suffered—Good Friday. It was for this event that the whole service was sung. It was made, as it were, a service of sorrow, deploring the great event that had happened, and craving forgiveness for its cause—sin.

The whole ceremony is simple and touching. Throughout all is silent save the voices of the singers, which occasionally send forth their stream of harmony—like music heard in the night. At various but regular intervals during the service, a candle at either side of the chandelier was extinguished, till at last all were put out, leaving the place in stillness and obscurity. This is meant to represent the darkness at our Saviour's death. Just at this moment the choir unite all their

efforts, and the *Miserere* itself is sung. There was a solemnity, if not sublimity in the effect, not easily banished from the mind. No instrument of music broke upon the ear, but it was the human voice only, with tones of softer harmony and deeper melody, alternately pleading or lamenting. But finished and imposing in a high degree as was the whole service, we were listening throughout to an opera. Every one came, not for devotion, but to hear and admire. Effect was the great object aimed at. It had even the characters of the drama; the darkness with which the close was invested was theatrical and tragic. But, notwithstanding, it is the most excusable of the ceremonies of the Holy Week, and which leaves a more favourable impression than perhaps any other of the Roman ritual.

The *Miserere* is sung upon three different days\* of the Holy Week, of which the service on the last two is reckoned the best. The late Pope did not often attend, as the long sitting was too much for his increasing years and infirmities; but the entire body of the cardinals are usually present, together with their chaplains. In this chapel, at least on this occasion, there was none of that salu-

\* On *Giovedì, Venerdì, and Sabato.*

tation which we found to occupy so much time in St. Peter's. Their eminences at once turned to their books, and gave every attention to the service. Lambruschini was near me, and he seemed sincere and devout. At its conclusion the *capellane* twisted the trains of the cardinals with great rapidity. All quickly departed, and the Sistine Chapel and Michael Angelo's frescoes were wrapped in obscurity and silence.

## CHAPTER IX.

ADORAZIONE DELLA VERA CROCE.— THE SPEAR.— THE NAILS.—  
THE CRUCIFIXION.— THE SUDARIO.— STATE OF RELIGION AT  
ROME.—HER PROSPECTS.—ADORATION OF RELICS.—RELICS, IN-  
DIAN AND EGYPTIAN.—ABSURDITY OF THE PRACTICE.

AFTER the lapse of about half an hour, another ceremony, and of a more questionable character, takes place in St. Peter's. I had only heard of it in the morning, but I was resolved that I would see, if possible, the worshiping of the True Cross. Upon entering St. Peter's I observed two rows of small reading-desks, opposite which were cushions placed upon the ground: more advanced, and in front of the great altar, stood one by itself, as I saw afterwards, for the Pope himself. But few persons had assembled. I observed a few priests and several Italians, but the greater part of the English had gone to their homes.

It is said that the Church authorities would just as soon that this rite should not be witnessed

by heretical strangers, although there is no prohibition whatever. Indeed, the observance is so foreign from Christian worship that I do not wonder at it; for it affords a weapon which may with such ease be wielded against them, that they do well to practise it at the approach of night.

It suits well, however, with matters as they are at Rome, and amongst professing Catholics it is a rite the very highest of its order. To have worshiped the True Cross but once is reckoned as a great privilege; and to obtain a sight of the other sacred relics that are at the same time exhibited is considered to have the happiest effect upon the individual.

After some delay, the door that leads to the church from the Pope's apartments opened, and a Papal procession made its appearance; "*sed quantum mutatus ab illo!*"—shorn of all the splendour which is associated with it on these occasions. The mitres were all laid aside, in place of which they bore their usual small caps; and the glowing scarlet robe was exchanged for one of a pale purple dye, which is the mourning of the Pope and cardinals. The Supreme Pontiff led the way, followed by two rows of cardinals and their chaplains. With downcast eyes, and in solemn silence,

they walked up the great aisle, and took their places at the desks, all falling upon their knees. Upon each desk was a paper containing several prayers, suited, of course, to the occasion. It would be curious to see in what manner the relics are addressed, but to those "that are without" they are of course sealed books.

As soon as the Pope had rested himself, a lofty gallery, or rather balcony, to the left of the altar, and under the dome, was entered by two priests, arrayed in the richest vestments, a strong light also being concentrated upon the place. This leads from the apartment where these precious relics are deposited, and to these priests is assigned their care.

The priest who first appeared exposed the wood of the True Cross,—"*lignea di Vera Croce*,"—for veneration. The distance was very considerable, and it was impossible to form an accurate idea of it, and it was also enclosed in a case. There is not much of the wood,—that would be impossible, as nearly every country lays claim to a considerable share. The Romanist asserts that there can be no doubt as to its identity; that the Empress Helena herself brought it to Rome, and that it has continued in the custody of the Popes ever since.

It was wonderful to observe the veneration that was paid it. The head and the princes of the Church could not, apparently, have been penetrated with a deeper awe had they bent before the Saviour Himself. They fell down and knelt to the wood. Whether any other object, higher and holier, was in their thoughts at the time, I cannot take upon me to determine; but unquestionably at this conclusion we must arrive with regard to the crowd of uneducated persons that thronged the aisle.

After a few minutes the priest again appeared, and the relic that he exhibited for adoration was the spear with which our Saviour's side was pierced at his crucifixion. It could have been the head only, as the object was small. Strange, if after so many centuries time has spared aught of this memorable weapon! Stranger still, when He suffered death at the hands of his enemies, and his friends "all forsook Him and fled," that the Church should have been able to possess itself of this actual spear! The thing is impossible. But of course there are legends enough to account for it, detailing its preservation or presentation to the Bishop of Rome, which are never questioned or examined by any member of the Church.

After due time the spear disappeared, and the

guardian of the relics exposed another precious charge. These were some of the nails which suspended our Saviour to the Cross ! It was impossible not to feel some degree of awe even, in the presence of these supposititious relics. Anything connected with the name and history of that Almighty Being who consented to die for our sakes naturally impresses the imagination, which the time and place were calculated to heighten. But this feeling soon gives way to a feeling of sober and solid pity for men, who so far frustrate the design of the religion He brought into the world, as to convert its chief article into a nullity, and raise the atoms of perishable matter to almost an equality in worship and honour with Him who is the chief corner-stone.

Were these the very nails that had their part in the crucifixion? Did the Roman soldiers, who, at best, thought Christianity but a "pernicious superstition," instead of casting them aside, carefully preserve them? And are they so long exempted from rust and decay? For what purpose? Can they see or hear, appreciate the honour bestowed upon them, or aught avail the worshiper? Were these the actual instruments of death, and only kept as evidences of the guilt and enor-

mity of man, it were another matter. But when the head of the Catholic Church and the assembled prelates did them worship and homage, the heart sighs to find that truth meets such mighty obstacles in its progress. We blame the Cingalese for worshiping the tooth of Buddah; we say that they are buried in ignorance, and unhesitatingly call it idolatry. Are the distinctions very great here? The Romanist should look carefully, lest what will excuse the former will not justify the latter.

The last object brought in from the depository of the relics was the *Sudario*, or towel with which our Saviour wiped his face at his Passion. This is in a precious case, and enclosed in glass. Upon the *Sudario* remains the impression of the Saviour's features. The traces of a face are distinctly visible. What a delusion! and how carefully kept up! Unless the matter be explained by a special miracle—a *miracle for no purpose*—the thing is frivolous and absurd. Would the delicate texture of the *Sudario* receive the impression, or exist for the thousandth part of the time? It is hardly possible to think that the Pope can be sincere. No doubt this very relic is renewed, and fashioned in the figure it bears. It must be so, and can it be done without his knowledge? Perhaps it may be

otherwise explained. Every one must rejoice to hear that there is no alliance with deception.

It is very possible that relics, these among the rest, will be the rock that the Church of Rome will split upon. The vaunted infallibility will for awhile direct it, as it has done, amidst the dangers; but before increased knowledge, and in more enlightened times, examination will spring up, reason unlock its rivets, and deception vanish before truth.

The true plan to bring about these great ends would be to allow the perusal of the Scriptures. To this the Church of Rome will never assent; self-preservation is the first law of nature. In them it would be suicidal. At the present moment it is almost impossible to bring a copy of the Bible into Italy. At all the custom-houses the books of the traveller are examined; and at the frontier *dogana*, if the prohibited book is found, it will be retained for him until his return.

The Bible is forbidden to be read, and every other work capable of giving right notions upon religious truth has a prominent place in the "*Index Expurgatorius*," which is revised yearly by a congregation presided over by a cardinal. Improvement will only begin when the people shall assert their undoubted right to read and judge for themselves;

Reformation will, in truth, commence when they cease to see with other eyes, hear with other ears than their own; when they stand forth in the proud position they were designed to occupy, as reasoning creatures, by their Maker; and not, as they now do, allow *one* mind to think, act, and decide for them.

It is very possible these events may take place. The age is ripe for this already, and the States of the Church have frequently given indications that they are dissatisfied with Pontifical Government. Their present wise and enlightened ruler may indeed obviate much of this feeling. They have had, no doubt, much to complain of. Trial by jury is not to be found at Rome, and but little of personal right. The Church is independent of the laws. Altogether the system is ready for change. Probably the end of this century may find the Pope occupying his original position as bishop of the district of Rome, and its worship purified by a movement arising within its own bosom.

The adoration of the wood of the Cross by the Pope proves what are the sentiments of the Church of Rome in this matter, and the doctrines upon this subject that it would inculcate. Plain it is, that these sentiments have suffered no change. The same

creature-worship,—the same respect to inanimate beings,—which characterised the dark ages, subsist in those of greater light, when knowledge has advanced with rapid footsteps, and science unravelled many intricacies in things hitherto unknown. Rome exhibits a curious spectacle: while the world has advanced in the perception and the practice of truth, she alone has retrograded. She stands like a vessel moored on a leeward coast, having directed her course by obsolete methods or by the stars, while the pilot that grasps the helm looks upon the compass that would guide her aright as an heretical discovery—as some instance of the black art. But the clouds will burst upon her, and the storm beset her path upon the ocean, when her strength may probably be tried, and the cables found unable to resist.

In fact, Rome as a nation exists more by the sufferance of the European potentates than by any power of her own. How long she may keep the equilibrium in the balance of power,—though it be a doubt now whether she could much influence the scale,—it is hard to say; and we have had instances to prove that a Protestant nation is not requisite to give her the *coup de grace*. It seems, at all events, to be clear that she takes no good way

to prolong her existence, as a politico-religious power, by maintaining practices equally opposed to reason and foreign to truth. Such an unwise course has not unfrequently been the prelude to the destruction or the decay of empires.

“*Quem Deus vult perdere priùs dementat.*”

In the face of these things it is a lamentable fact that Christians, and clergymen, have been false to their first love, and allured by the attractions of Rome. In accepting the system that they maintain, they must accept it all; and how can men of studious or inquiring minds reconcile to themselves the adoration of relics? The pure and undivided worship of God once influenced them. If they are good Catholics, they must share it now with his creatures. What are its foundations in natural religion? None; except what fear without reflection may suggest. What are its proofs from revealed? Absolute and implied prohibitions. Moses, going upon Mount Nebo, and dying there, by the express command of God, the children of Israel being ignorant of his sepulchre, seems to have taken place for the very purpose lest they should consider his remains sacred, and attach a religious value to them. Joseph, if he deemed relics worth

a thought, would have bequeathed his own to his race; but he gave commands only concerning “his bones” and burial. When Elisha held a piece of Elijah’s mantle as he mounted to heaven, it would have been a desirable relic; but it is never afterwards mentioned. The contents of the ark—the manna, &c.—were deposited, not for worship, but to crush infidelity, and as incontestible evidences of the goodness of God to them.

If a thought were to be bestowed on relics, if their worship were to form a stone in the arch of the Church which the Apostles founded, instances or precepts upon the subject must be found in the writings which they have left us, and their own conduct would of course be influenced by such a feeling. But at John the Baptist’s death, whose eulogium our Saviour Himself pronounces, did they, who must have valued it more than all others, divide his body among themselves, as a treasure for the future church? The inspired account does not, I think, favour such a supposition: “and his disciples came and buried it.” When St. Stephen was slain, who spake with such ardour and inspiration, that “his face shone as an angel,” was there anxiety displayed by his followers to have a limb, or an ear, or a nail—some of his blood, or some

of his garments? Did the spirit which actuates the Romanist actuate them? The Evangelist tells us that nothing of the sort occurred, but that they took him forth, lamented, and buried him.

At the death of the Saviour, when his disciples imagined that it had destroyed their hopes, when Joseph of Arimathæa came and begged of Pilate his body, what was his purpose? Was it that of the Church of Rome—to preserve it as a relic? Hear again the unerring monitor: “He took it, and buried it in his own new tomb, hewn out of a rock.” Thus clear it is that such a worship never entered the thoughts of the primitive Church, or occupies a line of the apostolical writings. The practice arose only when the source of truth became polluted, and in obedience to the maxim, since widely acted on, that man can facilitate or improve the method of salvation pointed out by its Divine Author.

It arose, also, from a spirit of rivalry. The pagan systems had their images and relics, and why, in the opinion of its patrons, should not the Church of Rome have theirs? Such an opinion prevails in most religions, except in that whose origin is from above. The Mussulmans have their stone of the Caaba and the tomb of the Prophet,

which receive the veneration of thousands of his followers. The Buddhists have the tooth of their founder. There are relics in the Brahminical temples; and recently, in Pompeii, several mummies were found in the temple dedicated to the Egyptian worship, which we may calculate to have been the pontiffs of their service, who, no doubt, had their votaries in abundance. The Indian tribes of America have their amulets, which are of the nature of relics. The imposing system that existed in Egypt of old was chiefly a relic-worship; witness the host of ibis, scarabæi, and other sacred animals which have been found. They are all alike the marks of a false worship. The Supreme Being, who is the object of adoration, is of a spiritual nature, and those "helps of devotion," or whatever else they may be called, only serve to make men more unlike Him, and to degrade the impression that He leaves upon every breast.

In the case of the Roman relics, how puerile to think that they can benefit those who venerate them! When life is at an end, and Death seizes on the body like a remorseless creditor, surely he receives it deprived alike of volition and power. His handmaids—corruption and the worm—are the

only emblems of authority there. The senses are mute, the voice is still, the heart is cold. How do the relics of St. Francis or St. Paul at all differ from any of the fleshless occupants of the neighbouring cemeteries? Can either hear or heed? Do we require to be told that Death's cold ear is as inaccessible to prayer as he is himself to pity? Then why keep and reverence them? Because "all passes from the type to the prototype," perhaps. But would such a worship to the bodies they relinquished on earth be acceptable to St. Paul or St. Francis? If they are influenced by the same feeling as the angel in the Revelations, which of course they are, in the possession of bliss they would reject such approaches, and with a similar answer. They would be rebels in the courts of Heaven, if they could suffer it for a minute. And yet this is the principle from which it flows. They conceive that by paying attention to the bodies of these holy men, they will be pleased and intercede for them above; whereas sensations the very opposite must take place, as, the purer and more spiritualised the mind, the more jealous and disposed it is for the worship and service of the one and only God.

## CHAPTER X.

RELICS : OBSERVATIONS ON THEM CONTINUED.—ST. APOLLONIA.—  
ST. STANISLAUS.—PORTABLE RELIC.—SCALÆ SANCTÆ : REMARKS  
CONCERNING.—ST. RANIERI, PISA.—SANTA CLARA.

NEARLY every church in Rome has its peculiar relics. They are the holy things which seem to give a character to the edifice ; and are like the spirits which were supposed to occupy the temples and oracles of old, making every spot of ground sacred, and inaccessible to the profane. Like them, too, they are hid from view, lest they should lose in public estimation by being too common, as we conceive higher opinions of a face that is veiled than of one uncovered and founded upon that universal sentiment, well known in every age, that objects of a sacred or mysterious character have the notions that are entertained concerning them cherished and increased by being seldom seen.

Every church is dedicated to some saint, who is its patron, or, as the Italians write in each “ sacred

invitation ” on the festival day, “ *nostra protettore* ;” but the relic is the saint present in the body, the virtue of which alike preserves the building and protects the congregation. If they were exposed as mere emblems of mortality, perhaps the practice would be excusable ; preaching the sermon to thoughtless minds of life’s uncertainty, and pointing out death by its sad and undeniable records ; warning men, while they glide on the stream of pleasure, that time has its limits ; or, like the slave in the victor’s chariot of old, amid the spring of life, sternly pointing out its winter and decay.

But a feeling the very reverse of this has placed them on every altar at Rome. A virtue, as it were, animates them, and if it does not give life and motion to the shrivelled skeleton, it at least invests it with the attribute of power. Their efficacy is great in healing, or in exerting various other influences. Formerly miracles were worked by relics, and the practice, though not so common at the present day, is by no means given up. At Leghorn, within the last three years, during the prevalence of continued dry weather, the entire body of a saint was carried in procession, in hopes that he would afford them plentiful showers. At Milan, during the plague, St. Carlo Borromeo was

also borne with great solemnity, with the hope that he would be of use to them in abating the pestilence.\*

In the eyes of priests and people they are equally valuable. It is said that in their troubles or trials the latter will bend before the relic for hours in silent meditation, waiting for the answer to their wish, like the mother who demands of the ocean her drowned child. I have myself seen them rise from their knees after prolonged prayer, and approaching reverently impress a kiss upon the sarcophagus where the body is laid, deeming it half profanation to touch it, and looking when it was done as if they had achieved a triumph.

Where a valuable relic, the body of a saint for instance, is exposed on the *feſta* of the Church, not unfrequently a priest ſits in the immediate neighbourhood, leſt probably the too great zeal

\* This, however, having taken place in the year 1629, is not a very modern inſtance. "His body, enclosed in a crystal ſhrine, formed the moſt precious treaſure of the cathedral. The ſhrine was borne through the ſtreets, ſurrounded by the prieſthood, the nobles, and the magiſtrates, barefoot and in penitential dreaſſes, and followed by a multitude; and for a moment all minds were abſtracted from their own and the common danger to gaze upon the mitred ſkull, viſible through its transparent covering, whoſe eyeleſs ſockets and grinning jaws might have ſeemed to mock the hopes ſo fondly and vainly entertained."—*Lib. Ent. Knowledge.* Vide Ripamonte.

of a votary might prompt him to pilfer; or lest his mode of address might not be consistent with that mysterious respect which the mighty dead inspires. I have seen this sacred watchman at Pisa, and I was at first led to think that an excess of faith induced him to keep his ward, lest, when the marble where the saint slept had been removed, he might make himself wings and flee away.

On these occasions of exposition how ghastly is the spectacle, and, one would think, how little likely to inspire devotion! The skull with its eyeless sockets looks grim and horrible, while the brows are dark and damp with time. The slender arms are extended, sinewy and shrivelled; while the fingers, long and lank, black as those of a mummy from the pyramids, are clenching a crozier or a cross. The ribs are bare, exhibiting the place where the heart beat, like a ruined fountain in the wilderness, or the altar of an old temple, desolate and dismantled. The fleshless limbs are extended and composed, having no traces of energy remaining; and the whole frame has that aspect of languor, as if it sighed for the tomb. It is but a relic indeed—the relic of mortality, and the remnant of the worms' feast! We feel, as we gaze on the cold and inanimate object, that we are in the

charnel-house, and not in the church. How extraordinary that man can be induced to reverence decay—to worship the worm! The beings who have been the objects of adoration in all ages are invested with majesty and power; but here is nothingness respected, and dust deified.

These eastern nations who prostrate themselves before the great luminaries,—the sun by day, or the stars by night, the one the source of light and life, the others twinkling in beauty and power,—we can hardly imagine so corrupt and culpable as this. It is not improbable that reason unaided should prompt them to acknowledge the benefits received from these magnificent objects, and particularly in these climes where both shine with increased splendour.

For the Greeks or Romans even, some plea may be urged, as they bent before the fair proportions of the human figure, consummately carved in marble by the hand of a Phidias or Praxiteles: their taste may have been carried to extremes, and their admiration end in devotion, but even these slender excuses cannot be urged for those who on their knees pour forth their petitions, or place their dependence upon the remains of the frail form saved from the sepulchre or gleaned from the grave-yard.

Unquestionably they have much to answer for, and their guilt is considerable, who can give the people a head or an arm, a saint's skeleton or a skull, instead of the great truths—simple but sublime—of the religion the object of which was to smooth the path of life and to save them for the next. It is cheating the heart in the objects that are most dear to it, and is, in the truest sense, presenting them with a stone when they ask for bread.

