

statue of Trajan which once crowned its summit, holding a globe in his grasp, is there no longer. That of St. Peter now stands there—rather out of place, it must be admitted, considering the scenes of battle and bloodshed which are represented below. It is said that the French had at one time entertained an intention of transporting this column to Paris. The first Napoleon, however, adopted the wiser and *mor*: becoming plan of celebrating his victories by the erection of his own splendid column in the Place Vendôme, in the execution of which he had only to borrow that of Trajan as a model, which was thus left to grace its original situation. There is another, only less celebrated than this of which I have been speaking, that of Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, which stands in the Piazza Colonna, about midway down the Corso. It is very beautiful, too, but wants the merit of originality, being a close copy of the other; and like that with its statue of Saint Peter, it has on the top the figure of Saint Paul.

Close at the foot of the Capitoline Mount, on the East, was the Roman Forum. It occupied a large extent of ground (seven acres) with its spacious halls and long arched porticos, its Basilicas, *Ararium* (Treasury), and other public offices. Almost all has been swept away of this immense pile of buildings, whose early date is coeval with the very foundation of the city; and which is so intimately associated with its fame and fortunes and whole history. Enough of it, however, is still left to mark out the general site of the old Forum, though its precise limits and accurate position are still the subject of some doubt. It was, as we can well understand, in the palmy days of old Rome, a glorious spot; surrounded by magnificent temples, adorned with beautiful sculptures and numerous statues, displaying to the eyes of the proud Romans, memorials of their power, and recalling to their recollection their early and continued triumphs. It was the very heart of Rome, as Rome was of the whole world; and the mighty current of human affairs, which received there its first impulse, circulated from it, and throbbled throughout the vast empire to its extremest bounds. Taken altogether, even in its present desolate condition, with what yet remains of the monuments around it, with the historical events and associations, which belong to it, probably no part of Rome possesses greater or even equal attractions, or is visited with a more lively interest. There the Courts of Justice assembled, within whose halls were heard the noblest bursts of Roman eloquence. There was the busy mart of trade—that, too, was the scene of many a patrician and plebeian conflict; of many a popular harangue, in which the bold and ambitious candidate for power “wheeled at will the fierce democracy.” It was in short the great centre of attraction—the resort of every citizen of Rome; and we may imagine what a busy, bustling, noisy multitude daily thronged the open square and every court and avenue in its neighbourhood, and with what warmth every public measure was discussed, and every public character freely canvassed. Each of those had his followers; nor were the contests which arose among them always confined to words. We know that in the later days of the Republic—between the contending factions of Marius and Sylla, and those of Crassus and Pompey, the forum was not unfrequently the scene of violence and bloodshed. But as I have said, the Forum with the actors on its stage has past away; and the very ground on which it stood, has been covered and changed. It is curious to notice how closely to the very letter the whole scene now agrees with the description of the same spot which Virgil has drawn where he represents *Æneas* in company with the aged Evander, gazing upon it from the Palatine hill, in the olden time, before Rome had an existence, or a name. You now look as they did then, upon the ruins around—the monuments of antiquity,

“*Reliquias veterum vides monumenta virorum.*”