

ROMAN RUINS.

THERE is nothing which it requires so much knowledge, taste, and previous preparation of mind to see with advantage, as ruins. Their interest always, excepting their picturesqueness, (which is not a very extensive element in Roman ruins,) is dependent upon an acquaintance with their original appearance and uses, and requires both an accurate knowledge of architecture and an antiquarian taste. It is enough, indeed, to excite a very dull imagination, to see even the ruins of the palace in which the Cæsars dwelt, to walk within the amphitheatre where the early Christians suffered, or to tread the pavement which Cicero's feet have pressed, and to look upon the remains of buildings which the eyes of the Apostle Paul certainly saw! But it is not so much the beauty or intrinsic interest of the ruins, as their associations, which thus moves us. Nothing, except Jerusalem, not even Athens, possesses associations so full and rich as Rome. But the ruins of Rome, considered merely as ruins of ancient magnificence, are certainly, on the whole, disappointing. They are not half as beautiful or effective as the common engravings lead you to expect to find them. From this sentence the Coliseum is to be excepted, but nothing else. In the first place it is an immense disappointment to find almost all the great masses of Roman ruins, to be of brick and not of stone. In the next place, it is disappointing to find the ruins so divided, producing so little the effect of an extensive desolation. Then, as a rule, with the exception of the ruins in the Forum, and the temples scattered about modern Rome and built into churches, there are very few columns or bits of striking ruin left in old Rome to attract the eye and please the taste. What is to be made out of the great shapeless pile of brick and mortar, called the ruins of Cæsar's Palace! or what picturesque effects are to be found in those massive remains, the Baths of Titus, Domitian, or Caracalla! All the interest there, is one of calculation and inference. The intrinsic beauty is very small.

The idea of the ruins of a great city such as Rome, will naturally be of a field covered with contiguous remains—here a few broken columns, there a confused pile of heavy stones a mass of crumbled towers and standing arches, all lying together in a grand chaos of splendid decay, and overgrown with ivy, or shaded with trees that have grown old since they sprung up between the chinks of fallen temples. Nothing can be less like this than the Ruins of Rome. There is

no place from which any extensive view as of a ruined city can be obtained. There is no manifest relation of the different ruins to each other. They are all separate, and must be hunted after. They do not present themselves. Indeed, it is a long and tedious business to ride about the area covered by old Rome in search of particular ruins. The original idea of a great city in ruins is quickly dissipated, and the mind is gradually reconciled to the necessity of taking up with the scattered remains of the very numerous edifices that constitute the ruins of Rome.

Having recovered from this disappointment, we are prepared to take the Roman ruins as we find them, and to take all the satisfaction in them which they are individually capable of giving. The Forum is not what any stranger will expect to find it, although it comes nearer to the ideal pattern than any other part of Rome. There stand the scanty remains of five or six temples, one with two, another with three, others with four or five columns, yet erect. The arch of Severus, a magnificent ruin, aids the effect—and the excavations of the few last years, bringing the actual floor of the old temple of (we forget what) into view, and the very pavement on which the Roman Senate passed to its deliberations, give this spot an intense power over the imagination. And yet it would be a great mistake to suppose that these remains give of themselves any true idea of the Forum. On the contrary, you soon learn, under proper antiquarian guidance, that the old Roman Forum was quite on one side of what you have hastily judged to be its position, and that the ancient Tribune was not comprehended within what is now called the Forum.

THE RHINE.

Coblentz is a fine old town, situated at the confluence of the Moselle with the Rhine. It is marked by a very peculiar church with four towers, some of the oldest houses in Europe, and a monument erected in 1812 to commemorate the expedition of the French to Moscow, when they were passing through in the expectation of an easy victory. Nothing can be finer than the sarcophagi of the Russian general, who, when he arrived in Coblentz, pursuing Napoleon's routed army to the gates of Paris, instead of destroying the monument, added the following inscription, still to be seen: "Vu et approuvé par nous commandant Russe de la ville de Coblenz, Janvier 1er, 1814."

A bridge of boats connects Coblentz with Ehrenbreitstein—a fortress of tremendous strength—to which is committed the defence of the Prus-