

## ROME; ITS RISE AND FALL.

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My theme is Rome, its rise and fall; Rome once so powerful and so haughty; Rome, at the mention of whose name empires quaked to their very foundation, and nations coweringly trembled for their safety; nay, that grand old Rome whose fame, as says the poet, was bounded by the lofty heavens, and whose power knew not terrestrial limits. When we review the annals of ancient nations, we find none others so interesting, so remarkable as those of the Empire of Romulus. Rome's foundation is stranger than fiction; her rise is as rapid as it is firm and staple; her fall as headlong as it is sudden. Such are briefly the striking features in records of an empire that once swayed the mighty world, but becoming drunk with her own prosperity and renown, tottered and crumbled to the ground a mass of sad yet glorious ruins.

Romulus, the founder of Rome, wanting inhabitants to people his new city, unfurled and raised his standard on the walls, and promised to all who would stand beneath its flowing folds and bravely defend it Protection and Liberty. The offer was indeed great, and it was hailed with universal joy. His call was immediately answered by a multitude who flocked to his newly-formed asylum.

Thus was founded the imperial city, and thus also it became a refuge for the outlaws of all nations and a den for thieves. Laws, however, were enacted and Rome was governed. It is from this time in her early history that we observe with a lively interest her rapid and gigantic strides towards the pinnacle of her splendor and prosperity.

Her generals met invading hordes, and showed them Rome stood boldly in the way; battles were fought with neighboring tribes, and victory perched upon the Roman standard; wars were waged against powerful nations, and again the Roman eagle waved triumphant. Tribes soon learned to dread her name; then nations fearful listened to her thundering mandates. Rome thus advanced; she worked, prospered and triumphed till she held the world under grasping sway; then she sought repose. Fatal repose it was, for with it came her downfall. Never before to a people were her victories more detrimental; never before was her glory the precursor of a greater or more precipitate decline. Rome had successfully climbed the steep and rugged path leading to worldly fame. Never a backward step, nay, never a faltering marked her course. Now she had reached the pinnacle—a point so high that she herself became infatuated by her greatness, and are we yet surprised that Rome yielded, staggered and fell? do we still wonder that her downfall was so headlong? Lofty was the height, so her fall was great!

The eventful day had dawned. Her people lay in luxury; and indolence, its faithful atten-

dant, ruled the hour. Discord and ambition, wrangling, stood at the helm and steered the bark of state. Civil feuds sprang up, and Peace—timid Peace—gave way to the bloody sword and fled. All was disorder and strife. Tribes who had borne her yoke for years boldly rose up and shook it off; nations subjugated by her once invincible arms declared their independence. Such was the sad and sudden change. A cloud of darkness had encompassed Rome, and her name no longer inspired its wonted fear. Some who had suppliantly implored peace from her, and others who had often cringed in submission at her feet, now wielded a common sword against her, their common foe. Power combatted weakness, and Rome, the once proud ruler of the world, now the prey of her enemies, at length succumbed. Look at her now, admirers of her ancient glory, look at her now only a sad monument of her pristine splendor. Truly does ancient Rome also verify the words: "Sic transit gloria mundi."

## THE EIGHTH OF DECEMBER. AT THE ACADEMY OF OUR LADY OF ANGELS, ST. LAURENT, P.Q.

MR. EDITOR,—Fair dawned the fairest feast of our Immaculate Mother. It seemed as if some of the celestial rays of gladness stole from her divine abode, and fell in golden brightness upon the beautiful valley of St. Laurent. Joyous, indeed, was the celebration, and glad the hearts that pulsated in sweet unison with the choir of the blessed in chanting her beautiful psalm of love. It was the occasion of the admission of twenty-three young ladies into the sodalities of the Holy Angels and Blessed Virgin. What transport joy beamed from the countenance of the young applicants as they pronounced the sweet words of consecration before Rev. Father Paré, the resident Chaplain. The attempt to describe the beauty, the imposing grandeur of the occasion would prove futile. It was one of those rare scenes which must be seen to be fully appreciated, and which defy both the magic skill of the artist and the subtle imagination of the poet. Rev. Father Paré, who justly claims a bright diadem in the casket of our esteem and affection, addressed a few congratulatory remarks to our young associates, after which the Benediction of the Most Holy Sacrament crowned the festive garland of the day's solemnities. The musical part of the Benediction was admirably executed, and as the sweet young voices in most entrancing harmony swelled through the arches of our tastefully decorated chapel, we enjoyed, as it were, a foretaste of the happy delights of heaven.

Trusting, Mr. Editor, that you may insert this communication in your very interesting SPECTATOR, I am with best wishes for its success,

A PUPIL OF THE ACADEMY,