The church of Santa Maria en Trastevere\* has a goodly collection of relics. Among them is to be found the head of St. Apollonia, who is the patron-saint of those who suffer from "*il malade di dente.*" There is a fine painting of St. Apollonia in the Corsini collection by Carlo Dolci; and a sweeter face was never painted by the same master. It is a favourite subject with the artists at Rome, and many of them find their way into this country. I should much prefer Carlo Dolci's head to that which is laid up in the church, although the former be valueless in the priests' eyes. The features are Roman, beautifully rounded, and full of expression; the forehead fair and high, the mouth small, the whole air voluptuous. But the

\* *Transtiberim*, beyond the Tiber; the west quarter of the city.

chief feature are the eyes, soft as the evening star, with more than its brightness. With all these accomplishments Apollonia met with the fate of martyrdom. I cannot assign the reason why those afflicted with tooth-ache fly to her for succour. If the picture is a fair representation of the original, she would be more likely to give the heart-ache, than cure any other.

A small church on the Quirinal Hill, or, as it is now called, Monte di Cavallo, possesses the body of St. Stanislaus, a noble Pole, who sacrificed and suffered much for the Church. The body is contained in a handsome marble sarcophagus, which at the same time forms the altar of the church and the tomb of the saint.

In the various churches throughout the city bodies and garments are reverently laid up. There is scarcely one without its relic treasure. But the basilicas of St. Peter's and St. John Lateran's stand at the head of all others in this respect. St. Peter himself is said to repose in the former, and in the latter St. Paul is enclosed in a silver bust. If all be true that is affirmed concerning relics, the saints, I fear, would cease to be bipeds, or must have been monsters such as we have no record of now. Three or more legs, and as many arms as

Briareus, are often assigned to one individual; and, what is of more moment, there is undoubted evidence of their having two heads, one probably possessed by a monastery at Rome, the duplicate being in Austria or Northern Italy. If the fingers or toes be put together, they will be far more than nature ever gave to one man; and the garments of a single saint, to which sanctity is assigned, will be found to exceed in number and variety the wardrobe of the most extravagant gentleman of our time. Nothing would be more useful than a catalogue of relics in all Catholic countries, if information might be afforded to make it; it would soon appear that the "pious fraud" is continued still, and is principally at work in relics.

Rome is the great emporium for relics. This celebrated city gives them their sanctity. There is either an office or congregation where the value and virtue of such things are assigned, but in most cases they come from the Holy Father himself. To Catholic princes they were the choicest presents; and prelates or priests, visiting the capital of the Church, are sure to bring away with them a case containing some canonised bones. They are well paid for, and perhaps it is the only traffic which is carried on with real activity within the walls. So great has always

been the demand, that the catacombs—the great cemetery—are said to have been well nigh exhausted. Once that they come from the genuine channel, sealed and certified by infallibility, they are never afterwards questioned. At the custom-houses opposite the French coast no commodity is found with more certainty in the portmanteau of the travelled priest, than a limb or an arm of some of the martyrs of Italy. It reminds me strongly of some quacks, who have made easy fortunes by the sale of medicines, advertised to cure all diseases, but which in the end turned out to be brick-dust, or some equally innocuous material.

I may mention here an incident that will be hardly credited. The relic is sometimes ground down (this application of a bone-mill is novel) and made into a paste, of which small round cakes are formed, bearing the impression of a cross, a crosier, the head of an apostle, or the figure of a lamb. This is carried about the person, and is laid upon the table where he performs his matins or vespers. It is, I believe, especially for the priests, one of whom shewed a cake of this nature to a friend of mine, and explained its properties. I myself also subsequently had an opportunity of seeing one.

I shall conclude this account of relics, already too prolonged, with a description of one of the most curious and interesting to be found at Rome—the Scalæ Sanctæ at the small chapel near St. John Lateran's.

The “holy stairs” are, say the Church chronicles, the very stairs of Pilate's house at Jerusalem, which our Saviour ascended as he went to judgment. They were brought by miraculous means to Rome.\* These celebrated stairs have been in their present position for centuries, and are at the present day objects of as great veneration as they were in bygone times. They are composed of white marble, and consist of many steps. The devout Roman Catholic must ascend these steps, invested with so holy a character, only upon his knees. I have seen numbers in this attitude, male and female, patiently mounting their way to the top. Thus to mount these hallowed steps is the highest penitential act, for which thousands traverse wide oceans and distant kingdoms.

Lest the number of pilgrims frequenting the

\* It is not quite clear whether they were brought miraculously, like the Virgin's house at Loretto, or were brought hither by the less ostentatious means of toil and labour.

sacred fane should wear out the steps by the constant attrition of their knees, they are covered with wood, an open space having been left at every step, through which the sacred marble can be descried. Hard as the stone is, this was no doubt absolutely necessary, pressed as they are from age to age by so great a number ; but perhaps it had looked more venerable if the traces of devotion were indelibly stamped upon it.

I did not think that the penitents, scaling the ascent in their painful and uneasy position, afforded either a religious or solemn spectacle. Some plethoric individuals were warm with the exercise, and a few modest ladies blushed deeply upon being discovered at the task. When the top is gained, the penance or service is concluded, as it would be a perilous undertaking to descend in the same manner. On either side there are common stairs of wood, from which the devotee takes his departure.

There is a box at the top, the usual accompaniment on all such occasions, which stands inviting whatever offering the person may be disposed to pay. At the completion of this exercise the person rises from his knees, and in most cases proceeds to look through the key-hole of a bronze

door leading into a small-ante-chamber. Curiosity induced me to perform this part of the ceremony. Great sanctity is evidently attached to the spot. Probably it represents a fac-simile of a room in Pilate's house, as upon the walls are written in large letters, "*Non est in toto mundo locus sanctior.*"

No doubt a certain awe would attach to those things which had been touched by the Saviour of the World; but it remains to be proved that they are meritorious to the individual, and, still more, whether they are the identical objects that had been pressed by his footsteps. That it is a mere imposition, a deception practised upon the multitude, no more question can exist than that the light shines.

Jerusalem, in fulfilment of prophecy, underwent the hard fate which was written in her stern sentence. The Roman eagle hovered over her walls, and the Roman soldier pillaged and profaned the altars of her temples and her domestic hearths. Vespasian and Titus so completely destroyed the city, as literally not to "leave one stone upon another." Houses, baths, and towers were involved in one common ruin; the fortifications were so completely overthrown, that the plough was driven

over the site of Jerusalem. It long remained waste and uninhabited—unoccupied by the unbeliever or the Jew. Amid this heap of confusion, amid the broken pillars, where the plan of the city and the site of every edifice was lost,—and history tells us how unsparing were the Romans in their pillage, particularly where revenge and hatred were the wild spirits that devastated the scene,—was it within the bounds of possibility that a particular stone or a certain structure could have been distinguished from the surrounding ruins, or have been preserved entire? Such a supposition will not stand the test of examination for one minute. It is one that is frivolous to entertain; and the person that can believe it, under such circumstances, would admit any absurdity, no matter how gross. The Scalæ Sanctæ were probably never twenty miles from Rome, excavated from the neighbouring quarries, and are the ingenious device of some prudent Pope or wily cardinal, who considered the finances an object as much deserving their attention as the promotion of the faith.

These relics, that have descended from ancient times like heir-looms in the succession of the Church, are probably the last things that would afford matter for doubt or inquiry to the Romanist

himself. Their origin is too remote, and the investigation attended with too much difficulty, for him to engage in it. It is true, also, that those things in religion which have antiquity upon their side are invested with peculiar sanctity. Like the ruins of an old abbey,—defaced, but honoured by time,—they are imposing and impressive. They are also mixed up with the character of his religion; and inquiry is at once checked, as he knows that if discoveries were made, it would wound the system, which is associated with his habits and thoughts in the most vital part. Such a thought never enters his mind, because he considers it sinful. For the laity, therefore, to examine, and to be convinced, is, I think, a forlorn hope. To wait for those who profit by the delusion to preach a crusade against such things, is more than can be expected from human nature. Yet the time may come when in this fruitful field a second Luther may reap memorable triumphs, and not inferior to his who has a deathless name throughout Christendom. He may find it, too, a more vulnerable part than that which shrunk beneath the heroic arm of the German monk.

The veneration of relics is not confined to Rome, but is spread over all Italy; in proof of which I

shall mention two incidents which came under my own notice at Pisa.

In the beautiful cathedral of that city, which has so many objects to arrest the attention, none of them is more striking than the sarcophagus on the altar to the left of the great doorway, which contains the body of St. Ranieri. Long ago he had been a bishop of Pisa, and in the time of her greatness and glory had administered the affairs of her church. He is called in the "*sagra invita*" "*Nostra protettore*," being thus the patron saint of the city. To him, in times of difficulty, the devout Pisan has recourse, and on occasions of danger, as well as in the hours of sickness. When he recommends himself to St. Ranieri he reckons all to be secure. The festival of this saint takes place upon, I think, the 4th of May.

The sarcophagus is marble, but the sides are glass, so that you have a complete view of the slumbering saint.\* The skeleton is entire, and after the lapse of so many ages the saint has managed to preserve himself very well. Flowers were strewed over the bones, and upon the skull, raised upon a

\* It was the festival day on which I visited the cathedral, and an exposition of the relics then usually takes place, so that it is probable the body is covered up at ordinary times.

cushion, was laid a chaplet of the same products of nature, the sightless orbs being turned slightly towards the multitude. The feet were cased in gilt shoes, and his crosier lay beside him.

It seemed extraordinary to me how such an exhibition could excite or command devotion; but it was evident that such was the case. Several women were in the immediate neighbourhood telling their beads in solemnity and silence, with eyes occasionally turned towards the potent saint—eyes which plainly spoke the reliance and the faith they reposed in him. They then concluded by impressing a kiss upon the cold case which contained his remains.

So valuable and holy are these relics esteemed, that a priest sits in the immediate neighbourhood, to see that no one injures them. It is possible the treasury of the church is also benefited by his presence.

You will find many of the Pisans called by the name Ranieri, as we perpetuate Bible names, and those of the apostles, particularly, are given to the members of Christian families. In like manner, the Pisans rank the name of their good bishop with the older, Luke, Matthew, and Paul.

At the church of the Dominicans, Via del Car-

mine, on the 3rd of May, is celebrated a festival in honour of Santa Clara. As to her history, I was not able to learn all the particulars, but she had formerly been either a nun of some order, or had ended her days by martyrdom. Her body was now in possession of the brotherhood. On the day in question the body was exposed in the centre of the chapel. It was contained in a square box, the top and sides of which were of glass, by which a complete view of the contents was obtained. The skeleton had fallen to pieces by time, and both skull and bones were entirely detached; but they were again arranged with care, in a peculiar order, according to the taste of the priest. The thigh-bones, crossing each other, were tied together with white silk ribbons; the ribs, feet, and arms were beneath, and over these relics of mortality was placed the skull, in an attitude that presented its sightless eyes towards the numerous congregation. Upon the skull was placed a wreath of white and red roses. It presented a curious union of ruin and beauty—the wreck of the human form, and the unrivalled sweetness of the flower!

What was the reason of the garland? perhaps to represent the freshness of her memory, and the fragrance of her name; but to me it told a different

tale. How often have we seen, amid scenes of gaiety, a fair forehead and raven hair adorned with a similar garland, where the heart beats lightly, and is unoppressed with thoughts of frailty or the future. A few years have passed away, and she is gone to her bed of death. It brought the two scenes together, as it were, or the one that was before me seemed to mock that which was past. It told me strongly and sternly of the fate that awaits us, and seemed to mock the objects we love and the enjoyments we took delight in. I was hurried from contemplating the form in the halls of pleasure to look upon it here, with its garland of roses, but upon a brow deprived of all flesh and beauty. As if to check my admiration, and to remind me of instability, the monitor before me said, "Look upon me now."

Santa Clara remained exposed to the worship and reverence of the multitude, and during the day numbers knelt at her shrine and paid their annual offerings. At six o'clock four priests entered the church, and stood at the four corners of the platform, and as they approached they bent the knee and made humble obeisance to Santa Clara. Their motives seemed to arise from the notion that they were in the presence of a being who could either

reward or punish them, and was capable of fully appreciating their acts. They then turned their faces towards her, and commenced a service in her honour, chanting throughout. The organ gave forth its thrilling peals, and the voice of the priest joined in unison, invoking the assistance upon them and the congregation of the puissant Santa Clara.

It was a melancholy scene. I could have understood it if it were an office for the dead. But to see the dust and ashes before me deified, reverence given to it, prayers offered to it, and its "dull cold ear" invaded with the soft sounds of music, the priest and the worshiper standing around—I could not but feel that human nature was degraded, and that the great Being, who pervades all things, was dishonoured and deprived of his inalienable rights. The creature was deified—the Creator forgotten.

When the organ had filled the church with a few more of its solemn tones, through whose aisles it vibrated with a full effect, the priests took each a handle of the platform, and, continuing the chaunt, advanced towards the door. They then proceeded, bearing Santa Clara through the street for a short distance, when they again entered the

door of the convent that was close at hand. The priests paused, and the eager multitude were permitted to take one more glance, the doors closed, and Santa Clara was conveyed to her box, or shelf, wherever her repose may be, to sleep if she may, after this periodical visit to the light, until another year ushers in her festival.

## CHAPTER XI.

RESPECT TO THE VIRGIN.—HER ALTARS AND PICTURES.—INSCRIPTIONS, — WORSHIP OF THE VIRGIN, — MIRACULOUS CONVERSION OF A JEW AT THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREA DEL TRATE.—BRONZE STATUE OF THE VIRGIN NEAR THE CHURCH OF SANTA MARIA MAGGIORE.—IL VOLTO SANTO.

AFTER a month's residence at Rome, a stranger, unacquainted with the religion professed there, would most probably conclude that the Virgin Mary is the deity of the Italians. The appearance of the interior of the churches, and many indications in the streets, would incline him to that opinion. In the former he finds various paintings of her, placed generally in the most prominent places, and not unfrequently statues bearing her likeness, or wooden figures richly attired. In the latter he observes, at the corners of most streets, or "*in triviis*," a bust of the Virgin with a small lamp before it, and some words underneath expressive of confidence or devotion. The altar of the Virgin has always the greatest number of

suppliants, while that upon which rests the emblem of salvation, the cross, has but a straggling worshiper. At the places for devotion\* in the streets, also, a devout person may be occasionally found on his knees, deaf to the noise around him, undisturbed by car or cavalcade, paying his orisons.

The days set apart in honour of the Virgin are very numerous, and are as much observed as the Sabbath, or probably more. The shops are closed, and to transact any business would be sacrilege. The street porter will refuse to carry the load of "*legnia*" or "*fascine*," with the excuse "*Questa giorno è festa, signore.*" The churches are all frequented, and vespers celebrated with much splendour; while the cardinal rolls along in his heavy vehicle to his own church, to take part in the service of the day, or to enhance it by his presence. The population wear their best attire, as we meet them in the thoroughfares. All—priest, citizen, and noble—unite in their homage.

The processions in honour of the Virgin are both more numerous and splendid than any others which take place in the city. We see pictures of her borne along, or her image; and the respect

\* Altar, I believe, is not the correct term for these; but there are several places for worship, marked either by an image or cross.

that is shewn to these is universal and unequivocal, while the priest recites a service, in which the Virgin's name occurs frequently. At the sermons in the churches, two-thirds of them are filled with praises or invocations of the Virgin. "*Santissima Maria*" falls upon the ear as frequently as the revered name of God does in our own liturgy. Sometimes the preacher points to her picture to enforce his positions, directing the eyes of his hearers there, where he endeavours to direct their hearts. It is the Virgin they have offended by their sins ; it is her they must invoke—she is to be their intercessor.

I have also observed that the altar dedicated to the Virgin in most churches, but particularly in the chapels of the monasteries, is decked with the gayest flowers of the season—the perfume of the rose mingling with the stronger odour of the incense. In these chapels, also, the pictures of the Virgin are the most numerous. In some we find the crowning of the Virgin by angels, in others the clouds painted under her feet. In one I saw an extraordinary painting, which proves the respect, or rather reverence, in which she is held. Upon the circular roof was painted, and evidently by a very superior hand, our Saviour and God the

Father, and between these, but far above them, exalted into the highest position, was the figure of the Virgin. If we are to interpret it, it would seem, that, as she occupied the chief position, she had the chief power. The three figures were similarly placed to the three prominent figures in Raphael's "Transfiguration." Our Saviour, who is raised above Moses and Elias, properly represents Him "who has all power in heaven and in earth."

The most favoured subject of the painters, past and present, is the Madonna. Raphael, Murillo, Carlo Dolci, the Caracci, have derived an immortality from transferring her to their canvas. In every studio at the present day, from the humble room in the Via Capuccini to the *salons* of the Condotti or the Barberino, we find the *Madre Adolorata* in number and variety. It is clear they paint for the demand. The supply would cease unless the customers were numerous.

Under the busts or figures of the Virgin, which abound throughout the city, a lamp is always lighted in the evening. This is for her honour, and for the purpose of pointing her out to the devotion of the passenger. The words written underneath vary, but are always highly laudatory, and gene-

rally consist of terms which should only be applied to the Supreme Being. It is frequently a single sentence: "*Madre di Dio, pregate per me.*"

In the Strada di Lavatore, there is a small statue of the Virgin, and underneath these words in Greek, Ἐλπίς ἐμοῦ. The purport of the words clearly discloses the position she occupies in the mind of the Catholic. David addresses God as "my hope." Christians may well address our Saviour after that manner, as his atonement supplies them with the hopes of happiness and salvation. But we find here the province and the privilege of the Saviour ascribed to her. In fact, she appears to them as superior to Him in authority and power, as a mother retains an influence over her child. They argue from earthly to heavenly things, and involve themselves in the difficulties which attend those who follow that practice in things to which they cannot apply.

The Scriptures declare that the being, of whom Christ was born after a manner altogether miraculous, was highly favoured among women, but there is nothing that can be construed as supporting her worship. She was a human creature, and did not lose that nature by being the chosen vessel of the incarnation. God, the Trinity, is to be

worshiped only. Adoration paid to anything else is idolatry.

The modern Italians, however, are like their ancestors, who had their choice of temples and of shrines, to pray in and be purified. It is not improbable the habits of their fathers have been transmitted with their blood, and have caused this pervading desire of exalting a female as a recipient of their adoration. There may be more in this than people commonly think. Probably when the people were called upon to surrender a Juno or Diana, they were resolved to have instead the statue or picture of the Virgin. At first the foundation may have been weak, but various circumstances may have strengthened it, and the priests, who might have been indisposed to it in the beginning, may have become willing converts, by reason, probably, of the golden streams it brought into the Church.

At present the worship of the Virgin is placed upon the strongest foundations at Rome. Pope, priest, and people alike favour it. It is agreeable to their habits and wishes, so firmly interwoven with their system, that I am sure they are convinced, if her worship received a wound, the fabric of their religion would fall to pieces. This

article of their creed gains strength daily, and, instead of giving way before extended knowledge and enlightened times, it takes a firmer hold upon their hearts and affections. The priests are not idle for the purpose of maintaining this belief, and various *authentic* narratives are told of the successful intercession of the Virgin, or of her miraculous influence. One that has occurred very lately, and that has been celebrated in all circles in the Eternal City, I shall here relate.

A wealthy Jew of Germany had visited Rome for the usual purpose of travellers, to gaze upon the architectural beauty of its eloquent ruins, to admire its unrivalled pictures and statues, as well as to enjoy the summer freshness of its climate\* and the richness of its scenery. He had formed, during his stay, some acquaintances amongst the priests, the aristocracy of Rome; and, of course, among other attractions, he had visited several of the churches, remarkable for their own beauty, as well as the treasures of art deposited within them.

One day, in his walks through the city, on the

\* In the climate of Italy, particularly of Rome, the sun during the winter months possesses a heat not much removed from what we experience in spring.

north of the Tiber, his companion happened to be a priest and a Jesuit. They had just passed the Collegio di Propaganda Fede, when the church of St. Andrea del Trate stood inviting them to enter. The Jew was a thorough unbeliever, and the things that he had seen at Rome confirmed it, so that, even in the hearing of his friend, he indulged in no measured sneer at the national worship.

The church contains the usual number of paintings and images of saints, dressed in the fashion prevalent in Catholic countries. It need hardly be said that the whole appearance was equally opposed to the faith and the habits of the Jew. He condemned the priests and pitied the people, and thought the whole system as foreign from the service of God, as that which his forefathers found in the land of Canaan. Well, the Jesuit entered the sacred precincts, and with some difficulty brought the Israelite along with him. The Jesuit, at the Virgin's altar, fell upon his knees, and remained in fervent prayer, while the Jew examined what was worthy of attention in the place. More than usual he had the sneer upon his lip, "*suspendens omnia in adunco naso*," and sometimes his remark was so loud as to fall upon the ear of the prostrate priest. The holy water was an abomina-

tion,—the images of the saints, idols,—the altars defiled. It occurred to the Jesuit to intercede for his erring friend: the altar at which he bent was a potent one; the conversion, if successful, well worthy his consideration.

