

## ROME IMMORTAL.

By Arthur Peirce Vaughan.

"Paul purposed in spirit \* \* \* to go to Jerusalem, saying, After I have been there I must also see Rome."

Peter has warned us that in the sayings of Paul "are some things hard to be understood"; but to anyone who has come under the spell of the City Immortal Paul's longing to see it is an open secret. And none can tell how many thousands have shared the same enchantment, and have come on long pilgrimage, knowing that healing was to be found only at her hand who had cast the spell upon them. These words are the words of one who has wandered by day and by night through her streets; has worshipped at her shrines; and in her colosseum, while white moonlight was flooding its high balconies, has quivered almost in agony at the echoes of the concentrated emotion of the eighty thousands that filled its seats and went mad with hate and bloodthirst, in passion so intense, the echoes of it still reverberate in the ruined vaults and crumbling walls. They are the words of one who, on the last night in the city, as every child of Rome has done, waited late by Trevi fountain, then drank deep of its waters, and tossed a coin far out into its dark pool in certain confidence that one day, sooner or later, old or young, the spell would work and bring him back again to the city.

The story of Rome is a long one, if you go back to the first words of it; and fascinating from the beginning, no matter how you may happen to take up the study. But I know no other place that affords such delightful opportunities for historical study "on the spot" as does Rome. For the first page go to the little stream just outside the walls, down which, in a shepherd's basket, the Twins floated from the old settlement in the Alban hills and lodged here at the foot of the Palatine. The Palatine hill is the second chapter—the establishment of the first little colony. By and by, after petty conflicts, the Capitoline hill was incorporated. So page after page, the story lengthens, written in the pillars and rostra and shrines of the Forum; in the great foundations of the palaces of the Caesars; in the avenue of tombs along the Appian way—written everywhere; and all intensely interesting, and readily grasped if you have someone familiar with it to read it to you. Supplying just that need Dr. Russell Forbes has conducted for years his peripatetic lectures about the city, and does his part so thoroughly, yet so entertainingly, that in a few days you are filled with Rome and have become historians ere you are aware. When you come to medieval Rome I would advise a new guide; take Marion Crawford's "Ave Roma Immortalis" with you to your pension or hotel at night and read the story of the seven hills and twice seven districts into which the city was divided, while the great princely families held warlike sway, built their strong palaces, patronized the arts, and contended for or against the papal throne through the Middle Ages. Then go to rest and dream of it all, and the next night, after the sunset has faded behind St. Peter's dome, wander with the throng along the curved avenue that leads through this medieval, fortified city, from the Angel's bridge to the bottom of the Corso. Drift up the Corso with the gay, well-formed, well-featured crowd that moves along, laughing, rich-voiced and chattering as it goes. And when you are in your rooms again read the story of the Corso, and of the early race of wild horses down it, at the season of the Lupercal games, that gave it its name. To end his story, Mr. Crawford, lover of Rome, tells again of her fascination, of students who came for a year and stayed for a life; of aliens who came as hurried passers-by and stayed as citizens. So rich is she that unless you have a life to spend you

cannot hope to know her. He advises, if you have but a few years, that you do not try to know much—but feel much. Races and generations have poured out their emotion here. Her air is quick, and hot, and southern. Hate and love, warm hospitality and stinging enmity have chased each other in and out through centuries. Go with sensitive fingers, and heart, if you would get the most from Rome.

But there is another Rome; the city of religious history. Greater still is the appeal it makes to us. Luke writes the first chapter now, and all may read it in the Acts. The rest of the story is scattered, a page here on the walls of St. Peter's; others in the catacombs, others on the hill where St. Peter's stands, once Nero's garden, and many pages are lost. Again I know no better foundation for our study than a day with Russel Forbes, driving along the Appian Way out into the campagna. Along that way the Roman emperors and legions came in triumph from Africa and the East. Along it from the Three Taverns came also Paul, the prisoner. Here Peter was fleeing from the persecuting city when he met one familiar long ago in Galilee, and stopping in his haste and bowing, asked the question, "Domine, quo vadis?" The Master answered, "I go to the city to be crucified once more." "To be crucified afresh, Lord?" came the pained reply. "Aye, to suffer anew!" "Then I will follow Thee, now!" And the vision faded, but Peter remembered that other meetings long years past, when thrice (as often as he had denied him) the Master had taken his pledge of love and given him charge to shepherd his sheep, and then had twice bidden him, "Follow thou Me!" And Peter understood that the Master had come to meet him in his flight to take again that old pledge of shepherding the flock; and he turned back and encouraged the scattered church, until the soldiers took him away to his cross, where he followed his Lord still in the likeness of his death. Near at hand on this same famous road is the traditional burial-place of the two great apostles; also the catacombs, rich in memories of those heroic days of discipleship; and again there are many columbaria, where the funeral urns were interred ~~hrlu hrdlu hrdlu hrdlu hrdladrdli~~ freemen of Caesar's household and contains names familiar to us from Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

