

interest in it, and left it almost entirely uncared for. It remained for a long time uninhabited, and persons residing in Rome between 1850 and 1870 will remember the ruinous condition in which the house appeared. Several of the ceilings were in such a dilapidated condition that they had to be supported by beams, resting on the floors underneath; and the *chefs-d'œuvre* of Sadoma, the frescoes which have excited such universal admiration, were scrawled over and defaced by the race of travellers who cannot refrain from scratching their ignoble names upon situations of prominence which give them the opportunity of so doing.

After remaining in this miserable condition for a considerable period, the villa was purchased by the Duke Ripalda, who was Spanish ambassador to France during part of the reign of Napoleon III., who devoted much time and money to it, and reproduced it as a public monument of art, grudging no cost that was necessary for putting the building into complete repair, and, in fact, making its restoration the chief object of his life.

With loving care, and with the assistance of the best artists of the day, he has cleaned the frescoes and repaired the damages they had received in such a complete manner as to remove every trace of the injuries that had been inflicted upon them by the modern Goths and Vandals from whom they had received damage. In one of the largest rooms it was found that a beautiful frieze, on which the chief