The time passed on in the dim religious place, and the faithful and the unbeliever continued occupied as before. Suddenly, with the speed of light, a change came o'er the features of the Jew. The sneer departed, the spirit which possessed him fled away. His face exhibited a feeling between fear and devotion, so strongly marked as to paralyse for awhile the good Jesuit. He fell upon his knees, wrapt as it were in a trance, gazing with all the intentness of a saint towards the same small altar of the Virgin. He prayed, crossed himself, confessed, wept, and arose a new man, no longer a member of the sect of his fathers, but a Roman Catholic. A miracle had been performed. The Virgin, he said, appeared to him in bloom and beauty, clothed in light, beckoning him to her shrine, and welcoming him to the temple. An influence flowed from the vision deep and irresistible. Conviction at the moment flashed upon his mind. The decision was involuntary. He was no longer a Jew.

He continued to gaze on the vision: when he rose from his knees it departed. The Jesuit was dumb with surprise; he saw "the change that came o'er" the Jew, but he saw not the vision. This very Jew is now a Jesuit, has given his wealth to the college, and after a few years of study, being admitted to orders, will disseminate those doctrines of the truth of which he was convinced in so extraordinary a manner. Over this very altar a picture was immediately placed to commemorate the event, representing the Virgin with a globe under her feet, exactly as she appeared to him. The sacristan points to it with pride, and the people kneel before it in numbers. This account I have from undoubted authority.

Again, it is a proof of the high regard in which the Virgin is held, from the number of churches that are dedicated to her. At the head of these stands Santa Maria Maggiore, a beautiful and extensive structure. Hardly a church at Rome is to be found simply dedicated to God, but the saints come in for the honour. To the care of the Virgin is entrusted the largest part, evidently shewing the position she occupies in their minds. There is *one* church at Rome sacred to Jesus. It belongs to the Jesuits, and is known at Rome as the "*Gesu*."

At the rear of the church of Santa Maria Maggiore is a magnificent fluted column, of the Corinthian order, one of the most splendid remains of ancient times, although but a remnant. It belonged to a colossal temple, and is worthy of the genius of the great people whose architecture kept pace with their conquests. Upon this column has been placed a bronze statue of the Virgin; exhibiting by this act the degree of veneration in which she is held—standing upon the remains of an old temple, as if that gave way to establish the mode of worship of which she is a principal part.

As a proof that this respect to, or reverence of, the Virgin is general, and not prevalent only at Rome, I may mention here an event connected with the Church chronicles of Lucca.

## IL VOLTO SANTO.

There is an image in the cathedral at Lucca known by this appellation, the history of which is well worth relating, chiefly because it has a well-known precedent in antiquity, with the various matters relating to which it seems curiously, but of course without intention, to coincide.

Some Italian mariners were sailing on the Mediterranean, who observed at a distance an object

floating. Thinking it worth following, they directed their course towards it. The weather happened to be fine, and from want of wind it took them a good while to approach. They came up with it at length, and it proved to be a wooden image, rather well carved, and of a somewhat mysterious appearance. They agreed that it represented the Virgin. Without any more delay they took it into the vessel, better pleased than if it had been a rich prize, not doubting that it had been sent from heaven, or at least placed there by Divine means, for the edification and adoration of the Italians. The greatest care was bestowed upon their visitor during the remainder of the voyage; the captain assigning it the chief place in his cabin, and holding sundry deliberations with his crew, as to how they should dispose of it upon making land. They all considered that the incident of the day had made them happy men, and paved the future with something more than hope.

Soon after, a fair wind sprung up, and loosing the canvas to the blast, they made direct for Leghorn; but upon nearing that port a violent storm arose, and after beating about, and in vain endeavouring to effect their object, they were obliged to put away for Genoa. Shortly after Nature put

on a more smiling face, and the weather became moderate, and in due time they arrived within sight of the port. But upon endeavouring to enter Genoa, the elements enacted the same scene; the storm arose, the wind and the wave struggled fiercely together, and debarred all access. Almost in despair, but attributing these storms to reluctance on the part of the image of the Virgin to enter either of these harbours, they put about, and coasting back, they made for a small harbour contiguous to the principality of Lucca. When, lo! all was propitious. By and by they land, when, having formed a small procession, they carry along the new palladium of Lucca with as much pomp as the old one of Troy.

In due time the image of the Virgin arrived at Lucca, and was taken to the church of a monastery, when an extraordinary event happened. Upon the morning after her arrival she was nowhere to be found. What had become of it? Was the treasure stolen? Did the sea-captain repent of his resolution, and resume possession, befriended by the night? While some doubted, and all were confounded, search was made in every quarter. In due time the image was found in another quarter of the city in an upright position. The

devout monks, surprised not a little, and pronouncing a few "*aves*," took it back. The doors were closed with greater care, and the azure twilight of Italy announced the approach of another night. On the following morning, again, the sacristan, aghast, announced to the brotherhood that the image had disappeared. The experience of the preceding day at once directed them where to go, and she was found in the same place and position. This happened a third time; when the monks willingly agreed to relinquish their newly-acquired treasure, afraid of something serious happening to their community, if they should persist in their claim. Hence, it was determined to erect, on the spot where the image had chosen, a temple worthy of so miraculous and august a guest. The cathedral was forthwith commenced, and, as an inducement to subscriptions, the image found cast upon the ocean was exposed for the veneration of the multitude. Money flowed in, and the work progressed apace.

One day an eminent citizen stood among the crowd, and it was evident that he regarded the whole matter with no very favourable eye. His look was full of contempt, his lip of sneers. The language of his features did not escape the notice of

the attending priest. The citizen's insane opinion evidently was, that it was a mere *ruse* of the clergy to serve a purpose. He even was overheard to say "It is all a farce, and I will not give a *sous*." These remarks more than one heard in the neighbourhood of the image. The words had no sooner escaped his lips, when, wonderful to relate, the image stooped down, took off its gilt slipper, and flung it directly in his face. It is needless to say that he immediately became a convert, and brought all that he had and laid it at the feet of the clergy.

Upon this festival the people flock into the cathedral from the whole country. The exposition of the image takes place, when the highest honour and adoration are paid. A priest stands beside her. He hastily with one hand receives a piece of silver, with the other the cross and beads of the suppliant. These he rubs to the toe or hand of the Virgin, and they are reverently received again. They then become a sort of talisman, protecting the owner from danger and accident. They deposit it as carefully in their bosoms as if it were a cross of diamonds. Every Luccan is present at this ceremony, and it is regarded as a positive evil if anything happens to keep him away.

To the main facts here there is nothing added. The account or the legend every devout Luccan will tell. The analogy between this image and the palladium of Troy is very close. Its origin is like that of the latter:—

“Creditur armiferæ signum cœleste Minervæ  
Urbis in Iliacæ desiluisse juga.”—OVID, *Fasti*.

## CHAPTER XII.

BURIAL OF THE DEAD.—OBSEQUIES.—MORTALITY SOCIETIES.—  
MONUMENTS.—INSCRIPTIONS.—CHAPEL OF THE CAPUCHINS.—  
ITALIAN CEMETERIES.—ENGLISH BURIAL-GROUND.

IN nothing are our habits and those of the Italians more marked and distinct, than in the mode in which the burial of the dead is conducted. As soon as life is extinct, some of the fraternities, the Capuchins or Franciscans, are informed of it, and to these alone is entrusted the conduct of the funeral. The relatives of the deceased fly to the country or to their friends, and thus leave the member they have lost to his cold couch and dark chamber.

When “the first day of death has fled,” the brothers of the convent assemble at the house, and carry the body to a neighbouring church, where they celebrate the obsequies; as they pass in the streets they also sing in a dirge-like voice a service appropriate to the occasion. These alone

are the undertakers, the mourners, or the mutes.

The father does not follow his child to the last bourne, or the husband the wife of his bosom as she departs to the sleep of the tomb. They descend to their last resting-place, unwept, unhonoured, but not "unsung." The body is interred in its clothes, as coffins are not the fashion at Rome. Sometimes the face is exposed as it is carried through the streets,\* exhibiting to the thoughtless passenger the languor and the listlessness of death. He may look upon the shrivelled features of age, the health of youth, or the vigour of beauty, slowly wending to the same goal. Wax tapers are always borne, and the bearers stand holding them, ranged at each side of the corpse, when it is brought into the church. Then a solemn or a short service is repeated, according, I suppose, to the wishes or the wealth of the surviving friends. Holy water is strewn upon it, and the vessel of incense sends forth its spicy clouds. "The last scene of all" then takes place, and it is hastily deposited in a vault of the church, or hurried off to one of the cemeteries which have lately been erected.

\* This custom is now mostly confined to Naples.

Though the Italian custom be very different from ours, it is a question whether it is not preferable. What can relations attending the obsequies of friends avail them? It is to pay them respect. But the time for that is past. The ear of death is dull and cold, the heart insensible to attachment or attention. The bereaved friends afford, too, on such occasions, subjects of remark, according to the taste or feeling of the spectator. They afford themselves a spectacle which might be well spared. To the sincere they are trying moments, which serve no purpose but probably to aggravate the wound that Providence has dealt. To the superficial they bring a flimsy gravity which is easily seen through. Home is the sanctuary which, on such occasions, is best calculated to relieve the wounded spirit, where reflection, undisturbed by the public gaze or petulant remark, may feed on hope.

When Death has seized his prize all is over, our endeavours are at an end. The spirit we loved has passed to another world; the eye that looked upon us is divested of its fire; the heart that beat for us, cold as the dew in the church-yard. It is but the wreck of the past, like a fallen leaf or a faded flower, divested of its tints and its perfume,

which no heat of spring shall call again into life. It is not therefore necessary that we should accompany these dead relics with that regard and affection which are the heritage only of the living. On such occasions the object that we loved could not be placed in better hands than in those of the Church.

There are numerous mortality societies, which comprise in their body the lowest as well as the highest of the inhabitants. These undertake the burial of poor persons, and those whose relatives cannot afford the payments which on these occasions are made to the Church. They are frequently to be seen engaged in their melancholy office, but presenting a very curious spectacle, from every member being habited in a white dress. They also wear a hood or mask of the same material, with holes for the eyes only visible. They, it is clear, desire to preserve an incognito, since, being in many cases respectable persons, it is desirable to escape the public gaze. The employment is considered meritorious, and, like charity, washes away a multitude of sins. It is said that the Grand Duke of Tuscany is a member of one of these societies in his own dominions, and frequently takes his turn at the burial of the dead. They

carry a great number of wax lights, for the purpose, I suppose, of lighting the soul on its way to heaven, the route having been darkened so much by the devices of man in the city of the Popes. A crucifix, or a picture of the Virgin, generally leads the procession.

Up to a comparatively recent period no other places of sepulture existed except the vaults under the church. These vaults are to be found under every church, and are capacious receptacles. In point of fact, the flags under your feet are all grave-stones, each bearing a few vanishing memorials, frequently the coat-of-arms, and a rudely-carved effigy. It must appear at once that a practice like this was highly injurious to the health of the city; consequently it has, in some degree, been discontinued, and only wealthy or aristocratical houses retain their family vault. Two cemeteries have been established, which are the Golgothas of the modern city.

The majority of these tombs belong to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and it well repays the trouble to examine them. The dress of the period is indelibly fixed upon them. No better or more authentic source could be found for ascertaining the costume of these times. A coat with a single

row of buttons, fixed tightly to the throat, as if the wearer was in the pillory, and frills, as we find them in the portraits of Charles II.'s reign, are found on the greater number. The female dress is also peculiar, hooped as in the Elizabethan era, or else fitting the person closely. No part of the church is exempt from these stones, the chancel is paved with them, as well as the aisle. Monuments are also very numerous. We find mostly an inscription surmounted by a well-executed bust of the deceased person; often, also, statues of exquisite form and finish. These tributes, with which affection has gifted the dead, may be well reckoned amongst the most beautiful ornaments of the churches. It is clear that no expense has been spared, and I think it not improbable that some of the happiest efforts of the sculptors of modern times will be found within the sacred precincts. There is in St. Peter's a skeleton carved out of marble. It is a well-finished work, and proves that nothing is beyond Italian skill. The statuaries of the consular or imperial times were very happy at many objects besides the human figure; the sculptors of our own age must yield them the palm here.

The inscriptions are generally pompous and pro-

lix, setting forth the advantages of the defunct, and declaring how little the Saviour was in the mind of the survivor. I give the inscription from one monument in the English college. It is the type of its class. Swinburne, to whose daughter it was erected, had been long abroad, and imbibed probably Italian habits and tastes in this as well as in other things:—

“Martha Swinburne, born Oct. 10, 1758, died Sept. 8, 1778. Her years were few, but her life was long and full. She spoke English, French, and Italian, and had made some progress in the Latin tongue; knew the English and Roman histories, arithmetic, and geography; sung the most difficult music at sight, with one of the finest voices in the world; was a great proficient of the harpsichord; wrote well; danced many sorts of dances with strength and elegance. Her form was beautiful and majestic, her body a perfect model, and all her motions graceful. Her docility and alacrity in doing everything to make her parents happy, could only be equalled by her sense and aptitude. With so many perfections, amidst the praises of all persons from the sovereign down to the beggar in the street, her heart was incapable of vanity. Affectation and arrogance were unknown to her. Her

beauty and accomplishments rendered her the admiration of all beholders, the love of all those who enjoyed her company. Think, then, what the pangs of her wretched parents must be in so cruel a separation. Their only comfort is the certitude of her being completely happy, beyond the reach of pain, and for ever freed from the miseries of this life. She can never feel the torments they endure for the loss of a beloved child. Blame them not in indulging in innocent pride, or transmitting her memory to posterity, as an honour to her family and to her native country, England. Let this plain character, penned by her disconsolate father, draw a tear of pity from every eye that peruses it."

The Capuchins of the monastery on the south slope of the Pincian are interred under their own church. After they have lain a sufficient time for the worm or the damp to divest the bones of the enveloping muscles, the brotherhood descend into the narrow house, and raise the skeleton from its long repose. They then place it in an upright position in the chapel exactly under the church, and dress it in the coarse robes the Capuchin wore during life. There may be seen a spectacle sufficiently harrowing. A group so gaunt and grim, probably, has never existed, except in the

pages of poetry or romance. But truth is strange, stranger than fiction. There they stand, as silent as the grave they have left—dark and mute as midnight. It is a scene that freezes, casting over the heart some of the gloom that surrounds the place, and reflecting there much of its desolation. The bare skulls and the hollow eyes meet you at every step; and it is impossible to divest oneself of the idea that they are unearthly, looking upon you, and searching into your soul. While we wander in this wide grave, imagination gives them life, and in the flickering shade of the torch, a limb seems now to be in motion, a hand now to be upraised, those bare teeth seem to chatter, and that dark form to move suddenly towards you.

There they stand in files, as if you had visited Pluto's realms, and beheld unveiled the dread proceedings below. A minute before, all was life in the streets above; here is the stillness and reality of death. There the Italian sun bathes towers and temples in its living light; but here darkness was removed only to discover decay. I pity the poor Capuchin, who looks forward to this as his resting-place: denied the slumber of the tomb—that sleep that knows no waking, pillowed with no sister or sire, nor with the freshness of the morn over his

cold bed, the sun-beams warming it into verdure, or the starlight falling on it, like messengers of heaven. His sleep is broken, the sanctuary of his repose defiled, that he may stand as a gazing-stock to the stupid populace—a mark for the sneer of the thoughtless, or the jest of the profane. Such a scene, certainly, can be of no use to the living, and is obviously deficient in respect for the dead. The earth, our common mother, claims those perishing elements, and it would seem to be sacrilege to take them from her bosom.

The practice, however, is an ingenious plan to invest the character of their order with as much sanctity as possible. They thus, as it were, stand forth as priests for all time; their tongues made mute by death, but ready to enter again upon that office, when some extraordinary agency shall be vouchsafed to awaken their energies. It is needless to say that this care and show are not for nothing. On certain festivals this subterranean chapel is opened to the public, when a mixture of the living and the dead may be seen—a spectacle such as no capital that I am aware of can exhibit.

I visited the cemetery outside the Porta San Lorenzo, and was much surprised to find it so deso-

late a spot. One would have thought, from a knowledge of Italian character, that they would have bestowed some of their taste, and exercised their genius, in adorning or improving their burial-grounds. But the same spirit that has directed them to abandon their friends with their last breath, has also influenced them here. There is no record of affection, (I cannot call the few slabs that I met with by the name,) no neatness, no vestige visible, which tells that our feet are treading over the dead. The contrast between our retired grave-yards,—generally removed from the hum of life, each tenanted mound covered with verdure, and the trees not without their beauty, declaring, as it were, that, though death is around, they are full of the principles of life, while a mossy tower or tottering ruin is in unison with the scene,—must strike every observer.

The Roman cemetery is an enclosed field, containing fifty-two vaults. The flag that covers each is level with the ground. One of these remains opens every week, and yawns darkly and dreadfully for the victims of seven days. There are jumbled together the old and the young, the sickly and the strong. The bride, the widow, the mother, the child—all go down together. The friend and the

foe lie side by side, their hands possibly clasped, as all alike are coffinless. It is a wretched mass of flesh, garments, and putrefaction. Affection must be very blunt, or love but short-lived, that thus can suffer the objects upon which both were centred to become inmates of this horrible charnel-house. But it is the custom of the country, and it is never questioned.

Upon the walls, probably fifty yards off, some marble slabs are placed, erected by friends to tell that the remains of a father or a son are entombed in this cemetery. A lever lifts the flag whenever the procession of death demands it. At the conclusion of a week quicklime is thrown in, it is then sealed for the year, when the next vault is opened to receive its human garbage. The grave, which is, at the least the heritage of mortality, the poor Italian never knows with its decency, order, and cleanliness, but he is decreed to rot with hundreds, and not to mingle his dust with those of his household or his heart. The very position of the bodies, distorted, convulsed, ill at ease, seems to bespeak their degradation.

There is no cypress nor willow, emblems of sadness, such as we meet with in the French cemeteries—mourners that outlive the grief that gives way to

time, and which look like nature's tribute to worth; no elm casting its shadows over the damp bed, through whose branches the winter wind pours its requiem for the dead, or sheltering the remains in autumn with its golden leaves; but it is cold and bare as the mountain heath, as cheerless and as lonely as the wilderness.

As the English usually congregate in large numbers at Rome, casualties will happen, so they have been obliged to procure a burial-ground. It lies on the Via Ostia, and contains within its bounds the celebrated pyramid of Caius Sestius. This place, where many an English heart moulders, contains many eminent names, among whom are John Bell the surgeon, and Keats the poet. It is enclosed with a wall, and is upon the usual plan of our simple grave-yards.

It is impossible for the tourist to enter this, or the cemetery at Leghorn, without feelings of deep melancholy; at least, I do not envy him who has not such impressions. How many of his countrymen who are at rest there, in this land of the stranger, passed their last moments with no friendly hand near! In their mortal struggles, their thoughts, like the gladiator's, were "far away," breathing wishes never to be heard, anxious for one meeting

more, one look, one kiss, ere the scene closes on them for ever. The invalid, perhaps, who had sought the sunny shores of Italy on the pilgrimage for health, or the young and strong, cut off by the summer fever of this abode of malaria, are no doubt the most numerous occupants of the "Cimiterio Inglese." But the traveller, who comes to look upon the classic ruins of this lovely land, should let this spot also claim a moment of his time. It is due to those who rest there. Its effect will not be lost on himself.

## CHAPTER XIII.

PALACES OF THE POPE.—THE VATICAN.—THE LATERAN PALACE.  
—THE QUIRINAL.—PRISONS.—POPULACE OF ROME.—STATE OF  
THE COUNTRY.—ITS POLICY.

ALBEIT the Pope be but a bishop of the Church, and the great patron of celibacy, in person as well as precept, his wants are provided for as if he was the head of a numerous family, and required accommodation for their establishments as well as his own. He has no less than three extensive palaces within the walls of the city of Rome. To a temporal prince, who might people these vast chambers, or occasionally fill them by his hospitality, they would be natural and necessary. But what use they are to the crowned ecclesiastic who sits in St. Peter's chair, I am at a loss to determine. Probably it had been more in accordance with the spirit of the Church if the dwelling of its head was less ostentatious and superb, as indicative of one who claims peculiar rights with regard to

that kingdom which is not of this world. These palaces are in no way inferior to other royal residences, either in extent or ornament. They come before many, in these as well as in other respects.

The palaces are the Vatican, St. John Lateran's, and the Quirinal. The Vatican adjoins St. Peter's, and is a part of that great structure. It stands upon its right, and is entered by the noblest stairs, possibly, in existence, from the great court in front, surrounded by the colossal colonnade of Michael Angelo. It is a square building, not imposing in its external appearance, and deriving its chief ornament from its neighbourhood and associations. The site is elegantly chosen, commanding extensive views. The city lies at its feet; glimpses of the Tiber are caught from the windows, threading its way amid verdant hills and dark ruins. The Sabine hills appear in the distance, bounding the view—in some instances rocky and bare, at others green as the champaign. At their bases several villages are discerned, from which points to the sky the tower of some sacred edifice, or some remnant of Roman times. The beautiful Tivoli, eminently picturesque, is directly opposite, its white walls gleaming in the sun, relieved by the sober pines which shelter it from the Tramontane

blast. As you turn more to the south Frascati discovers itself, with its detached villas and numberless terraces. Frequently the tints of the evening sun clothe the distant view in a deep azure, which slowly melts away in the twilight into the darker shadows of eve. Nearer the windows lies the mausoleum of Adrian, now the great defence of the Vatican,\* while the deserted Campagna stretches on all sides until it is lost in the Appenines or the clouds.