Within the city walls the ghetto furnishes much of authentic interest. Its location has not changed from apostolic times to the present. Within a decade the ghetto walls have been torn down and many of the most fearful tenements cleared away. So the appearance of the place has changed—it will take longer to change the life and custom that has been crystallizing through the centuries. At the sunset in old time the gates were shut and locked, and for the night the people were safe from outside persecution. It was the social hour of the community. Every one was at his door or sitting in the street before it, airing and chatting with neighbor or passer-by. The walls and gates are gone, but the evening hour comes with each sunset; and that is the hour at which to visit the Jewish quarter of Rome. As we pass through its streets remember that Peter and Paul walked here before us. They were Jews. The people they saw and whose names they have given us were featured exactly as those we see. And Jewish and Christian tradition agrees that here in the ghetto was the house Paul hired and inhabited for two years—on Via Aescletus, Beech street, of ancient Rome.

There are numberless traditions of the early Church, of every shade of belief, from the purely ridiculous to the accurately established. They are located in every

district of the city. It is a matter of interest to search out the site of the dwelling of Aquila and Priscilla, who had a church in their house; also the remains of other early churches, usually overbuilt by a medieval or modern structure. Rome is full of medieval church history, too. The Reformation period is represented by the church house where Luther lodged in the city, and the Scala Sancta which he did not climb. And Rome is full of religiousness still to-day; immensely enriched churches and the headquarters of religious orders cluster around and center in St. Peter's and the vatican, which are the visible embodiment of the greatest religious organization of the world.

But for us St. Peter stands for other things than the papal world-center. Its ancient memories are richer than its present glories. It stands on ground that once was Nero's circus and garden—ground sprinkled with martyr blood and charred with martyr ashes. Here at one transept of the great cathedral stood the cross of Peter. Avenues leading back along the hill summit were marked with rows of similar crosses and pillars—Nero's lamp posts in his hideous carnival. Read again the story in "Quo Vadis," and Farrar's "Darkness and Dawn."

Later, when these gardens were too thickly strewn with ashes and too closely haunted with horrors, Rome built the Colosseum as a new theater in which to watch the dying of Christians, and it became their place of suffering and glory. Standing in the center of its arena and looking up across its far sweep of terraces I have marveled more than once that any man could stand here with the thought of eighty thousand souls concentrated on him, intense with hate, and keep his reason for an instant. It would craze and madden; it would drive insane. Then what could give the Christians the calm and control they had while standing here? And the grey Colosseum, that knew them well and watched it all, gives answer assuredly: "That calm was a gift to them,—the infinite peace of God."

## BRITISH AND FOREIGN.

In Russia no photographer can pursue his calling unless he has a license.

Windsor Castle has been in use as a Royal residence for nearly 800 years.

General Booth is under engagement to appear at Gourock on Aug. 22nd.

The Arabian coffee crop is said to be of extraordinary fine quality this season.

Rev. Mr. Cockburn, Orrock Place Church, Hawick, has resigned after 30 years' ministry.

Glasgow now wants sacred music added to the other attractions of the picture galleries on Sunday afternoon.

There is to be seen on a towel rail in the lobby of Gilnock's school, Canonbie, a swallow's nest with five eggs in it.

Port William U. F. Church congregation, who have been interdicted from the use of their church, worshipped in Main Street church on the 25th ult.

Not for twenty years have so many foxes been killed in the Highlands as during the past spring and early summer.

The congregation of the Auchterarder Parish church bid farewell to the old historic building which has served as a place of worship for generations past.

Siberia could contain all Europe except Russia, and there would still be room left for another twice the size of Germany.

The congregations of Creebridge and Port William have been evicted at the instance of small groups of "Wee Frees."

Three of the evicted U. F. congregations in Caithness have had legacies left them within a few days after eviction. The last is Reay, £200.

The delegates who called at Fort William U. F. Manse the other night for the keys of the church received rather rough treatment from an assembled crowd.