

*jeune* ; it is the brass pillar of the eternally revolving roulette-wheel of folly and fashion, frivolity and frenzy. Whirling, whirling, whirling, the Master of the Game—if you peeped beneath the green baize table you might see a cloven foot in a varnished boot, perchance—is never tired of crying “*Mes-sieurs, faites votre jeu !*” nor do the crowd of punters ever desist from staking time and health, honour and fortune, on the red or the black, the *pair* or the *impair*, the *passe* or the *manque*.

The Passage des Panoramas is sedulously industrious—for there is no greater error to suppose that vicious courses are unattended by hard labour : the life of a rake is as wearying, in its continual toil, as that of a galley-slave, and those who minister to the rake’s wants must earn their bread by the sweat of their brow, even as the ploughman or the miner earns his. “*Vive la bagatelle !*” may seem an easy cry enough ; but to make the bagatelle, and to bar-tar it, and puff it, and vend it, thousands must be up early and late, and know no rest. “Give but to nature that which nature needs”—you know the rest. But still there is as much industry, and a great deal more taste and talent, displayed in modelling and casting all these bronzes, in carving these caskets of oak and ivory, in chasing these bouquet-holders, in painting these fans, as in baking these loaves of rye-bread, or in sewing the skins of wild beasts together to cover our nakedness withal. That porcelain vase must have had hands to make it and to bake it, even as the coarse loaf has had ; and besides it has been covered with delicate miniatures and arabesques, and a loaf stands in no need of such decorations. Those kid-gloves, those patent-leather boots have to be cut and stitched and pressed and polished with a scrupulous delicacy, that is not needed in cobbling fig-leaves or wolves’ skins together. I grant the occupations frivolous, and the result only to pamper luxury, to coddle up voluptuousness ; but still brawny arms have hammered and welded those metallic nicknacks together ; thousands of patient eyes and delicate fingers have bent over those myriad gewgaws, and fashioned them into quaint and beautiful shapes. Honest labour—not always very well requited—has been banded together, and drilled, and disciplined, to produce the trifles and the toys that crowd the bazaars of the Passage des Panoramas.

*A Winter in Rome.*—Whatever you do, do not mount the tower of the Capitol, even though it is written in black and white in your guide-book that you must make that ascent first and of all things. “Murray” is a mighty pundit, and worthy of all honour ; but he has slept for once. Mount, if you will, I know not how many weary stairs ; ring merrily ; see a very pretty girl (probably she has gone by this, and you will not have the satisfaction of seeing even *her*), who will tell you in dulcet tones that no one ascends ; and tramp down again like the once famous king of France. Some enthusiast—probably your countryman—availed himself of so lofty and historical a situation, to plant the Italian tricolour on the summit of the tower. The S.P.Q. R., who lord it in the Campidoglio, plucked down the glorious, but to them offensive, and certainly most unwisely flaunted, pennon, and hermetically sealed the spot against the possibility of any more political pilgrimages. Somebody had done a very foolish thing ; and, jealous of the dignity of their office, they topped this travelling lunatic by committing an act more insane, and unfortunately more permanent. Still, though denied access to this the