The Vatican contains within its walls the great museum of Rome, rich in the remains of antiquity. Statues, which have conferred immortality upon the maker, are in numberless variety. Bassi-relievi, busts, urns, full of taste and genius, meet you at every step through these unequalled galleries. You are brought back to the times of the emperors, and hold communion with the greatest works of the mighty dead.

The paintings are all master-pieces, objects which once seen leave their *fac-simile* on the imagination. The objects in the Vatican museum are priceless. It must ever rank the highest and most interesting in the world.

The chambers in this elegant palace amount to

\* Converted into the Castle of Saint Angelo.

several thousand, and the chief amongst them are covered with frescoes of the greatest painters of modern times. The artists were Raphael, Guido, &c. The Pope inhabits a superb suite of apartments, situated in the inner quadrangle. The Swiss guard are always at hand, but not in any extensive force. They are clad in the most uncouth dress that I have ever seen worn by soldiers. They are exactly like the harlequins we see upon village stages, with coats and trousers of party-colours. They wear a hat and carry a halbert. His Holiness' household also remain in the palace, amounting to three or four cardinals, a few monsignores and prelates.

The gardens are most extensive, and fitted up with much taste. There is a great profusion of ornament. Fountains send forth their clear and refreshing streams, sparkling in the sunshine; and many statues well worthy attention are dispersed through the grounds. There is a drive of upwards of a mile; on either side of which rise hedges of box, growing luxuriantly, and clothed with a brilliant green throughout the winter months.

This is the Pope's winter residence, being the warmest and most delightful of the three. He seldom appears in public, never except to attend

some procession, or to minister at some church. During six months he did not leave the precincts, except to be present one day at the "Gesù."\* His extensive gardens combine all the advantages of the country. There he walks and drives, seen by no eyes except those of his cabinet and household. In this there is much worldly wisdom. For a person of the sacred character of his Holiness to appear often in public, would be to diminish the high feeling of veneration in which his office is held. Such a feeling is ever nourished and increased by keeping the object which excites it buried in the cloister, and concealed from human eyes; just as the priests lock up the relics, and expose them only once or twice a year.

The Lateran Palace is a large square building, and is the oldest of the papal residences. It was the seat, also, of some memorable Councils. It is situated in an unfrequented part of the city, and is by no means a favourite with the modern Popes. It contains some immense apartments, which are well finished; but it yields in every respect to the Vatican. It adjoins the basilica of St. John Lateran's. There are fine views from it, amongst which

\* The reader must remember that the author here speaks of Gregory XVI.

not the least interesting are the ruins in the neighbourhood. That noble monument of other days, the Colosseum, and some of the temples of the Capitol, are well seen. Albano lies to the south, crowning the summit of the hill, abounding in rural beauty and scenery of wood and water, more than any of the neighbouring villages. The mountains also add their dark forms to the landscape, every crag lighted up at noon by the Italian sun, or casting their shadows over the plain as day melts into eve.

This is the most retired palace of all, and would suit well with a studious, unambitious mind. If any Pope should turn misanthrope or hermit, no doubt he would select it. All the neighbourhood is peculiarly exposed to malaria; it is said to be seldom without it. This is the chief reason why it is not much used.

The Quirinal is the most modern, as well as the most beautiful, of the palaces of the Pope. It occupies the summit of the Quirinal Hill, or, as it has been named by the moderns, Monte Cavallo. It is situated in the heart of the city, of which it commands the completest view. A large and lofty front looks towards the south-west, approached by handsome steps and a fine portico,

from which a most extensive wing runs towards the east, fully 250 yards long. This great extent of building—in fact, in itself a town—encloses a garden laid out in modern taste, full of flowers and fountains, the circuit of which is one mile. The rooms are gorgeously fitted up, and are almost without number. Indeed, everything about this palace evidences the utmost neatness and finish. It is a residence worthy of the wealthiest sovereign of Europe, and is probably not surpassed in either dimensions or design. Certainly no bishop ever laid his head in a more royal dwelling. What use the wilderness of walls can be to him, it is difficult to say. He can only inhabit but a small part; so I suppose the pile rose into its present extent from the spirit of ostentation which seems to direct every movement of the Pope, whether he appears in the procession of St. Peter's, levels a piece of the Pincian hill, or presents a mutilated statue to one of the national museums.

This is the summer residence of the Pope. It is very happily chosen, as, from its lofty site, the sultry heats are tempered by the winds that blow over the circle of hills which skirt the Campagna. In the lower parts of the town, when the sirocco prevails, the heat is excessive, and a languor and

aversion to exercise ensue. This is to some extent avoided in the more exposed situations. Fever also always stalks in the valleys, while the inhabitants of the higher streets are to a great degree exempted. Independently of these advantages, it was only fair to place the Pope upon the loftiest of the seven hills—the Quirinal. It looks like a citadel, viewed from various quarters of the city, only that it has more of the pacific appearance than is usually to be found in those buildings which crown commanding eminences. At all events, whether it be useful or otherwise, it is a handsome addition to the buildings of Rome, and the chief ornament of that part of the city in which it is placed.

Very different is the state of papal Rome from that of the early commonwealth, when the poet describes it—

“Sub regibus atque tribunis  
Viderunt uno contentum carcere Romam.”

The prisons in the city now are both numerous and formidable; and they are frequently not large enough for defaulters. This argues a diseased state of society, of which the chief cause is the wretched system of government which exists,—that suffers its principal duties to be engrossed by the

internal affairs of the Church, and bestows but little time upon the condition of the people or the welfare of the country.

It seems a problem to discover how the mass of the lower orders maintain themselves. They are ever idly disposed, and seldom occupied. To be sure, their wants are satisfied at a small price, where both wine and bread—the common food—are cheap and abundant. But dishonesty generally prevails, and the wealthy, no doubt, without either their knowledge or assent, contribute to their subsistence. One great cause of the idle habits which characterise the peasantry and the populace is the frequently occurring festivals of the Church. A week seldom passes over without two or three; upon which the shops are closed and all business suspended,—the only active individuals to be met with being the various orders of the priesthood, from the cardinal to the curate. On these days they lie in the sun like the *lazzaroni* at Naples, or “*carpunt diem*” in playing the game of *pallone*. The ceremonies of the Church are the chief concern, and everything else is but of secondary importance.

The consequences of this system are everywhere visible. Agriculture is neglected, the people in a

wretched condition; the level and rich plains which stretch away from the walls to the mountains are deserted; not a field is to be found in a state of tillage, with the exception of the gardens and grounds of the few villas which lie contiguous to the city. Though in summer these plains are unhealthy, nature has endowed them with great fertility, and they would be capable of producing the vine or the olive in profusion, and corn for the supply of the city. But these truths escape the notice of all, and the only tenants of the extensive Campagna are a few herds of buffaloes. The eye will not rest on a farm-house for miles; the only symptoms of life and animation are the shepherds and the flock. Not a tree is to be seen over this wide surface watered by the golden Tiber and many tributary streams, where the chestnut might supply the wants of thousands, or forests be reared for the fuel of the inhabitants.

It would look as if the open country lay exposed to the incursions of banditti or wild beasts, as is the case in an African colony, and that all fled for refuge to the towns. This supposition, however, is without foundation, as the robbing system is on the wane in Italy. The people want enterprise, because they want encouragement. They are still

active and intellectual where occasion calls for it. And if the government, instead of wasting the finances upon the embellishment of churches, would promote rewards for industry, or improve the instruments of husbandry, and protect the well-disposed, the aspect of the country would soon undergo a beneficial change, the state obtain a better class of subjects, while the advance in individual happiness would be such as a numerous population have a just claim to, and would surpass the expectation of the most sanguine.

Such results, however, I fear, must be hoped for in vain. The Church is the dial that regulates everything in this land. It is a fixed star,—itself incapable of change or amelioration,—which has transferred its unyielding nature and properties to other institutions. There is nothing so much dreaded in Rome as novelty. Novelty or change in agriculture or commerce would probably produce novelty in opinions, and thus lead to novelty—to a reformation of religion. Hence, to the prejudice or caution which sways the Papal cabinet, it seems far better to leave the country in its present miserable state, than, by improving it, run any hazard to themselves or their Church. Consequently, the only harvest that they reap, and will be likely long

to do, are political commotions and general depravity. It is this system that fills the gaols, replenishes the galleys, and does not suffer the executioner's hands to be idle for lack of employment.

Rome ought to be, and probably is reckoned by many unacquainted with it, a model for other countries in the management of its institutions, and in the order of its population. Where religion is borne upon every breeze, and a clerical vestment brushes your coat every ten minutes, a moral feeling may be thought to run through society, and to regulate the practice of all. The prisons, however, never empty, tell a different tale. It is very unpleasant, in passing through the streets, to see the objects that are cooped up in them, crowding to the windows for air, and in some cases asking a *baiocco* of the passengers, as if their keepers do not sufficiently supply the wants of nature.

The dress of the convicts and prisoners is a coarse striped cloth, and in most cases they are fettered two by two. The able-bodied who are under sentence of confinement for life, or a less term, are engaged in the public works. They generally have their offence written upon their backs. To one who asked something of me as I passed, and who looked sufficiently miserable, I

gave a small coin, but felt very unpleasant when in walking away I read the word "*Homocidio*" upon his back.

There is a large prison in the Strada Giulia; another on the south bank of the Tiber, near the church of Santa Maria in Trastevere; one on the Via Ostia, near the church of St. Paul's; an extensive one at the Campidoglio, mostly for political offenders. The Castle of Saint Angelo, formerly the mausoleum of Adrian, is also used as a prison. There is another as you enter from the San Lorenzo road. This is pretty well for a population not amounting to an hundred and fifty thousand, and proves incontestably the state of society under the paternal government of the Popes.

Italy, although full of beauty, has been always full of crime. It is well described by the poet as a land "where all is fair but man." The banditti, which rendered it dangerous to pass through the open country, especially by night, are now nearly extirpated. To Lambruschini's and his predecessor's vigorous exertions this happy event is owing. He has annexed capital punishment to many of those offences to which his countrymen are prone. It is said, that if a robbery takes place, and blood is drawn in the fray, no matter how

small the property taken or the blood spilt, the offence is expiated on the scaffold. This improvement is particularly visible in the neighbourhood of Rome. There are, however, several wild tracts where the hardy mountaineer fearlessly stops the passenger. The Romans, however, are at the present day far superior to their neighbours the Neapolitans. Owing to the weak or injudicious government of that kingdom, the trade of the brigand flourishes; and when it suits him he stops the diligence, and lays the passenger under tribute, by paying which, if he escapes more serious injury, he may reckon himself fortunate.

The gaols in Rome are filled by all the hues and phases of crime; but possibly the jealousy of those in power has incarcerated a considerable number for giving too much freedom to liberal opinions, or who had been actually engaged in those petty political movements which have of late taken place in the States of the Church.

## CHAPTER XIV.

ENGLISH CHURCH. — TOLERATION. — CONTRAST BETWEEN TUSCANY AND ROME. — COLLEGES. — COLLEGE OF THE PROPAGATION OF THE FAITH. — ENGLISH, IRISH, AND SCOTCH COLLEGES. — GHETTO. — STATE OF THE JEWS.

THROUGH the influence of that truly liberal statesman Cardinal Gonsalvi, now no more, permission was obtained to have an edifice for the celebration of the Church of England service, for the purpose of supplying the wants of the numerous British subjects occasionally sojourning at Rome. It was situated in the Corso, the Regent-street of Rome. It was generally looked upon with aversion, and, although the population refrained from insult, it was evident they felt displeased. This feeling, it is clear, more or less extended through all classes; for upon Gonsalvi's death, and soon after the accession of the late Pope,\* the English church was closed, and unceremoniously thrust outside the

\* Gregory XVI.

walls. It is now situated outside the Porta del Popolo. The city was too pure to suffer so erroneously a worship within its walls, so it is placed in a remote spot, where it may no longer offend either populace or priest.

Such is the toleration of Rome in the present age; and that to England, by whose blood and treasure she was rescued from the grasp of France, and to whose prowess she owes her existence as a separate state. The present building is very plain, and affords as great a contrast to the churches of the national worship in its vicinity, as there is between the respective religions. But though its exterior hardly denotes its use, it is well attended. The equipages that are drawn up at the doors on Sundays are very numerous, and prove that our countrymen are glad to avail themselves of the privilege of calling upon God in common, bearing into foreign lands that character of gravity which belongs to them at home.

There seems to be no restriction inside, as the preacher spoke very freely and fearlessly of the ceremonies and doctrines of the Romish Church—a subject which it is equally the duty and the interest of the clergyman to enlarge upon, where there are many minds to whom such things are novel and

imposing. The Romish ecclesiastics are aware of this, and, though they look upon them with jealousy, I am glad to say they have recourse to no other weapons but argument. In the church of St. Andrea della Valle, as well as in some other churches, sermons are preached by eminent men, which generally during the Lent are of a controversial character, but decidedly free from any violence or recrimination. They, no doubt, are meant not to offend any ears, as it is possible some of the auditory may be members of the Church of England. Their arguments are calculated rather to win than to wound. It is desirable to see such a spirit abroad, and is gratifying to one that looks back upon the red page of the Church history. At the same time it is to be lamented that intolerance should so far prevail, as to induce the government to drive a pure Christian church, as if it were a plague spot, from the city. It was neither prudent nor wise. If the English Government had acted in a similar manner towards its Roman Catholic subjects, no doubt the Roman See would be the first to remonstrate upon the subject. With this exception the English are highly favoured at Rome, and by all classes. The name *Inglese* admits to everything that is to be seen, and is

a passport to all society. It is the wealth profusely disseminated by English subjects that maintains the city. It is not improbable, as the English consul hinted to me, that grass would soon grow in the thoroughfares if our countrymen did not make their annual visit there; it was, therefore, an ill requital to offend them in that point which is dearest to the heart of every man—his religion. But the climate of Rome is so delicious, and the land so lovely, that I fear, if the church were closed, it would not be an insuperable barrier to their annual winter sojourn.

The contrast between Tuscany and Rome, in a variety of important particulars, is very marked. The country is well cultivated, and the people look contented and happy. We see no desolate tracts like the Campagna, where nature is fertile, but man is indolent;\* no plains like those

\* The author of "The Diary of an Invalid" says, speaking of the indolence of the Romans, "The barrenness of the Campagna has been attributed to the national indolence, which will not be at the pains of cultivating it. But I believe it would be more correct to say, not that the Campagna is barren because it is not cultivated, but that it is not cultivated because it is barren;" and he then refers to Livy (lib. vii. c. 38) to shew that in those days it was also sterile and unhealthy. My opinion, from actual observation, is very different. The soil is generally a rich loam of a dark colour, and in the spring months is covered with verdure. That it is capable of producing

between Civita Vecchia and the capital, which afford but scanty pasturage to a few buffaloes, where corn and wine with very little care could be abundantly supplied. Tuscany is not unlike England. The land is divided into farms, upon which the occupier dwells in a comfortable, and frequently a picturesque house. Not a field is suffered to lie waste, but in every direction the wheat waves its green ear, and luxuriant meadows are spread before the eye; while the hedgerows and divisions are planted with vines, bearing evident marks of skilful culture. The peasantry also are well clad, and in general appear to be a class far superior to those of either Naples or Rome.

In the towns, also, the difference is equally striking. None of that indolence in look and manner is met with which characterises so many in the streets of Rome. There is the bustle of business. Idlers there are none; every one is employed.

abundance of corn there can be but little doubt. It only wants to be subjected to the usual process of tillage. I admit that the tract is more or less visited by malaria during the heats of summer, but this would be mitigated, no doubt, by the plough, the atmosphere being admitted to produce its purifying effects. Many tracts in Italy, similarly situated, are injurious to health in the months of July and August, but they are not on that account unproductive.

The sea-port, Leghorn, enjoys an extended commerce. There are no harassing duties; hence the products of other countries find free admission to supply the wants of the Tuscans, while the great national exports, oil and corn, are in constant demand. The commercial pursuits in which the merchants are engaged give employment to a large number of persons, as well upon the Arno and the canals as at sea. The buildings, too, are constructed more for utility than ostentation; shops, stores, and arcades being far more numerous than palaces. The money of the state is not lavishly bestowed on the increase or embellishment of churches which are not required, but upon the improvement of the port and the development of the country's resources. Lines of canals run in various directions, and useful *strade di ferro* connecting the cities are already finished, while more extensive works of the same nature are spoken of.

The Grand Duke is a clear-headed and not a narrow-minded man, who feels no hesitation in adopting the improvements of modern times, and introducing the fruits of skill and science into his dominions. He lays no embargo upon enterprise; and though such has ever been the policy of his

government, he runs no risk of having the established order of things disturbed. The people are eminently quiet. Sedition or political movement, while it makes the Pope and the cardinals very uneasy, and still threatens them, is here totally unknown.

But in the point of toleration, chiefly, Tuscany has much the advantage of Rome. The government afforded every facility for building the English church; no impediment was thrown in the way. It is placed in the city, and, with the *Cimiterio Inglese* attached, is an ornament to it. How desirable it is to see a Roman Catholic prince giving the example of toleration to the Roman See, and not adopting the selfish policy of the latter. It probably required some degree of courage to do so, although it was only really carrying out the enlightened principles long acted on in the other countries of Europe.

And what is the consequence of the policy to which I have referred? The state has the seeds of permanence implanted within it. Its various institutions are deeply founded in the affections of the people, and, as a consequence, general contentment prevails. The progress of Tuscany is just in equal proportion to the decline of Rome.

Whatever trade the latter has is daily falling off; and the movement in the States of the Church, often repressed, but as often breaking out again, proves the precarious tenure of St. Peter's successors. These attempts are indications of a diseased state of things, the causes of which are deeply seated, not so much in the framework of society, as in the mode by which the country is governed. The people enjoy no representation—have no voice whatever in the public weal. Authority resides singly in the breast of the Pope and in that of his cabinet. The Italians look upon the free institutions of England and France, and sigh for some measure of liberty approximating theirs. What also adds bitterness to their feelings and wings to their exertions, is that they know that they are the descendants of freemen, and they cannot but account themselves as degenerate sons of a race of heroes.

There are several Colleges at Rome, among which the chief are the University, the Collegio di Propaganda Fede, the English, Irish, and Scotch colleges, as well as those of other nations. The University is an extensive institution, and has the usual number of professors. It has produced some men of considerable eminence. Degrees are here

conferred upon the ecclesiastics of all countries. It has also its library and museum.

The College of the Propagation of the Faith is on an extensive scale. Its front extends towards the Piazza di Spagna. In the construction, accommodation has been consulted rather than ornament. Here there are professors of almost all languages, in which young men are instructed for the ministry, and sent upon foreign missions. The wealth of this college is unbounded, and it is all expended for the purpose of increasing the confines of the Church. A cardinal resides in the house, and is "prefect" or president, with a long string of officers under him. The scholars vary from two to four hundred, and are of all nations. I have seen Jews of Asia Minor, Africans, and even a Chinese, in the academical dress—a long gown with a red border. I attended a rehearsal, which takes place upon every Epiphany, in the theatre. The youths had each a written subject, which they, in their turn, read aloud to the audience. The number of languages, to which some dialects were, however, added, was forty-nine. Arabic, Persian, Chinese, Hebrew, Irish, were among the number. They acquitted themselves well, and shewed how perfect is that system of education

which is pursued in the establishment. When they are complete masters of the language, and have received orders, they proceed upon their mission, and, as they are generally accomplished men, they are no doubt successful.

This college has ever been the favourite of the Popes, and the great engine of conversion. It was established for the very purpose of supplying a superior class of ministers, not so much to combat the positions of the Reformers, as to counterbalance the inroads they have made upon the Church, by fresh accessions in other lands. Hence, India and the Pacific are supplied from this source; and, from their knowledge of the tongues of the people to whom they are sent, joined also to an acquaintance with their character, we cannot be surprised if they are favourably received, and that the cause they have in hand progresses. I am surprised that we have not taken a leaf from their book, and established a similar institution, and for a similar purpose. The idea is an admirable one, to have ministers, as it were, of all nations, ready to take whatever post the exigency of the times, or peculiar circumstances, demand. The Jews gave greater heed to Paul when he spoke in Hebrew, and so will every new people listen with attention

to the teacher conversant with their native language. The missionary often goes abroad, and defers learning the language of the country until he has arrived within its limits; a method by which time is lost and trouble increased. The true plan is that of the Propaganda. The abilities of the pupil are consulted, and from an early age he is required to give his sole attention to one of the eastern languages, so that he is able at length to express himself as fluently in that as in his mother tongue. They go upon their missions with ardour, and fearlessly make their way among savage and uncivilised people, as the past and present history of this institution amply attests.

