

for one's country. Vespasian however, who had been thus one of the causes of its destruction, restored it to more than its former grandeur. It was again burnt in the reign of Domitian, by whom it was again rebuilt: but as I have said, it has now entirely disappeared. On the very apex of the hill, on the very site of the Pagan Temple, now stands the new Christian Church of *Ara Cæli*. It was there, as he looked on the ruins of the noble city before him, that Gibbon, as he tells us, first conceived the design of his great history of the "Decline and fall of the Roman Empire." The Capitol is now converted into the *Campidoglio*, a large palace occupying three sides of a square; a magnificent flight of broad steps leads up to it, as one formerly led to the Capitol; it forms a vast museum of paintings and sculpture, and other objects of antiquity, and art; many of them disinterred from the immediate neighbourhood: among these is a mutilated pavement containing part of the actual plan of the old city—and in another of the galleries, a bronze statue of a Wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, which has been supposed to be the identical one mentioned by Cicero as having been struck by lightning. Certain it is, that in the hind leg there is a mark which might have been the effect of such a stroke. And what gives great probability to the supposition that it is the identical statue, is the circumstance of it having been dug up at the foot of the Palatine—for somewhere there was the place in which it originally stood near the *Ficus ruminalis* which figures in the early history of Rome. See Liv. i. 4; x. 23.

There too is the Mosaic of *Pliny's Doves*, and here too is the *Dying Gladiator*, which the readers of Lord Byron may readily call to mind. But I have no intention of dwelling on these collections, interesting as they are. The bare examination of them would occupy all my time. In the square in front of the palace is the spirited equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius, remarkable not only for its own great beauty and excellence, but as the only perfect equestrian bronze statue of antiquity which Time has spared to us.*

From the tower of this palace is had probably the best and most extensive view over the whole city, and the surrounding country. Mount Soracte in the distance is very prominent—appearing much nearer than it really is—and when I saw it, in March and April, white with snow. Near the north base of the Capitoline Mount, between that and the Quirinal, stands the lofty and graceful column of Trajan. It was the first of the many noble remains of old Rome which I happened to see.

On the morning after my arrival in that city, sallying out without a guide, and threading my way as chance directed through several streets, I came suddenly upon this striking object. It needed no one to tell me what it was, for it spoke for itself. Some feet below the surface of the street on which I stood—resembling very much in appearance the Parade in Halifax, as it is looked upon from the street on the upper side, by the National School, was a sunken area too of an oblong square, over which were scattered basements, broken shafts, and other fragments of various pillars. It was the Forum of Trajan, and these the remains of the porticos and splendid buildings which surrounded it. Tall and stately and beautifully proportioned rose at one end of it this celebrated column. Its height of 127 feet is exactly that of the ground between the two hills which was cut down to make room for this Forum. A series of sculptures winds in a spiral form from the base of the column to the capital—representing the wars and triumphs of Trajan in the Dacian campaign. These sculptures consist of two or three thousand human figures, besides horses, standards, fortresses, etc. This column, unrivalled for beauty and elegance, has had the good fortune to escape amid all the changes and chances which have befallen the city, and is even now almost perfect—though the

* There are but four equestrian statues of antiquity in all now known to exist.