The English College is situated in a small street, entered from the Piazza Farnese. The exterior is plain, but the house is large, and capable of accommodating a much greater number than usually reside within its walls. It was very probably a monastery, as the plan is in some respects the same. It has its refectory and chapel—the latter a small and simple building. The pupils do not appear to amount to more than fifty, and are of a superior class to those designed for the ministry in Ireland. It is governed by a rector and vice-

rector. They are generally chosen for their learning and abilities. Dr. Wiseman was rector when elevated to a see. Dr. Baggs succeeded him, and also received episcopal consecration at Rome in 1844. It is a highly respectable post, the possessor of which frequently enjoys the confidence of the Pope. The president of this College generally calls upon the English residents. Dr. Baggs was a gentlemanlike man, and took a pleasure in offering his services to his countrymen.

There are some marble slabs in the hall, recording the visit to the college of one or two Popes; and on the first lobby one is erected which mentions the visit of some of our royal family.\* In a recess, to the left of the entrance-hall, are several ancient and curious monuments, collected, I am inclined to believe, from various churches in the city, where they lay unnoticed and neglected.

The Irish College is situated on the Monte Cavallo, near the Villa Aldobrandini. It is tolerably extensive, and kept in good order; but, from the state of the furniture and apartments, the revenues must be small. The pupils vary from fifty to an hundred. The rector is Dr. Cullen, a man of whose abilities and character I can fur-

\* The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, if I recollect rightly.

nish little information. There are other lecturers in the college. The reason, probably, why these young men are instructed for the ministry, when they have Maynooth at home, is to supply a class of teachers more elevated from mixing with the world and society, and who have advantages of becoming acquainted with the doctrines and discipline of the Church which are denied them at home.

I think it is generally the case that the foreign educated priest is the more polished gentleman, and less likely to set his parish in a blaze by dedicating a large share of his time and labours to politics; because, being removed from his country so long, in addition to other softening influences, he shares his affection and allegiance with Rome.\* Whereas the Maynooth priest is moved by every wave of political turmoil which agitates the country. He imbibes along with logics and "humanity" the pervading love of agitation; and when he is liberated from the discipline of the college, it is no wonder that he should become a prominent champion of the visionary grievances of that class from which he is taken. As long as the priest is identified with

\* Not the Church merely, but with the place and people.

the peasantry, it will not be easy to guard against this. His associations will always be with that "stock from which he is hewn." Better days would rise upon Ireland, and prospects of true peace and happiness light up her horizon, if the Roman Catholic gentry infused their blood and their love of order into the priesthood.

The chapel of this college is a more ambitious structure, and is dedicated to St. Agatha, though, of course, with her festival that of St. Patrick's holds an equal place.

The pupils are clad in a dress almost similar to those studying at the Propaganda. They walk through the city in a long file of two abreast, accompanied by the senior scholar or the moderator of the day. This order it is not necessary to preserve outside the walls, and it is amusing to see how willingly they forget the commands of the professor on the Appian or Flaminian way.

The Scotch College is presided over by Dr. Grant, a modest and unobtrusive ecclesiastic. The wants of the Scotch are easily supplied, so both establishment and pupils are on a small scale. The foundation is laid, "*principium est dimidium facti*," and it is probably fondly hoped that there will be necessity for its extension hereafter.

The Jews are rather numerous at Rome,\* much more in number than it is likely they should be found where they are exposed to exaction and oppression. They inhabit a quarter upon the banks of the Tiber, which is remarkable more for the filth than the cleanliness of the people—for poverty than wealth. There are gates upon it, which from sunset to sunrise are closed upon the luckless Israelites. They are not allowed to reside in any other part of the city; and recently an order has been promulgated by the Pope,† to the effect that they must not have Christian servants or apprentices. This, I believe, results not so much from an intolerant spirit, as from fear lest the Jew should convert the Christian to his faith a very unlikely thing. They are left to their customs within the Ghetto. No church has obtruded upon its limits; but immediately opposite the gate a church has been erected, over the door of which is a large fresco of the crucifixion. The church was probably built to receive any repentant follower of Jacob; but it was not good taste to place the picture in such a locality, standing forth, as it

\* In the year 1709 the Jews amounted to eight or ten thousand. It is a question whether they come up to this number at present. At all events, they do not exceed it.

† Gregory XVI.

were, to upbraid them with the death of the Saviour.

In all other places restrictions have been removed from the Jews, who have proved themselves good citizens and valuable members of society; but Rome alone beholds these restrictions renewed, and the whole class exposed to annoying prohibitions, according more with the genius of past times than the milder influences of the present age. It is a part of the weak and senseless policy which has too frequently regulated the Papal decisions. These people, instead of contributing by their wealth and standing in society to the welfare and permanence of the State, are kept from embarking in any enterprise, and are consequently broken-spirited and poor. The Jews in Germany are amongst the wealthiest and the most respectable of the inhabitants; and it is a great error to imagine that they are not attached to that order of things which contributes to their prosperity and happiness.

There are no indications whatever of affluence among the Jews at Rome. There are some mean jewellers' shops, but the great majority carry on a very inconsiderable trade in clothes, old and new. The female portion of the families

generally sit in the streets, and are engaged in making or repairing garments.

The women are by no means prepossessing, and inherit none of those charms which led Jacob so long to serve for the fair Rachel. Their persons are large and fat, and the features too plump and round for beauty. The men are better-looking, possessing frequently dignity and thought in their countenances. The cast of features is not so decidedly Jewish as we meet with elsewhere; but the reason of this seems to be, that the contrast with the Italian face is less than with us.

From the situation of this little colony, as may be imagined, every endeavour is made for the conversion of its members. The missionaries employ their tongues or their pens in the cause, but seldom with any success. The attachment of the Jews to the faith of their fathers is proverbial; and it is by no means likely, if they were inclined to change it, that they would adopt the religious system they have before their eyes in the Eternal City. The statues\* that abound in every church must be, on the threshold, an insuperable objection. The number of Jews who have embraced Romanism has been limited, and, no doubt, will

\* Or images of saints.

ever continue so. Men will not so easily suffer their prejudices to be offended, their simple worship to be shocked, by so many competitors. When the Jews abandon the Mosaic law, it will be to embrace a religion consistent with the writings of the Prophets, whose meaning they may at length learn that they have misunderstood. Where they see its fulfilment and its observance, when their understandings are enlightened, we may naturally conclude they will attach themselves. It is said, however, that occasionally a converted Jew is baptized at St. John Lateran's, but I did not hear of very many instances. Another plan is sometimes had recourse to. If Jewish children are occupied in the city at trades or otherwise, their minds are imbued with the Roman Catholic doctrine; and if induced to assent, they are at once admitted to the Church by baptism, no regard being paid to the remonstrances of parents or friends.

Although the Jews are cooped up in this quarter, and certainly shew no signs of affluence, they look happy and contented. The women sing at their occupations, while their open faces betray no uneasiness of heart; the children play with each other, and their frequent and merry laughs are signs of well-supplied and quiet homes.

It is to me a subject of wonder that the Jews should remain at Rome at all, when so many countries would be willing to receive them. The United States, or our own colonies, would be the field for such industrious and well-ordered citizens as they have always proved themselves. But they, possibly, share with others that universal principle, the love for the "*natale solum.*" While they keep in view the Canaan—their fatherland—they cannot but look with affection on that which constitutes their home, where are the graves of their parents, the hallowed tombs of their friends. And, though they have the marks of intolerance about them and around them, the present times see them on the increase rather than on the wane. Kindred and familiar associations bind them together and reconcile them to their lot. They prefer the narrow compass of the Ghetto, with its filth and confinement, to the rewards that industry acquires in most lands—honour and affluence.

What singular interest attaches to this people, scattered amongst all others without mingling with them! In all other instances that we are acquainted with, the influx of strangers has been incorporated with the population to which the tide of events has borne it. But these remain

single and separate, marked out themselves by the peculiar stamp of their features; they also performing their part by the distinctive rite of circumcision, evidently retained by the hand of Providence for other times and other fortunes. It was unnecessary for the Pope to make this separation stronger by placing them in a sort of quarantine; they would not have mingled with his people, although he wished it. But he has served to make more significant some of the passages from the prophetic writings, although that was in nowise his object.

Rome remains the only state where those foolish and fanatic laws remain in force, which visit upon the expatriated Jews the crimes of their progenitors. Other kingdoms formerly pursued the same course, during those times when the exiled Israelites were persecuted with unrelenting severity; but their present conduct is a palliation of their former offence against the laws of humanity and nature. The Jew has assumed throughout Europe the position to which intelligence and integrity always exalt the possessors. Their conduct, equally unobtrusive and honourable, has proved the conclusion of those who thought that they could only cabal against Christianity, to be absurd, and has sig-

nified to the world that they are among the most valuable members of society, as tending to improve it by their persevering industry, as well as to preserve it by their peaceable demeanour.

The method pursued at Rome must defeat the object it has in view, as oppression is seldom known to proselytise: conciliation should be the first step, and not a line of conduct full of harshness and suspicion. The sun has set upon them, and the liberty which the remaining population of Rome enjoys is unknown to them, until revisited by its rising beams. The Tiber flows past their dwellings, itself unshackled in its course,—an emblem of that freedom which is the heritage of man,—as it were, calling upon them to assert it here, or seek it in other climes. How changed is Rome of the present day in this respect as well as in others! The city of universal empire granted free toleration to the religions of other nations, and even admitted the objects of their worship to the Pantheon; reckoning it the same great Spirit diffused through all things, and reigning through all time. But modern Rome, domineering and despotic, hesitates to afford the common conveniences of life to that very people who for countless ages held the unity of the Godhead

uncorrupted and inviolate, amid surrounding ignorance—the asserters of religion when it was elsewhere but a name, and the parents of their own. They enjoy personal liberty in but a small degree, and no municipal privileges. These things the Jews bear with patience, following in their fathers' steps, waiting with a firmness of faith, which neither persecution, nor coldness, nor cruelty can shake, when Providence shall have fulfilled the times, and overcome the difficulties which stand in the way, for them to enter the promised land, where rest the bones of Jacob and Joseph, and whither their hopes centre, and their affections tend, as to an earthly paradise.

## CHAPTER XV.

ORDINATION AT ST. JOHN LATERAN'S.—CEREMONIES.—FESTA DI ST. GIUSEPPE.—LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.—FIGURES AND FRESCOES.—CHURCH AT LUCCA.—COSTUME.—PICTURE EXPRESSIVE OF THE POWER OF THE VIRGIN.

THE ceremonies which take place at St. Peter's on Easter Sunday are continued, but the scenes are shifted to St. John Lateran's. The early part of the morning is devoted to the charitable office of the baptism of heretics. Sometimes a Jew is found willing to embrace the Roman Catholic religion, or perhaps some foreigner, when at the hands of the bishop he receives the sacrament. No heretic, however, was to be found upon the morning I attended, to the great disappointment of many spectators, as well as myself; but high mass was celebrated with all the pomp and splendour with which it is usually accompanied in one of the Roman basilicas. At its conclusion the largest ordination of the year always takes place. The candidates were very numerous, amounting

to more than a hundred. They were not confined to natives, but the various countries in communion with Rome sent some of their representatives.

The part of the church where this ceremony, or sacrament, takes place, is the oratory to the right, where the cathedral service is usually chaunted. There the candidates were seated, looking as pious and orderly as the occasion seemed to require. The regular and secular clergy were mingled; some with the crown "shaven and bare," and others with nature's head-dress unmutilated. They wore simple surplices only: the investiture of more sumptuous vestments is reserved for a further period of the ceremony.

One cardinal bishop only attended. He wore his mitre, and was seated in the chancel as he administered the rite. Several priests stood by his side, who also placed their hands on the postulant's head, when he meekly knelt for admission as one of the shepherds of the Church.

Perhaps the sitting posture in the bishop is more significant, as tending to represent that authority with which he is invested; although there is no lack of means to declare this to both clergy and laity, in the church of which the Pope is the supreme head. The form of words that was pro-

nounced was very brief, but was repeated over each candidate. On two several occasions he approached his Eminence: at the first, the vestment which is indorsed with the cross was placed upon his shoulders. He then retired to his place, evidently fully impressed with the responsibilities of the station which he had assumed. Subsequently he again appeared in the chancel, where he presented the palm of his right hand to the bishop, who then poured some of the sacred chrism from the anointing cup into it. The attending priest, his chaplain probably, immediately placed the other hand over it, and taking a small white napkin from a bundle that was provided near him, he tied them both together: with this handcuff the young priest retires again to the seat he had occupied in the oratory. He continues in this posture for hours, until, I suppose, the chrism has worked its expected effect, or till it has been absorbed by the animal heat.

I should not have been surprised if the bishop had anointed candidates upon the head, which was the ancient and usual method; but I am at a loss to discover the intention of anointing the hand. Perhaps it was a hint taken from the school of the gladiators, who oiled their arms,

hands, &c., that their bodies might be more pliant for the struggle, and that they might slip more easily from the grasp of their opponents. So this would signify that he should be prepared for controversy—ready to grapple with any adversary who might hurl a “negative” in the clerical arena; and then it would contain a hint that, if hard pressed, he could retire, as there would be no danger of his antagonist being able to hold him in his grasp.

No doubt the act may be significant, and this, or some such conjecture, may explain it. Perhaps it is done, founded upon the well-known fact, that, as oil cast upon troubled waters soon reduces them to a quiescent state, so they should regard their ministry in the same light, checking schism in the Church, as well as quelling tumult in the state. If this be the true interpretation, it were well for the sister country if many of her priests were ordained at Rome. As to schism, it probably does not exist to give them any uneasiness; but political movement, and the evils following in its train, would fall still-born but for the decided part taken by the Maynooth priest.

But I am inclined to believe the real cause of this rite is to impart a sanctity to the hands which are to hold the host in consecration. Such

an opinion might follow from the belief in transubstantiation. It were well adapted to impress upon the young priest the idea of his own importance, as the act itself he is destined to perform raises him in the estimation of the people. That the host is of so sacred a nature, that he should not venture to touch it with common hands; but it requires the blessing of the bishop, in addition to the ordination and the chrism of the Church, to adapt them for the high duty: so much amongst Roman Catholics is religion reduced to externals. The ceremonies—the mass—all speak in the same language. To have a true spiritual church, it were better to receive the Saviour in the heart than in the hand, and to anoint with heavenly influences the former rather than the latter. The heart is the test in all things. In the dealings of life, in the intercourse of society, if that is not steady and sincere, all is hollow and deceitful, although it be wrapped in specious pretexts. Devotion is the heart of religion, shewing itself in pure doctrine and conduct, and pulsates as strong and as warmly, although the body that meets the eye be in modest garments, and without the aid of ornament.

On the 19th of March, the festival of St. Joseph

is kept in some of the churches. There is nothing remarkable in the services of the day to distinguish it from any other anniversary, but various preparations are made for it in the streets and squares of the city. Booths, or, I should rather call them, sylvan huts, are hastily erected, composed of a few poles driven into the earth, covered tastefully with evergreens. Stripes of ribbon or calico are interspersed, so that the simple edifice shews some indications of the taste diffused through the people. It thus forms a shop in the open air. The viands exposed for sale are fish—a species of sprat found plentifully in the Tiber. They are fried in lard. A charcoal fire is kept burning, on which the grease and fish are constantly bubbling. These the people purchase in great quantities, and eat with avidity. I should esteem it in some degree a religious duty or custom to do so, and not alone to satisfy the cravings of appetite. The groups eating this homely fare—the Italian cook—and the hut of green boughs, form an object quite picturesque, and would have been a *morceau* for the pencil of a Teniers or an Ostade. The scene contrasted well with the buildings in the neighbourhood. It was in some degree the “*rus in urbe*.”

The victuallers' shops (this appellation applies at Rome principally to the venders of pork and sausages) are also dressed for the occasion. The verdant leaves of the box or of the evergreen oak, hanging amidst candles, butter, and salt fish, as if they were the fruits, testify that the festival is duly honoured. It is not improbable that of all the festivals of the Church this is the most welcome to these useful citizens, as they seem to do tenfold more business on it and the following days than at any other period. The poor artisan, who on other occasions rarely exceeds the wretched "*vino asciouto*" and "*pane nero*," makes shift at this time to add fish, salt or fresh, to his fare. While the more comfortable housewife is to be met ever hurrying home from market with her scaly prize.

From what I have mentioned I think it is conclusive that St. Joseph must have been a fisherman, and that the universal custom of eating fish on this day is to commemorate his early occupation. The husband of Mary was a carpenter, it would not therefore seem that he was the object of their regard. The Roman calendar is very extensive, and saints of the same name occur more than once. Or, further, it may be an opinion founded upon tradition, that some period of St. Joseph's

life was, like many of the apostles, dedicated to the simple and meditative life of a fisherman.

It is a curious fact, that so many of the apostles, out of the small number of twelve, should have been engaged in this occupation. But, probably, of all the employments which engage mankind, there is in it least room for any of those passions which are likely to disturb the equanimity of the mind. With the humble fisherman envy has no place. The possessions or power of others he neither covets nor regards. None of those ambitious motives which, more or less, influence most minds, have any place in his bosom. He is bred up to patient endurance, and looks to the will of Providence to give its blessings into his hands. The state of life is daily shadowed before him; disappointment often falls to his lot, and hopeful prospects remain unfulfilled. Thus his spirit is subdued within him, and reconciled to the similar events of life.

Nature also exhibits to his mind objects of interest and beauty—the calm ocean, the sunbeams gilding its surface, or the moon rising in glory from its depths, clothing the landscape with its softer light. These are apt to excite reflections in his mind calculated to soothe the asperities within, and

to divert the passions from the sway which they assume, to contemplation of the benefits of creation, and of the beneficent hand of which they all bear the undoubted impress. The water also, gliding away before his eyes with unceasing flow, would seem to be a type of his existence, never tarrying in its progress, but hastening till its waters are lost in the boundless ocean; while the wave that ripples at his feet, now proudly raised with its crest of foam, and the next moment broken and scattered on the shore, not inaptly figures the vanity of human hopes, and the issue to which they lead. This mode of life is full of instruction, while it is free from those temptations which, like parasites, are indissolubly connected with the various arts or callings of men. These may probably be some of the reasons, if we may venture to ascribe any, why the Saviour, turning from all other ranks of men, chose his companions out of this humble and unnoticed class.

The statues in some of the churches in Rome, more particularly in those a little removed from the walls, are by no means of high finish. The efforts of the best artists have been enlisted for the purpose of adorning the metropolitan churches; but we occasionally find some

figures within the sacred precincts which would accord better with the air of the Appenines or an unfrequented village. There is a wooden figure of some saint in the church of St. Paul's on the Via Ostia, which, from its dilapidated state, cannot, in my opinion, be any aid to devotion. Whether the disease that has attacked it is time or dry rot, it has lost much of its resemblance to the human face. The nose has nearly disappeared, the fingers are worn away, and the figure itself has lost some feet of its height. But perhaps it is esteemed more venerable from its years, for it occupies its niche as usual, and probably will do so while it holds together.

I could mention many others, but at present will take the reader for a few moments to Lucca, to observe something of the same nature.

Superstition seems to flourish at Lucca with as strong a growth as in any other part of the Italian continent, and ignorance to prevail to an extent perhaps unequalled in the country districts of Rome or Naples. The Virgin is peculiarly the object of adoration, and but few of the saints seem to share the honours of the people with her. As usual, the churches contain everything of interest or importance. In an extensive church, situated

near the palace, which is the parish church of the *Gran Duca*, there are, as you enter, two small apartments, one on each hand; in both of which are figures well carved, of wood, and painted, representing something from the Scripture history. To the left is a representation of the Crucifixion. On the right is the Virgin clothed in a dress of great magnificence, with "*il bambino Gesu*" upon her knee, and St. Joseph kneeling in a posture of adoration, and presenting both his arms to the infant Saviour. These figures are as large as life, and, though very old, as carvings, may rank the first of the second-rate. Nothing can be more extraordinary than the dress of all the three. The Virgin wears a gilt crown upon her head, and is elaborately adorned with necklace and rings. Her stomacher is gilt, and gold appears occasionally in various parts of her attire, which is evidently of the highest fashion of the time. The front of her dress ends in a peak like some of the present day, and the gown is ample and flowing. But the most striking part is a frill upon her neck, very stiff and projecting, reminding one strongly of the portrait of our own royal Elizabeth.

Joseph is dressed also in the fashion of the day, and, but for the absence of the wig, would be a

complete gentleman of the court of Charles II. His coat is of grey cloth, and buttoned up to the chin, and is of that shape that we denominate a frock. He wears also an enormous frill, and has fringes of lace at his arms. Knee-breeches, stockings, and a pair of high-heeled shoes, with silver buckles, complete the portrait of Santo Giuseppe, according to the taste of the monk milliners of the Luccan church.

The present instance shews us how erroneous it is, in pictures or representations of this nature, to disregard the history and costume of the period that belong to the subjects, and to arrange them in the uncertain dress of the painters' times. If this rule is not adhered to, unity is lost, and what the pieces probably acquire in positive art, they forfeit by these extraneous additions. The more simple, and according with truth and taste, is the drapery of pictures, so much the less chance has it of being considered anomalous amid the necessary changes of time and things. The absurdity is sufficiently obvious, of arraying a personage belonging to a past age in the fashions of our own. Our own lives are frequently long enough to see them changed and forgotten ; and the more we advance from the date of the work, the more irrecon-

cileable is the difference. If a statuary of the middle ages had left us an Augustus, or an Apollo, with a full-bottomed wig and knee-breeches, we moderns should not admire either his judgment or discrimination. The costume of the present day, perhaps, does not well accord with the dignity of a statue, but, I think, chiefly from this reason, that it will probably outlive the period when that costume shall have declined. More suitable is the simple toga of the Romans. It has precedent, beauty, and our associations in its favour.

Several of the churches and monasteries at Rome have their walls covered with fresco painting. In the majority of cases they are well executed, and will repay the trouble of examining them. But in some quarters of the city we find the Virgin painted at the corners of the streets; and in other localities some religious subject traced upon the walls, to remind the wayfarer of the future and its objects. Near the Piazza SS. Apostoli you will find a fresco of purgatory. The flames are burning fiercely, and several persons are expiating their sins in its torturing pains. They are tossed on a sea of fire, and its lurid light makes them appear unearthly, and miserable in the extreme. I, however, saw a picture elsewhere, more

remarkable than any to be found in the Eternal City, which deserves some notice here.

Leaving the square at Lucca, which contains the cathedral, built with alternate pieces of black and white marble, I entered a long and narrow street, and when I had traversed it for about half a mile, I suddenly came upon the ancient and massive church of San Martino.\* The church was undergoing some repairs, so I did not see it to the advantage that I could have wished. It contains some pictures by the old masters, several altars as usual, and a few monuments. But the object that struck me most, and deeply arrested my attention, was a fresco painting on the west end, and on the outside. It so completely represents the effect and intention of the Roman Catholic religion, that I cannot forbear detailing it minutely here.

The Virgin is represented inflicting corporal punishment upon the youthful Jesus. She holds a rod in her hand, with the other she holds the garments of the child. She is in the act of inflicting punishment. The child is in alarm, and its eyes are eagerly directed to St. Anna, the

\* I am not certain whether this is the saint to whom the structure is dedicated.

mother of the Virgin, in the background, entreating her intercession to escape the cruel ordeal. The look of the Virgin is not that of affection, but has the stern and harsh appearance which we might imagine a schoolmistress to have when engaged in a similar occupation. Under the picture is written in very legible characters, "*Jure matris rege filio.*"

This picture is better executed than those which are generally to be found at the corners of the streets, or on the outside of the churches. It is the most remarkable, and in its subject one of the most daring, that I have seen, and contains within its compass much of the spirit that is infused into the Roman Catholic church. Considering that the Saviour came into the world, and was born of a virgin,—that he took the nature of man upon him,—they infer that he was not only subject to the infirmities of that nature, but with its sorrows was liable also to its sins. The book of the Scripture was either closed, or told a tale to unwilling ears, that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners;" and, of course, as he was free from the sins of human nature, he must have been also from the punishments with which earthly parents visit the violation of duty. We are told,

indeed, "that he was subject unto them," and continued with them; but we hear from the same unerring authority, that his life was as spotless and perfect even then, as his source was undeniably holy and divine, for he daily "increased in wisdom, and in favour with God and man." But revelation was to be set aside, and reverence violated, to serve an object; and so we find the Virgin Mary here exalted at the expense of the Saviour. The awful reverence with which God dwelling in the flesh should be contemplated is here transferred altogether to another object. The argument which the representation is designed to inculcate, and the feeling they wished to produce on the mind of the beholder, was, that as mother she possessed more power than the Son (He, by whom all things were made), and so, more than Him, was entitled to the regard, fear, homage, and worship of the Christian world.

The effect of such subjects in painting, and exhortations of the same nature from the pulpit, are very evident. The addresses to the Virgin equal, if not exceed, those to the Almighty. Their affections are constantly directed to her by pictures and emblems in the churches, the streets, and their houses. A seaman caught in one of the

white squalls of the Mediterranean, and hurried at the will of the wind, considers his spiritual exercises completed when he has devoutly recommended himself to the care of the Virgin. When he relinquishes the helm in alarm, his calls are upon “*la madre di Dio;*” and if he is permitted to outlive the fury of the tempest, and to revisit his native valley, or the town where he first drew breath, his first care is to discharge his vow to his patron, whether it consist of tapers, a gratuity to the clergy, or a picture representing his disaster and escape.

## CHAPTER XVI.

THE COLOSSEUM.—ITS EXTENT.—IS CONSECRATED.—ILLUMINATION  
OF ST. PETER'S.

OF all the ruins to be found in Rome, the most stupendous is the Colosseum. The mind is prepared for no such spectacle as these rich remains afford. Wonder and admiration at the mighty genius which could devise so noble a plan, and complete it in a manner so as to outlive the wreck of the city and the empire, are the spontaneous feelings of every beholder. The area occupies the space of nearly six acres—so much does it exceed the amphitheatres yet remaining in other Italian cities. The shape is an oval; the greatest length is 620 feet, the greatest breadth 513 feet. It is built in several tiers of arches, each diminishing in size. The stories were four, each ornamented with a different order of architecture. The lower arches formed the places for admission, and communicated with the galleries which led to the various seats, set apart for senators, patricians,

or plebeians. It had no roof, but an awning was drawn over in unfavourable weather.

From its being built with exceeding care, and with stones of great magnitude, it is well calculated to resist the effects of time; accordingly, its chief injury has not come from thence. The Vandal and the Goth seem also to have spared it; and it contained nothing which would be likely to excite the fury or fanaticism of the iconoclast. Its mutilation is to be ascribed only to the inhabitants themselves. This surpassing structure, the "*monumentum ære perennius*" of the architects of old, was reckoned as a common quarry where Popes and princes might find materials for their churches and palaces. The Barberini palace,\* an extensive pile, is altogether built with materials procured from this source, as is also the Farnese.

It was that dark age and those times of ignorance when taste slumbered, and that narrow spirit was abroad which esteemed it meritorious to sink all the records of other days in the glory of the Church. The triumph of the latter in their judgment was complete, when the pillars of the temple of Jupiter Stator adorned the interior, and the arches of the Colosseum strengthened the walls, of a

\* This has given rise to the caustic expression—

“Quod non fecerunt barbari, fecerunt Barberini.”

church of St. Peter or St. John. It is this spirit that has anticipated the work of time, or rendered its operations more complete. These may be found to be the reasons why in such a city as Rome—which Augustus left of marble—so few striking remains, temples, or monuments are to be found at the present day. It was not the workmanship that was inferior or the material perishable, for the moderns do not either build so well or so durably. The bricks in Nero's house, and in some parts of the great sewers that pass under the city, seem in as good preservation as if they had been but lately laid. Their buildings were like their fame—for all time; and the former had come down in all the freshness of the latter, but for the Bœotic taste of the prince-bishops of Rome.

At length a Pope was found occupying the chair of St. Peter's, but unfortunately for art in very modern times, with a mind somewhat more enlarged than that of his predecessors. The Colosseum was consecrated by Benedict XIV.,\* as the most effectual means to preserve it from further injury. Interest, probably, as well as a regard for the beautiful in art, induced him to put a stop to

\* This took place about the year 1750. It was placed under the protection of the martyrs, who had there proved the sincerity of their belief by the testimony of their blood.

the practice I have alluded to. By this means almost one half of the amphitheatre has been brought down to us in a tolerable state of preservation. The succeeding Popes have repaired the breaches made by accident or design, and the attention of the government is directed to its preservation with as much ardour as former Papal cabinets shewed in its destruction.

Although the fabric is so massive, from its being constructed in a circle of arches, it looks light and elegant. The height in that part which yet remains entire is very great—157 feet. Some evergreens and rock plants have struck their roots among the stones, or twine their branches over the few seats that are left, adding rather than taking from the beauty of the ruin. The Colosseum looks to particular advantage by the brilliant moonlight. As it flows through the arches, the shadows are cast upon the ground or the opposite wall, forming an unrivalled network. The still hour is in keeping with the scene; and the lamp of night, the most fitting guide to the building, whose glory, like that of the triumphal arches surrounding it, is on the decline.\*

\*

“The moonbeams shine  
As ’t were its natural torches; for divine

Three crosses are now erected in the middle of the arena, representing the events of the Crucifixion. The Colosseum, as I mentioned above, has been consecrated, and vespers are said in it occasionally. The main object of this *coup de main* was to preserve it, as it would be now as great a sin against the Church as it formerly was against taste, to plunder a single stone. I bent my footsteps, one evening, to gaze on this record of the imperial days, as the red rays of the setting sun were imparting their warm glow to the western landscape. Its parting light still lingered upon the loftiest wall, when a party of Franciscans entered, and proceeding to the cross, chaunted the service of the Church. Every one in the building was upon his knees; all was silent as the surrounding

Should be the light which streams here, to illumine  
This long explored but still exhaustless mine  
Of contemplation.—

It will not bear the brightness of the day;  
But when the rising moon begins to climb  
Its topmost arch, and gently pauses there,—  
When the stars twinkle through the loops of time,  
And the low night breeze waves along the air,  
The garland forest which the grey walls wear,  
Like laurels on the bald first Cæsar's head,—  
When the light shines serene but doth not glare,—  
Then in this magic circle raise the dead.

Heroes have trod this spot—'tis on their dust ye tread."

BYRON.

ruins, save the voice of the priest uplifted in prayer. While the evening cast its shades around, and the light slowly departed, it seemed like a temple that barbarism had stripped and profaned, while the priest, befriended by the coming night, stole hither to celebrate within the sacred precincts the service of his god.

What changes come over human things! How altered by the inroads of time and the force of circumstances are various objects; applied to purposes as foreign from the design of the founders as anything human may be. Vespasian erected this massive pile as an arena for the trial of strength, where the contest of the gladiators, the stake being victory or life, might be viewed by the assembled populace of Rome. There the lion from the forests of Africa was enlarged to contend with the monarch of the creation, to pander to the public taste. The times of succeeding emperors saw the Christian take his stand in this bloody field, driven to martyrdom in a useless struggle against brutal strength. Thousands, who had espoused the cause of the great Regenerator of mankind, sealed their testimony by "the last ebbing drops" of life in the unequal encounter on the very spot before us, or were compelled to uplift their hands in the

combat which they had foresworn, in defiance of that creed of universal love, by the power of their heartless persecutors. The arena of the Colosseum, now as fair as the sand washed by the sea wave, was for years the ensanguined plain of Christian martyrdom; it was the red grave to thousands, who, in the early ages of the Church, bore with firmness and unshrinking fortitude the terrible ordeal, sustained by the hope of the happiness and reward that were in reserve. But now how complete is the triumph of the cross! It is uplifted above this field of blood, and the heart's sacrifice is frequently poured to Him, whose majesty was once insulted in the same place by the slaughter of his followers. The struggle against truth has been fruitless, and the descendants of those citizens of Rome number themselves among its proudest assertors now. Man may seem to have the upper hand for a while, but God always rules in the end.

What a contrast there is now over these dark and deserted walls. The shout of the mob, the yell of gratification resounds no more; nor is the air riven by the cry of agony, or the last shriek of despair, to be drowned again by the tumultuous voice of the barbaric thousands,\* who deemed their city

\* The wounded combatant dropped his weapon, and advancing to

the centre of civilisation, and themselves the arbiters of mankind. Now all is silent, as still and as lifeless as the tomb—the air barely moved by the evening zephyr, as if Nature held her breath as she trod the memorable scene. The bells of some religious house only break the spell, as they fall upon the ear, mellowed by the distance. The arena is empty, the gladiators are gone, no longer taken from their “Dacian home” “to make a Roman holiday”—serving no purpose now but a memorial of cruelty and crime.\* The benches are deserted,

the edge of the arena, supplicated the spectators. If he had fought well, the people saved him ; if otherwise, or as they happened to be inclined, they turned down their thumbs, and he was slain. They were occasionally so savage, that they were impatient if a combat lasted longer than ordinary without wounds or death.—Note 61 to canto iv., *Childe Harold*.

\* How well Milton depicts the Roman character in these lines :—

“That people victor once, now vile and base,  
 Deservedly made vassal ; who once just,  
 Frugal, and mild, and temp’rate, conquer’d well,  
 But govern’d ill the nations under yoke,  
 Peeling their provinces, exhausted all  
 By lust and rapine ; first ambitious grown  
 Of triumph, that insulting vanity ;  
 Then cruel, by their sports to blood inured  
 Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts exposed ;  
 Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,  
 And from the daily scene effeminate.”

*Paradise Regained*, book iv.

which were so often crowded by imperial and patrician guests. The seats used by the common people are broken by time, or tenanted by coarse weeds, and the green branches of the willow and the box. They are the haunts of the bat and the owl, ever housing amid decay and desolation. As the moon slowly asserts her reign over the heavens, casting her mild beams on the temples of the Forum, with all the softness of a fostering hand, as if it sympathised with the ruin, whose records are strewn like autumnal leaves in that celebrated spot, it enters the arches of the solitary pile, and appears to linger in its course, as it adds to the beauty and sublimity of the scene.

The Colosseum has looked upon the changes of eighteen centuries. It has outlived its use, and descended to our times as a mark only to discern the past. Kindlier influences have had their effects upon the rugged passions of men. Amusement is no longer gathered from blood, nor associated with slaughter and tears. That pile has witnessed a more enlightened age, and objects and instruments of truer gratification disseminated abroad. The press has scattered knowledge upon every wind, yet scarcely with sufficient celerity to answer the thirst with which it is received. For

the eyes was the feast provided then : now it is the mind that is the spectator, and the heart the handmaid. It was sensual then, it is intellectual now. The spirit of benevolence has become universal ; and while the Supreme Being is recognised and served, the inhabitants of distant and different climes look upon each other as united by the ties of brotherhood and blood. The wings of commerce have united them to each other ; not sailing beyond the sea for a freight of slaves, but introducing the blessings of civilisation in its course.

When the Colosseum was founded, the value of time was not known ; it is now only that it is appreciated and felt. There all classes might lounge and idle hour after hour, and acquire no knowledge capable of softening or improving the heart. They might become more resolute or more brave, but it is by no means certain that they became better or more virtuous citizens. But now the distribution of time has become a duty. To squander it heedlessly entails certain loss. If knowledge is power, so time, happily applied, is the gymnasium where it is acquired. Men in the present day give their leisure hours to health, the rest to the business and duties of life.

A grand illumination of St. Peter's takes place

upon the evening of every Easter Day. Preparations on an extensive scale are made for it, and no expense is spared. It is really a magnificent spectacle, of which no idea can be formed from what we are accustomed to consider an illumination. No lights are placed in windows with undeviating uniformity, but even in this the Italian taste, always sustaining its character, has found matter for the display of originality and genius.

Thousands of lamps are prepared, and placed upon every detail of the unrivalled church. They are placed upon the lofty Corinthian columns, and skilfully applied to the capitals. The *façade* receives them in rich profusion. They are elegantly stretched upon the roof. The vast dimensions of the dome are covered; the ball above it has them in circles; and the cross, elevated in mid air, seen from the Sabine to the Etrurian hills, has attached to it a suitable number. The gigantic colonnades stretched on either side of the piazza possess them in long and regular lines. All this preparation is made for some days previous to Easter. It is a business attended with the greatest danger to those employed, from the great height of parts of the building to which they must ascend. So perilous is it, that the custom is always observed to admi-

nister the sacrament to the men before they ascend. Accidents do sometimes occur, but, from the caution generally taken, they are now much guarded against.

As the shades of evening begin to creep over the sky, and the vault above to assume its sable garb, these countless lamps are lighted simultaneously. With all the speed of the lightning's flash they suddenly glitter before the eye, that is equally surprised and delighted with the novel scene. It looks like a new creation, whose instantaneous birth it has witnessed. St. Peter's, in its immense extent, is one blaze of light, the perfect outline, traced in fire, standing out against the dark night. Streams of light are encircling the dome, giving a perfect idea of its shape and size. The ball stands forth in bold relief; and above all, the emblem of Christianity glitters as if it were studded with diamonds of matchless lustre, or as if the stars had descended from their courses to do it homage; from its exalted position reminding one of the cross that is said to have appeared to Constantine in the sky, accompanied with the words *Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα*. The brilliant light falling from the lamps upon the two exquisite fountains, which eject into the air so large a volume of water, gives

a hundred different tints to the descending spray ; the struggling foam appearing white as snow, while a soft, but subdued melody falls upon the ear.

The surrounding gloom, made more apparent by the swift advance of night, throws the figure of the church out in all its beautiful proportions, convincing us, probably, more strongly than any day-view, of the great height and extent of the building. The effect is different at various distances. It is truly splendid as viewed from the piazza, the whole neighbourhood lighted as if by the evening sun. As you retire to the bridge of St. Angelo, or to the more remote parts of the city, glimpses of the temple are obtained full of grandeur and loveliness. From the Pincian hill, which is raised like a wall to the east of the city, it looks like a palace of stars, far more beautiful than all the imaginings of poets or dreams of romance. It is the personification of ideal beauty, an object which the mind can look at with pleasure, and feel its thoughts borne away to realms of spirits, leaving the earth with its sombre hues and shadows far behind. The calm night of Italy, with the balmy air barely fanned by the wind that has careered through the waste of the Campagna, and just enough starlight to point out the bold outline of

some ruin still battling with time, are in unison with the feelings, as we gaze with silent attention across the crowded city and the murmuring Tiber to the sacred mount of the Vatican. To the waking sense it is like a dream, where fancy has been the architect; but the "baseless fabric" is touched with a pencil of light, and finished by undoubted reality. The scene is so new and unexpected, that it leaves its luminous outlines as strongly printed on the memory, as the figure of St. Peter's itself is on the gloomy sky. With me, at least, it is one of the last objects that it will retain, being still one of those prominent spots that will remain developed when the other impressions of a southern clime will have altogether declined.

It is said, and I believe truly, that the illumination takes place principally to gratify English eyes. This, with the many other interesting sights, draws a large concourse of strangers to Rome, who leave a considerable sum of money behind them. It becomes a matter of some difficulty at this season to procure lodgings or accommodation at the hotels, and I have seen more than one family passing the entire day in the carriage, as it rested, loaded with baggage and mud, in the Piazza di Spagna. On Easter evening, when the lighting takes place, the

large space in front of St. Peter's is completely filled by equipages, waiting for the torch to be applied. Pedestrians run some risk of being run over in the narrow streets, for they rarely have the protection of footways or the advantage of lamps. The Pincian hill, which is on a different side of the river from St. Peter's, and nearly two miles from it, is also crowded, and mostly by our countrymen and women. From this spot the colonnades are lost, and the church looks diminished somewhat in size, but the view is otherwise very perfect—presenting not an absolute blaze of light, but tracing with wonderful accuracy, by the just disposition of the lamps, the various parts of the building.

The illumination continues<sup>a</sup> during the greater part of the night, which, as it advances to the midnight hour, rather adds to the effect by the deeper gloom of the sky. Although the lamps are countless, no accident occurs. They do not take fire; and so skilful are those employed at this work, that St. Peter's never sustains any injury. The practice certainly endangers the edifice; and when it is considered what time it took in building, and the vast sums that have been expended upon the work, as well as the natural pride with which it is looked upon by all classes, it is matter for surprise

that the Government should not altogether avoid the destructive element. But, no doubt, the plan pursued is the very best that could be devised under the circumstances; and everything is prepared of course for such a contingency. However, St. Peter's is constructed so admirably, the walls are so thick, and the roof so solid, that the hazard of danger from fire, either from within or without, is not great. Wood enters but in a very small degree into its construction, not even the doors being of that material, but of bronze.

## CHAPTER XVII.

CASTLE OF ST. ANGELO.—IL GIRANDOLA.—OBJECT OF PUBLIC REPRESENTATIONS.—THE CARNIVAL.

UPON the following evening the fire-works which are displayed from the Mole of Adrian\* take place. Il Girandola is a great favourite with the Roman populace. The windows in the houses of the neighbourhood fetch high prices for the evening in question; and the streets leading to the bridge of St. Angelo, from which the most complete view is obtained, are rendered almost impassable by the crowd. The mausoleum of Adrian is an immense circular building, and was erected at the period when the Romans had im-

\* In a dark period of five hundred years Rome was perpetually afflicted by the sanguinary quarrels of the nobles and people—the Guelphs and Ghibellines, the Colonna and Ursini. To this mischievous purpose (of defence) the remains of antiquity were most readily adapted. With some slight alterations, a theatre, an amphitheatre, a mausoleum, was transferred into a strong and spacious citadel. I need not repeat that the Mole of Adrian has assumed the title and form of the castle of St. Angelo.—GIBBON'S *Decline and Fall*, vol. iv. p. 445.

bibed the spirit of Egyptian architecture. The Popes have repaired and converted it to some use. It is now the castle of St. Angelo, communicating by a covered passage with the Vatican, by which his Holiness can make a speedy retreat in case of danger. Its situation is upon a gentle eminence, placed opposite the bridge to which it gives its name, and completely commanding the pass of the river. A few cannon are turned towards the city, to awe the inhabitants, should they be disposed to become hostile or to be weary of Papal government. It contains a guard of soldiers, and is the place where the Papal standard floats in the air upon the days which redound to the honour of the States of the Church.

The erection of these fire-works is very expensive. They are formed in various patterns on the exterior of the castle. Rockets of every colour, and almost without number, are prepared. At ten o'clock at night the display commences, when the works, wheels, &c. on the castle-walls are ignited. They are on so grand a scale, covering such an extensive surface, that they are really beautiful objects. At some distance they look like characters of fire traced on the dark vault of the heavens. What adds greatly to the effect, is the placid sur-

face of the Tiber flowing beneath the walls. For some hundred yards the blue or crimson light is reflected upon the water, changing in hue and intensity every minute; at one time an apparent sheet of fire, at another the motion of the current giving it the appearance of infinite circles of flame.

But the grandest display is reserved for the last. The top of the castle, which I may call the crater of the coming volcano, is filled with an amazing number of rockets and other projectiles: said to be worth some thousand *scudi*. These at about eleven o'clock are launched from the summit into the mid air, while an explosion takes place from the same spot. The spectacle is magnificent, and during its continuation equals the eruption of a volcano, which I believe it is intended to represent. Ten thousand rockets enter on their airy course, traced as it is by a stream of light, when they one by one burst, scattering to the elements their star-like particles, and are succeeded by others to take the same flight. The base remains a mass of lurid fire, now for a moment slumbering, and suddenly shooting forth again with renewed and resistless force. The night behind looks black as ink, defining with the utmost precision each rocket and shooting flame. But probably the chief addition

to the effect is from the glassy stream of the Tiber. It reflects all the operations of the castle of St. Angelo in a thousand different hues, and looks like a broad path of light intersecting the city. The gleam, as the works proceed, runs upon the water with a rapidity which the eye can scarcely follow; and on either side the bridge the spectacle seems renewed, illumining the whole way until it is lost in the curve of the river. The towers of some of the churches are revealed by the light, and the majestic dome of St. Peter's rises out of the gloom like one of the Appenine summits descried at the morning dawn, ere the mists have rolled away.

The people and the place formed just such a picture as would have been worthy the pencil of Gherardo de la Notte. The faces of every one had that glare imparted by the light which is so well expressed in the pictures of that painter. But probably the appearance of the Roman crowd on this occasion would have looked too unearthly, and might have suited better with some mysterious subject or scene. The tints thrown by the flame upon the features reminded me strongly of Vaitrinck's superb painting in the Fesch gallery, which any one that has been fortunate enough to see can never forget. It is the Flight into

Egypt. Joseph leads Mary and the heavenly child through a dark and trackless way, seated upon an ass, while an angel flies along, just above them, in an attitude of wonderful ease, holding in his hand, to guide them on their journey, a brilliant torch, the light from which falls upon the faces of all three, disclosing the beauty of the Virgin and the babe, and the fine Jewish cast of Joseph's head, giving to all an appearance perfectly life-like.

The balance of probability would seem to rest in the opinion that these shows are provided by the Government, not for the amusement of the people alone, but also to engross that excess of spirits which might take a course prejudicial to the established order of things. This has ever been the policy of despotic governments, or where the chief power resides mostly with the crown. The attention which might be given to plot and enterprise, like steam escaping from the safety-valve, is applied in another and by no means formidable direction. From these shows being annual, the people expect them, and anticipate them with pleasure. Such would seem also to be the object the emperors had in view in providing the expensive entertainments of the Colosseum. The hardy soldier and the

turbulent citizen were attracted to these *fêtes*, and in the excitement of the moment were disposed to forget the thirst of conquest and the desire of plunder, as well as to be less sensible of the dreams of freedom. Our Gallican neighbours also require some such amusements. The character of both these people is very different from the British, both being excitable and volatile in no small degree. These, or a direr alternative, *émeutes*, become to them a necessary of life. To nature, as well as to our happy constitution, which secures sufficient liberty to every one, is to be ascribed the sober and grave demeanour of Englishmen. We may indulge the hope that they will continue to keep the spirit that may abound, only to preserve their fatherland, and to maintain their country's honour.

The Carnival, as the name imports,\* means a season dedicated more than usually to the use of flesh. It takes place in the week preceding Lent, when, in consideration of the abstinence that is to prevail, there is free liberty to eat, drink, and be merry, in the widest sense. The theatre of the

\* The word is formed of the Italian *carn-a-vale*, which Du Cange derives from *carn-a-val*, by reason the flesh then goes to the pot, to make amends for the season of abstinence ensuing.—CHAMBERS' *Dictionary*.

week's amusement is the Corso, which in its entire length is given up to it. As in the case of some of the greater processions, business is at a stand; the shops are converted into boxes, and every window, from which a view may be had, is tastefully arranged with carpets and drapery. These are let out, and, in some instances, produce a rich harvest to the proprietors. It may be well said that all the inhabitants of Rome are to be found in the Corso on these days. They are, however, a well-conducted mob; and, owing to a plentiful sprinkling of military and police, no irregularity occurs. The clergy alone studiously stand aloof. They are never to be seen; in which they act prudently, as the dress of some, the monks in particular, might cause them to be mistaken for a portion of the masquerade.

The Carnival is under the especial care of the authorities. It is opened by the governor of Rome and the senator. They drive through the Corso in two of the most magnificent carriages I ever saw, attended by servants in the richest liveries; after which formality the amusements begin. As great crowds are attracted to the Corso on these occasions, the jealous government betrayed their fears of popular movement by the strong force

of military that were posted along the line. In the Piazza Minganella, the Piazza della Posta, and the Piazza Venezia there could not have been less than several thousand men, well accoutred, and ready to act in case any "*Viva costituzioni*" should arise. The headsmen, ill-looking fellows enough, with their formidable axes, were quite sufficient of themselves to keep order. But, at the same time, the admirable bands of each regiment added greatly to the enjoyment of the day.

Masks are worn in profusion, and dresses, no matter how grotesque, are met with at every step. Men change their sex and put on women's apparel; and it is not unusual to see a gentle-dame with a beard that has not been shaven for a week, or a little abashed by a veritable moustache. Noses are worn, and, from the shape of these excrescences—imagination not nature being consulted—they give a truly ludicrous appearance to the wearers. Old women, with well starched caps and high-heeled shoes, are seen driving gentlemen's carriages, handling the whip with an energy quite foreign to an elderly female. Ladies sit in their vehicles, covering their dark tresses with an artist's white cap, thrown judiciously on one side, or else clad in the quaint costume of bygone times. Some of the

groups are excellent, both from the appearance they make, and from their characters being so well sustained. And then what adds a freshness to the whole scene is the universal spirit of good-humour which possesses all classes. Every one wears a smile, and seems delighted with the spectacle.

There is, however, a great sameness in the way the Carnival is eked out. Two lines of carriages are formed in the Corso, one driving from the Flaminian obelisk, near the Porta del Popolo, to the Piazza Venezia, the other extremity of the street; while the other line proceeds in the opposite direction. They thus at a slow pace consume the day. Every window as well as every carriage that passes is well supplied with the ammunition of the Carnival—*bon-bons* and comfits. When a carriage appears, the persons in the windows, perhaps, recognise some one, and a well-directed fire takes place, which, as in all engagements, is spiritedly returned. The window being the vantage-ground, generally carries the day; and the carriage is glad to make a rapid retreat, the ladies and gentlemen's dresses being well powdered with flour—not gunpowder, and it being a difficult matter to distinguish the colour of the carriage. The pedestrian is not exempted from these salutes; and fre-

quently he is well pelted by the fair but pitiless hand of some dark-eyed Italian. Carriages meeting each other also often make an attack. It is amusing to see them lying like vessels, deck to deck, the missiles of confectionary flying from one to the other like hail on a winter's day. It is often no easy matter to decide the victor; but the usages of war do not apply here, as the foiled adversary retires with his chariot complete, and in the best humour. When *bon-bons* are exhausted, flour is used, which leaves the garments of the unlucky passengers in a truly pitiable condition.

This puerile amusement is almost too much to last for a week; the first and last days are the best, in the interim the excitement subsides. Upon the day that concludes the Carnival there is a slight variation. Every one appears at the approach of evening with a lighted taper, and endeavours most assiduously to extinguish that of every one else, and to preserve his own burning. Those who occupy the windows have also their wax tapers, so that at this period the city looks as if it were illuminated; but, from the successful efforts to put them out, they diminish in number very quickly, and upon the lapse of half an hour the twilight finds the windows deserted, and the Corso almost empty.

Rome during the Carnival is perfectly unlike itself. To see a city of churches and priests giving itself up for seven days to sports absolutely childish, agrees ill with the established order of things, and leaves one at a loss how to account for it. If the extravagant scene were enacted at Paris, it had been quite in keeping with the place and character of the people. But here in sober Rome, and under the eyes of the Pope, the stranger is astonished to find a large part of the population conducting themselves as if they acknowledged no restraint. I can understand the procession which often takes place in public, for religion is its ostensible object ; but the absurdities of the Carnival are only the exhibition of Punch on a large scale, and very unsuitable, it would be thought, to a place which consults in everything the dignity of the Church.

The period, too, is ill chosen—the week that ushers in Lent. Certainly the thoughts of the community can dwell but little upon the abstinence or austerities of that holy season, while they have the days of the Carnival, with its exhibitions and its too probable immorality, to keep them engaged. No preparation could be worse for religious duty, and seems to be done in the spirit of those in

some countries, who provide a condemned criminal, at the time just prior to punishment, with the most exquisite enjoyments, thinking his road will be lightened more by levity and luxury than by truer and more solid consolations. It is said that a crusade was some time ago preached against the Carnival, every priest setting his face against it; but so undisguised was the hostility of the people to any movement of the sort, and so close their attachment to their periodical enjoyment, that it was considered prudent to abandon the attempt. Authority, it was judged, might prove ineffectual in such a case, and that it would be best to leave the matter to public opinion, which generally is found to abate whatever is inconsistent with the spirit of the times.

There can be but little doubt that the Carnival is the remains of an old Roman custom which has been handed down from age to age, its origin being forgotten or clouded in obscurity. It is not improbable that it is the Saturnalia. Many of the characters which marked it are common to the Carnival. There is the same freedom, and the same love of mirth. Their duration, also, is alike—seven days. The Saturnalia took place in December; but it was an easy matter to alter to

February the time of their celebration. The heads of the Church may originally have thrown no opposition in the way of its observance, particularly as the Roman people were called upon to forego the objectionable Bacchanalia, as well as the barbarous shows and combats of the Colosseum. It will be thus no honour to the Pope and cardinals that they foster in their bosom a pagan custom.

Some would have it that it is self-interest that reconciles the Government to the buffoonery of the Carnival, as it tends greatly to support the city by the influx of strangers from all parts of Italy. But we should not hastily believe that such a motive would afford sufficient reason for the protection or forbearance of the Government.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

MODERN ROME. — POPULATION OF ANCIENT ROME. — MALARIA. — PINCIAN HILL. — THE CORSO. — PALACES. — EGYPTIAN OBELISKS. — OSTENTATION OF THE POPES. — MARKETS. — FOUNTAINS. — THE TIBER. — THE CAPITOL. FORUM. — ARCH OF CONSTANTINE. — ARCH OF TITUS. — TEMPLES. — CONVENTS. — CONCLUSION.

MODERN Rome occupies but a small portion of the original city; it may be a fifth that is enclosed by the wall which still remains, though it is difficult upon this subject to speak with absolute certainty. The present city touches the wall only at the north, where it declines to the Tiber, but in some other points it does not approach nearer to it than two miles, the intervening space being mostly filled with vineyards or villas of the Roman nobles, which generally have ample grounds and gardens attached. The city is chiefly confined to the banks of the Tiber, which runs through it, but it is far larger and more populous on the north-east side. This is the quarter upon which stand the Forum, the Colosseum, and the palace of the

Cæsars, as well as the chief monuments of Rome. Upon the opposite side lies the chief attraction of the modern city, the church of St. Peter.

There is a general aspect of desolation as soon as the frequented streets are left. You do not find yourself in the country, but amongst old walls covered with ferns and weeds, and crumbling into further ruin. Lofty gateways, retaining in the centre a mask or head, coarsely carved, and sometimes an inscription, remain in considerable number, leading no more to a sumptuous building, but serving as the entrance to a field planted with a few vines and reeds. Many an old pile meets the view; broken arches and prostrate towers, in many cases so dismantled as to be subjects of but little interest. The capitals of columns, friezes and entablatures, are of frequent occurrence. Almost every stone you tread on has its tale to tell, having been once in use: "*nullum est sine nomine saxum.*" The peasants, meanly clad and few in number, enter the city, or return from market; while on the paved highways a few cars roll lazily along; or a cardinal's carriage makes its appearance, the high colours of both it and the rider contrasting sadly with the graver hues which overspread the neighbourhood.

It has been questioned, whether the population that has been assigned to the palmy days of Rome could have lived within the walls. I am inclined to think that this opinion has been formed without duly considering the habits of the people, at least so far as we can judge of them by their successors. Independently of the houses being lofty and commodious, they generally accommodate four or five families. Each family occupies one tier of apartments, and are numbered *primo piano, secundo, tertio, &c.* In very few instances is one house appropriated to a single possessor. Thus, at least four families would have inhabited the space which in London is only sufficient for one.

In their private houses their chambers appear to have been on a very small scale, as we see them at Pompeii, and that in the best houses; they could have been very little larger than the bed that occupied them. They spent but little of their time at home. The ample chambers of the baths served to collect the people together, not only for the sake of ablution, but for amusement and conversation also. The artisan probably worked at his trade in the open air, as many do at present in that mild climate, satisfied with the shelter and comfort of a roof only at night.

In further proof of the city of Rome having contained the inhabitants ascribed to it by old authors, we are to recollect that almost the whole space circumscribed by the walls was occupied by houses. The open spaces or squares seem to have been few, and contracted in extent. The Forum Trajanum remains just as it was in the days of the emperor whose name it bears. It is little more than half the extent of Trafalgar Square. The Forum at the slope of the Capitol, no doubt the largest open spot in the old city, if we take the dimensions from the temple of Jupiter Stator and the arch of Severus, on to the triumphal arch of Titus and the temple dedicated to Faustina, will not be found larger than one of our modern squares. Yet this is

“The forum, where the immortal accents glow,  
And still the eloquent air breathes—burns with Cicero.”

The temples were both numerous and magnificent, but the houses of the inhabitants, probably, were as closely attached to them as the mean dwellings of the moderns are to the palaces of the present nobility. It must have been an immense city when the streets were crowded with houses from the Porta Lorenzo to the Ostia Gate—from the Porta del Popolo to that of San Giovanni in Late-

rano. Although the Romans indulged to excess in the luxuries of living and dress, they had not acquired the taste for suites of apartments. In this respect utility alone was their object, not ostentation. Hence, if their descendants have handed down to us their modes of living, which there seems no reason to controvert, the city of Rome would have contained as great a number of inhabitants as a modern city four times its extent.

The houses of Rome are well and durably built, but they lose greatly in appearance by being roofed with red tiles. Very little wood enters into their composition. The stairs are always of coarse black stone or marble; the chambers, also, being covered with flat tiles of various patterns. They must be much less liable to fire than ours, and, for the sake of this advantage, we should do well to imitate them. A fire might be kindled upon any part of the stairs without any fear of injury. Accidents by fire are, in consequence, almost unknown.

Nothing can be better than the supply of water; a stream is brought by pipes to every house, which flows into a capacious cistern, that is common to all the families in possession. The method of supplying the several apartments is very simple, but peculiar to this city. A strong iron wire de-

scends from the window of each "*piano*," exactly into the cistern ; upon this the vessel for drawing the water traverses. It runs down by its own gravity, and is drawn up again with the greatest ease by a rope and pulley.

The ascent of some forty of these stone steps to the apartments is a work of regular labour, and very unlike the ease with which the parlour and drawing-room are entered at home. Rooms on the ground-floor are always considered unhealthy, from deleterious exhalations which more or less prevail throughout the year. It is the evil spirit of malaria, which dwells in the Eternal City. The palaces are all strongly vaulted underneath, and the free exit and entry of air allowed ; in consequence of which the first floor is frequently ten feet from the ground. Malaria is not much felt during the winter months, but in summer it is very active, causing fevers in great abundance. It is not necessarily confined to the least cleanly or narrow parts of the city, for the Ghetto, although the narrowest and filthiest, is generally exempt from its visitations. Malaria, however, be it owing to what cause it may, is giving way before sanitary regulations. The streets are now kept properly cleaned, and Rome is no longer a disgrace, by the

offensive filth which was suffered a few years ago to accumulate in every place. The supply of water is of great use in carrying off vegetable and animal matter, and latterly the Government has forbid the butcher to kill his beasts in the city—a wise precaution, as the offal of the slaughter-house could not be otherwise than prejudicial to the public health in the warm climate of Rome.

The part of the city usually inhabited by the English is the highest and best that could be selected. The Piazza di Spagna is an open space, having the best hotels to be found at Rome; the promenade of the Pincian hill being within the reach of a few yards. None of those lanes, shocking by their appearance and effluvia, are in the neighbourhood, and it is a considerable distance from the muddy stream of the Tiber, which is no doubt an advantage. The Via Barberino, one of the best streets, leads directly through the Porta del Popolo to the agreeable drive of the Borghese Gardens, or to the Flaminian Way. The Via Condotti, the great mart for pictures and mosaics, joins it to the Corso; while the Strada di due Marcelli conducts the tourist either to the open country through the different gates, or invites his steps to the wonders of the Forum.

A pleasant road has been constructed on the Pincian hill. It is about an English mile in length. It is kept in the best order, and is tastefully planted. As it is higher than the roofs of the houses, the view of the city is the best that can be had. The eye strays over a large mass of buildings, containing little either novel or interesting. The tiles give an old and dingy appearance to everything. Numberless are the domes and towers of the churches. But in the distance, far above all, arise majestically the graceful proportions of St. Peter's. The situation has been well chosen, upon an eminence, just sufficient to display its beauties,—not to make them too prominent. It is free, too, from the fault which attaches to almost all the public buildings in the Eternal City—that they are crowded by mean hovels. The pillars of Trajan and Antonine rear their elegant figures into the tranquil air, bearing St. Peter and St. Paul, who have long since dispossessed the imperial occupants. The keys in St. Peter's hands, the chosen emblem of Roman power, can be plainly seen. Some glimpses of the Tiber are caught, but they add nothing to the landscape. At the back of St. Peter's the forms of some hills are spread, which obstruct any further view.

The Pincian is the place to see Roman life upon Sundays or the gala-days of the Church. A great number of equipages congregate there. The prevailing taste is that of the cardinal—their livery and coaches vieing with his gaudy hues. A long string is formed, where you can observe the several gradations of Roman nobility. They move along at a funeral's pace, while the occupants enjoy the warm sunshine and talk over the news of the day.

Upon these occasions the ladies display their charms to the best advantage; I, however, can say but little for the beauty of the Italian women. It is, no doubt, hard to please an Englishman, his eye being accustomed to such perfect standards at home. The Roman ladies err on the side of *embonpoint*. Their eyes are dark, but neither their complexion nor their features seemed peculiarly striking. I saw one handsome woman, but subsequently found that this was no exception to the general rule, as her birth-place was England, having been some time before united to a Roman nobleman.

The principal street is the Via del Corso. It runs parallel with the Tiber, and is almost the whole length of the city on the north bank. Much

higher opinions are formed of it than it deserves ; it is scarcely so wide as the Strand at its narrowest part. The shops here are the best in Rome ; but the business and commerce of the city are very circumscribed ; they do not surpass those of a good country town in England. The only activity that trade exhibits is in the sale of pictures and mosaics and other works of art. From the excellence that the inhabitants have attained in these departments, native talent is altogether directed to them, and a ready market is always at hand. There are no manufactories ; the various wants of the populace are therefore supplied from other sources. The people have an air of listlessness, and are clearly indisposed to an active life—faults engendered not so much by their own natural habits or tastes, as called into being by the reprehensible policy which rules the affairs of the Church. They themselves set an example of indolence, and assign half the week to the anniversaries of saints, which produces its certain effects among all classes of society.

The Corso contains many fine palaces, the chief of which are the Palazzo Borghese and Doria. The first is very extensive, and, taking its many suites of apartments and its rich decorations into account,

would not be unsuitable for a crowned head. Its gallery of pictures and statues is one of the best. The possessor is an enlightened man, who takes pleasure in opening his *salons*, not only to the inspection of the public, but for the instruction of those artists, foreign as well as native, who have made the arts their profession. The gallery contains many deservedly esteemed pictures, among which are the "Sybil" of Domenichino, a "Crucifixion" by Vandyke, as well as a host of others by all the great masters.

The Doria palace is of a different construction. Its appearance is light and elegant; it is also a considerable building, and contains a gallery rich in works of art. There are here some superb landscapes of Claude Lorraine and of Poussin. The pictures of Rome are not usually of this class, so that on that account they are well worthy inspection.

Palaces abound; there is hardly a street without one or two—according to the wealth or taste of the proprietor, an improvement or a disgrace to the neighbourhood. The Palazzo Farnese is a very fine square structure; but one views it with less pleasure, as it is mostly constructed with the pillage of the rich remains of antiquity. It

now belongs to the King of Naples, and his representative at the Papal court resides in it. The Palazzo Barberini, placed in a commanding position near the Quirinal palace, possesses an imposing and elegant front terminating in two wings. It is a noble edifice for a private individual; but the head of the house is guilty of a heavy sin, which, in the opinion of the lovers of art at least, the absolution of all the churches of Rome cannot wash out. It is notorious that it has been exclusively built with stones taken from the Colosseum.

The Egyptian obelisks, which are found in various quarters of the city, serve greatly, by the interest that attaches to them, as well as by their own positive beauty, to adorn the city. There are no less than twelve, all carried from vanquished Egypt, as the trophies of conquest, by the proud commanders of the Mistress of the World. They are quadrilateral, and formed of one block of red stone—I conclude, granite of a fine grain. They are generally covered with hieroglyphics, the cutting of which is as sharp and fresh at the present day as it was 3000 years ago.

During the calamities of the city these obelisks were thrown down and much injured. Some were broken into several pieces. To Sixtus V. and

Pius VI. chiefly we are indebted for their restoration. The largest is opposite the church of St. John Lateran's. It stands before the north portico, where it was placed A. D. 1588, in the pontificate of Sixtus V. It formerly stood in the Circus Maximus, where it had been erected by the Emperor Constantius. It is perhaps the largest in the world. When placed on its present pedestal, from its injured state, it was necessary to take off four palms. Notwithstanding, the whole height, with pedestal and ornaments at the top, is about 150 feet. The total weight of the shaft is about 445 tons.

Gibbon remarks concerning this obelisk, "Several of these extraordinary columns had been transported to Rome by Augustus and his successors, as the most durable monuments of their power and victory; but there remained one obelisk, which, from its size or sanctity, escaped for a long time the rapacious vanity of the conquerors. It was designed by Constantine to adorn his new city; and after being removed by his order from the pedestal where it stood, before the temple of the sun at Heliopolis, was floated down the Nile to Alexandria. The death of Constantine suspended the execution of his purpose, and this obelisk was destined by his son to the ancient

capital of the empire. A vessel of uncommon strength and capaciousness was provided to convey this enormous weight of granite, at least an hundred and fifteen feet in length, from the banks of the Nile to those of the Tiber. The obelisk of Constantius was landed about three miles from the city, and elevated by the efforts of art and labour in the great circus of Rome.”

It is indeed a magnificent monument, and a suitable gift from the Roman emperor to the Roman people. It cannot be viewed without calling to mind the genius and skill of the great people who inhabited the banks of the Nile, or, acknowledging the prowess of the Roman hosts, who embarked in unceasing toil, until they deposited their precious freight in the seven-hilled city. It bears upon one side the name of Constantine.

There is a beautiful obelisk on the Monte Citorio. It is that which Augustus set up as a sun-dial in the Campus Martius. It bears the following inscription:—

IMP. CAESAR. DIVI. F.  
 AVGVSTVS,  
 PONTIFEX MAXIMVS,  
 IMP. XIII. COS. XI. TRIB. POT. XIV.  
 AEGYPTO IN POTESTATEM  
 POPVLI ROMANI REDACTA,  
 SOLI DONVM DEDIT.

It was placed in its present position in the eighteenth year of Pius VI. The whole height, with its pedestal, is 110 feet. It was, when found, much damaged, having been broken into four pieces. The proportions of this work of Egyptian art are considered to be the best of any of those to be found at Rome. The position it occupies is also high and commanding.

There is another large obelisk in the open space near the Porta del Popolo, called the Flaminian. This, as the inscription declares, was presented to the Roman people by Augustus, Pontifex Maximus. While on another side, one of the Popes, Sixtus V., has, in wretched taste, inscribed his own name, with the addition of "Pontifex Maximus" also; announcing that it has been rededicated, and the stain it acquired from "impure superstition" wiped away. The whole height is about 116 feet. It was broken in three places. A fine fountain flows at its base, the water of which is guarded by two sphinxes.

Another large obelisk stands in the centre of the amphitheatre opposite St. Peter's. Caligula brought this obelisk to Rome, by whom it was erected in the Vatican circus. It was removed into its present position by Fontana, the architect

of Sixtus V. The whole height, with pedestal and cross at the summit, is 132 feet. It had been thrown down like the rest and injured, but was, as I have remarked, subsequently restored. This obelisk is formed of a single block, and possesses no hieroglyphics. The same feeling operated with Sixtus. His name stands inscribed upon the monument. His overweening vanity induced him to place it there.

Ostentation is the besetting sin of the Popes. Afraid, it is but too probable, that they shall build up no structure of fame which shall hand down their names to posterity, they seize every opportunity of placing it before the public, and do not at all regard the injury they inflict upon the national monuments by so doing.\* The juxtaposition of a Sixtus and a Cæsar looks something more than ridiculous. Does not the attempt savour something of the frog and the ox in the fable? In the same spirit we find a marble tablet announcing in large letters that a Pope has repaired an arch of the great aqueduct, or rendered the Pincian hill an agreeable promenade. He had been a very unwise prince if he suffered the supply of the

\* This remark would apply more to the Flaminian than the Vatican obelisk, where Augustus occupies one side, and Sixtus the other.

“*acqua felice*” to be diminished. The parading of his name upon the work might seem to favour the opinion that he was a misanthrope, and that this act was the exception to the general rule. But the Pope’s designation there, at all events, will not be able to hide the fact from the world, that this great and useful work is essentially Roman, and belongs to the times of the emperors, not to his.

This ostentation has also made its way into the museums. There are many vases and statues which have a scroll attached to them, with the words “*Munificentia Pii Sexti,*” &c. ; and in some cases, with more modesty, we find the gift recorded by a simple “*Cura Clementis,*” &c.

I observed a well supplied market to be held in the street opposite the Pantheon. Among the usual supplies of meat and fowl generally found in such places, a wild boar occasionally appeared, with which some of the nobility might make a feast in imitation of that of Horace. But a strange addition to the table was sometimes offered for sale—a porcupine. This, I understand, is the *ne plus ultra* of a Roman delicacy—the very dish for a cardinal’s feast when he entertains the magnates of the land. It should be dressed with the quills on, if only to illustrate Shakspeare’s simile, when the

unearthly visitant's disclosures to Hamlet threaten to make

“ each particular hair to stand on end,  
Like quills upon the fretful porcupine.”

The city of Rome derives not the least of its ornaments from the number and variety of its fountains. From the aqueducts, that pour their liquid streams in great profusion from the surrounding hills, the supply of water is not only sufficient for the city, but also to keep these refreshing fountains in continual play. The largest and most beautiful is the Fontana di Frevi, erected at the end of the Stamp-Office. There are several characteristic groups in marble. From beneath some artificial rocks the water bursts with wild force, and rolls into an ample basin in front. The murmuring of the water has a very grateful effect, situated as it is amid the bustle and in the centre of the city. The water is as clear as crystal, and as cool as the “*fons Brandusia*,” which Horace celebrates. Amid the summer heats the freshness imparted to the air from the neighbourhood must be in the highest degree grateful.

There is a handsome fountain opposite the church of St. Bruno, which jets forth the water of

the *acqua felice*. Moses is represented in alto-relievo, in the act of striking the rock, as the children of Israel murmured for the refreshing streams. In obedience to his word it gushes wildly at his feet.

In the centre of the Piazza di Spagna stands a fountain of a novel but interesting design. In the centre of an oval basin is a Roman galley, beneath whose rising stern and bows the foaming current dashes with considerable force. She looks like a trireme ascending the Tiber, proudly impelled by her rowers, fresh from naval conquest.

The Piazza Navona is ornamented by a very large fountain. In the centre of the basin stands an obelisk; around the base are grouped four spirited human figures, representing the four great rivers, beneath each of which a large volume of water takes its course. This fountain is the work of Bernini.

There is nothing in Rome that disappoints one more than the Tiber. From its being connected so much with classic story, we picture to ourselves a broad and rapid stream, reflecting the deep blue sky, and rolling its limpid waters to the sea. The river is narrow, and sunk in its bed like a ditch. Its waters are of a deep muddy colour; its banks teem with filth, and I should as soon use the

water of a sewer. It was well that it was night when Horace gives the direction,

“ Ter uncti

Transnanto Tiberim, somno quibus est opus alto;”

as at any other time I think it doubtful if any one could be prevailed upon to do so. The bridge of St. Angelo, formerly the Pons Ælius, crosses it, and leads to the Vatican. It is wide and solid, and is adorned by several statues. The other bridges possess little beauty.

A few decked boats trade from Ostia to the outskirts; and a couple of steamers, about as large as those plying on the Thames with passengers, constitute the only vessels on its surface. A novel mode for taking fish may daily be seen here. Four bag nets are placed upon poles, crossing at right angles. This is placed so that it revolves like a mill by the current, and in its revolution, if it has captured a “*mullus trilibris*,” or any other of the scaly tribe, it is so arranged as to cast it into a boat that lies beside.

The ferry-boat of the Tiber is also curious in its way, and worth notice. A strong rope reaches across the river, and is firmly attached to either wall; upon this a pulley is managed to traverse,

from which there is a rope to the front of the boat. When the Charon of the Tiber wishes to cross with his living freight, he merely turns the bow in that direction, retaining the boat in her position by a large rudder. The force of the current upon the side is the moving power. Without a pole or oar she glides rapidly across, and the pulley steadily advances along the larger rope as if it were driven by some invisible agency. "*Il capitano*" takes a *baiocco*, and, as you take your seat, politely bids you a "*Buono giorno, signore.*"

The Capitol, or, as it is called, *Il Campidoglio*, lies at the south-west end of the city. This famous hill has but a small elevation, but it is probable that the valley on either side has risen by the accumulated rubbish of centuries. The ambitious summit was considered a good site for a church; accordingly that of Ara Cœli has been erected there, and is approached by a dizzy flight of steps. Another part contains the palace appropriated to *il senatore*, an honourable officer of the government. The museum of the Capitol is also here, full of the choice remains of antiquity; opposite to which is the picture-gallery, containing neither a very extensive nor varied collection. Guercino's greatest work is here, "*L'Ensevelissement de St. Petronille,*"

a painting larger than the "Transfiguration." It is marked by that master's distinctive excellence. The figures at the burial have the indications of emotion indelibly stamped upon them. The colouring is strong and expressive, every part marked by the bold touches which discover the pencil of Guercino.

In the centre of the open space on the summit stands a fine bronze equestrian figure of Marcus Aurelius. The horse is very spirited, and is said to have obtained the warm eulogiums of Michael Angelo. It is the most perfect equestrian statue that remains, and has so much value attached to it, that an especial officer is appointed for its care, called '*il custode di cavallo.*'

Immediately as you descend to the west, the "eloquent Forum" bursts upon the view. It is the site of the senate-house—that intellect which for ages conquered and governed the world, gave away crowns and dethroned kings, and exercised so great an influence upon the happiness and fortunes of all people, from the Tiber to the Borysthenes—from the northern boundary of Britain to the Pillars of Hercules. It is the place where Tully pronounced his indignant oration against Catiline—and where the patriotic Cato was wont to address

the assembled fathers, full of the spirit of freedom. Here kings sued for their sceptres, or princes petitioned for aid. Time has not only broken up the senate, but no stone remains to attest the site of the palladium of freedom. It has frowned darkly upon the buildings of the spot, effaced some from the scene, and its hand is still at work upon the monuments which remain. It has half buried the arch of Septimius Severus, as if we had arrived at a new era, that was ashamed of the institutions which had given it birth—war, rapine, and blood.\* The temples are not spared; time has profaned their sacredness. Its fingers have been busy in

\* “But the gigantic grasp of Roman ambition comprehended the most powerful of the earth, and made them drink deep of degradation. The usual lot of prisoners of war was slavery—a practice bad enough, but common to the rest of antiquity with Rome; the institution of triumphs is her peculiar glory and distinction. Something may be said in palliation of a victor, who, having possession of his enemy, obviates the danger of further resistance or revolt, by committing him to that narrow prison from which alone there is no chance of escape. But when a Roman general’s arms were crowned with success, the prisoners of highest estimation were carefully reserved; and when all danger from their life was at an end, and their degradation, as far as external circumstances can degrade, was complete, after they had been led in chains before their conqueror’s car, to swell his vanity and to satiate the pride of Rome, they were sent to perish, unheeded and unlamented, by the hands of the executioner, and the thanksgiving due to the gods and the triumphal banquet were delayed until the savage ritual was duly performed. ‘Those even who triumph, and

overthrowing their altars, and stretching upon their roofs and pillars the mantle of green weeds, which is the favourite attire of ruin. "Two or three columns and many a stone," still in their decay eminently beautiful, convey the idea of their present situation. How forcibly do they appeal to the mind, and array our feelings in their behalf, sympathising with their fallen state! How full of contemplation they are, bringing back things fraught with interest, but forgotten! Once the seats of pomp and pride, their sun has gone down, and left the walls involved in impenetrable darkness. Where are the crowds that

therefore grant longer life to the hostile chiefs, that from their presence in the procession the Roman people may derive its fairest spectacle and fruit of victory, yet bid them to be led to prison when they begin to turn their chariots from the Forum to the Capitol; and the same day puts an end to the conqueror's command and to the life of the conquered.'—*In Verrem*, act ii, lib. v. 30. They led the prisoners to execution at the moment when the triumphal chariot began to ascend the Capitoline hill, in order, they said, that their moment of highest exultation might be that of their enemies' extremest agony. There is a needless barbarity and insolence in the whole proceeding which is peculiarly disgusting, and which was aggravated by the solemn hypocrisy of placing in the triumphal chariot a slave to whisper in the victor's ear, 'Remember that thou art a man,' when, in the same instant, they displayed so signal a disregard for the reverses to which humanity is exposed, and such contempt for the lessons which that warning ought to have taught."—*Historical Parallels*, vol. i., *Library of Entertaining Knowledge*.

visited them? Where is the priest? where the sacrifices covered with spotless garlands? where is the mingled acclaim of populace and priest? Upon all another day has arisen: the worshiper and the idols have gone: they are now the sanctuary of silence.

A little further on the cold grey wall of the Colosseum arises, exhibiting to the view that portion which has been honoured by time, and spared by the hand of the domestic barbarian. Its arches, although massive, appear light and beautiful, and are uniform, like a succession of casts from the same mould. Its form is sternly raised above the surrounding buildings, in different stages of decay, as if it felt a certain pride in successfully resisting the influences which have dismantled them. It is like the old oak of the forest, the last of the giant brood, with its black trunk and extended branches, which, while the storm has swept the rest to the earth, lifts itself amid the desolation.

A little further to the right the eye catches the triumphal arch of Constantine, almost as perfect at the present day as when it was first erected to commemorate the emperor's campaigns. The figure of the ancient triumphal arch is very beautiful. It is a detached building, consisting of a

central arch, and one of inferior dimensions on either side; above which, but preserving the most exact proportions, rises the entablature. It is generally profusely ornamented either with statues or basso-relievos, the subject recording the conquests of the victor. The melancholy captive, dragged from his mountain home to gratify the Roman populace, stands copied in the marble, while the heavy chains attest his wretched fortunes. We have figures of the Roman soldier, presenting to our view their muscular limbs and arms, and giving fair ideas of that energy which invaded and vanquished the less hostile kingdoms of Europe. They are replete, also, with the implements and engines of war. The victor is mostly represented on the interior of the arch, attended by the chained victims to ambition and the spoils of battle—the best representation, probably, that remains of the triumph that was wont, in the days of Roman greatness, to ascend the Capitol.

Much nearer, and raised above the road that led from the Forum to the Colosseum, stands the isolated arch of Titus. This has suffered considerably, the figures having been injured either wantonly or by the atmosphere. The arch is not so large as that of Constantine, but its proportions are very elegant. To

it also the greatest interest attaches, as it was built to commemorate Titus's subjugation of Judæa and the destruction of Jerusalem. The ornaments raised on the interior of the arch are the most wonderful that can be well conceived. There remains, copied in the stone, the sacred furniture of the temple of David. The emperor is represented triumphing, and the mystical vessels which were used in the service of Jehovah are carried in his train. The ark of the covenant is borne by the soldiers; and conspicuous appears what was made by express Divine direction, the sevenfold candlestick.

It is impossible to contemplate these objects without a feeling of awe; we are, as it were, brought into the presence of those objects which ministered to the worship of God within the confines of one nation, while all others were in total darkness as to religious truth. And yet here we behold the emblems of his nature proudly carried to swell the triumph, and to add to the honour of a pagan prince,—a spectacle regarded, no doubt, by the clamorous crowd as a defeat sustained by the God of the Jews at the hands of their numerous deities. But how little claim had they to that feeling! As well might the earthquake or the pesti-

lence, instruments which Providence sometimes uses in furtherance of its wise but inscrutable designs, lay claim to the work that they had done. The Romans were the instruments of Jewish punishment, and without their knowledge were fulfilling the page of prophecy. Theirs were "the eagles" that stooped to prey on the spoil of Judæa. The honour of that Being who presided equally over Gentile and Jew suffered nothing by such a scene, however the hearts of the sons of Jacob may have mourned, and their sighs have been as numerous as the willow leaves dropped upon the plain at the chill approach of autumn. At the advent of the Messiah the service of the Jewish temple was necessarily at an end. The types or shadows were no longer useful when the Being that was prefigured was come. They were the instruments of God's ordinances heretofore, and might be lawfully laid aside. This the Divine counsels thought necessary to put into execution by the strong hand of power, when that people, the objects of its protection for so many ages, relied upon them after their virtue was gone, and rejected the all-important revelation made for the benefit of mankind.

Some of the temples of the Forum remain to us still, having been long since converted into

churches. The temple dedicated by the servile senate to the wife of Marcus Antoninus preserves much of its form in its Christian application, and upon the front the words "*Divæ Faustinae*" remain, in nowise injured by time. How little she deserved this honour the voice of history plainly tells; an asylum would have been more suitable to her than a temple. The morals of the people must have been at a low ebb at the period, and the canker, from which may be dated the decline of the empire, had made its way already into the heart of society.

Upon the site of the temple of Romulus and Remus a church has arisen. The place where St. Peter and St. Paul are said to have been imprisoned is also similarly commemorated. The church is small, but it is always crowded with votaries.

Several convents have been erected in or near the Forum. The monks are seen walking indolently along, characterised by their various habits. We might imagine them pilgrims of the genius of the old city, their loose dress being not unlike the toga. The contemplative mind, as it is full of the interest kindled by the spot, is frequently arrested in its occupation by the convent bell, calling the

inmates to prayer. As its sound rolls unimpeded through the arches of the Colosseum, and along the empty halls of the palace of the Cæsars, it is, as it were, their knell, asserting by its iron tongue the dominion of religion over the countless altars and aisles now lowly humbled before the spirit of truth.

Such is the Roman Forum now ! In human things there are several stages ; it has passed that of decline, and is now in decay. The time may not be far distant when even fewer memorials of the consular or imperial days shall remain, and nothing but its name serve to identify the spot. Empires and their institutions are like human life ; they have their youth, their manhood, and their prime ; and when they have reached this, the seeds of change still shew themselves, and they go down the steep, perhaps as rapidly as they rose. They, too, shew "second childhood," and imbecility precipitates their doom. The old age of Rome was as destitute of strength as of counsel, and her vices adhered to her while her physical energy had gone. Although she did much to accelerate her fall, it may be mostly attributable to that instability which is inherent in all earthly things. Kingdoms are not permanent. Although built up by wisdom

gathered from every source, the history of the world records their rise and fall. The sites of powerful cities become a matter of doubt, and dynasties, whose dominion at one period reached from sea to sea, exist only in name. There is nothing eternal but truth! The efforts of the greatest minds gradually fade. The law of change and dissolution, that governs every moving thing, extends its influence upon their works. The creations of arbitrary power, or of a spirit instigated by renown, resist in vain the action of the elements and of time. The monuments of greatness are like those of the dead, serving their purpose for awhile, but sure to be broken and obliterated at last. But truth is permanent still, and an overruling Providence attests itself, while the power of the great Being, who regulates all things, remains always the same, and is brought home in every age, to every heart.

THE END.

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