

**A Roman Holiday.**

(Rom. Cor. N. Y. Sun.)

The tenth anniversary of the capture of Rome was celebrated here on the 20th of September with more than ordinary rejoicings by the ministry and municipality.

When the Italian Government decided to seize Rome in 1870, after the recall of the French troops, Signor Giovanni Lanza was the prime minister. In parliamentary debate it has leaked out that he was then fearful of taking such a step, but that, his judgment having been overruled by sundry influential advisers of the crown, he at length consented to order Gens. Cadorna and Sioxio to advance on the city of the popes. The bombardment of one of the gates, Porta Pia, having placed the defenseless city at their mercy. Signor Lanza at once put in a claim to all the glory of taking Rome, and he has steadily and sturdily maintained this claim. Since that memorable year of 1870, Italy has been immersed in a constant political turmoil, one clique of governing politicians giving place to another in quick succession. There have been no less than half a dozen ministries, Lanza, Minghetti, Depretis (twice premier), and Cairoli (now in his second administration) in turn held sway. The most statesmanlike quality these ministers exhibited was to keep themselves and their favourites in power by a series of hand-to-mouth expedients. Lanza and Minghetti, belonging to the party of the right, claimed to rule from a conservative point of view; Depretis and Cairoli, at the head of the party of the left, put themselves forward as the champions of the people. Although supported by popular opinion and indorsed by Garibaldi, the two last premiers proved, in some respects, to be more royalist than the king himself, especially in court matters. Their deference to the royal prerogative and etiquette, and their failure to institute any popular reforms, notably that of the enlargement of the suffrage, were abundantly satirized by both the right and the left. In reality, they followed in the footsteps of their predecessors in religious, military, and financial affairs. While these four men claimed to be carrying out Cavour's policy of unification and consolidation, Rattazzi and La Marmora, the two leaders, who, in conjunction with the famous Piedmontese statesman, did most to found the new kingdom, were thrust aside, and died, as is generally believed, broken-hearted.

The transfer of the government to Rome in 1871 was disastrous to Florence, which, during seven years, had been put to great expense in preparing to become a capital. Its trade and society dwindled until the authorities had to suspend payment because the municipality was bankrupt. Only two years ago it was even contemplated to place the "City of Flowers" in the hands of a receiver; and though this was not done, because the national government promised a help which has been only partially afforded, the financial plight of Florence remains deplorable,—its debts unpaid, and its paper dishonoured. Turin, the original capital, had been somewhat similarly damaged when it ceased to be the seat of government; but then Turin readily recuperated, because it was a wealthy commercial centre, which Florence never was.

Upon the instalment of the royal court in the Quirinal, and of the parliament in the wooden structure hastily erected at Monte Citorio, the celebrated guarantees to the pope which had been voted at Florence were promulgated officially. In substance these guarantees, while declaring the government supreme over the newly-captured city, left the pope in possession of the palace of the Vatican, as a great personage entitled to privileges, and allotted him a salary of \$65,000 a year. This salary has never yet been paid, because neither Pius IX. nor Leo XIII. would take it, and the amount has only nominally figured in the national budget; if called on to pay its accrued total the government would be sorely pressed. The law of guarantees, with the exception of paying this salary—and the series of laws passed in 1873, confiscating a portion of the church property and abolishing the religious orders and fraternities in Rome, have been rigorously executed. Much of the confiscated property was sold at auction at merely nominal figures to government favourites and intriguing speculators.

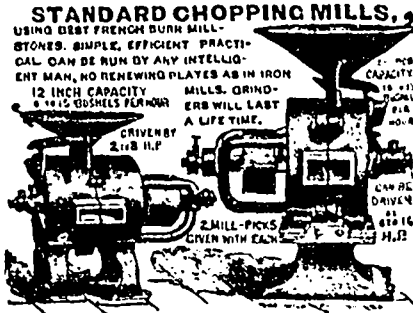
The ten years' interval since 1860 has wrought changes in the new capital. At first the Romans were disposed to be jubilant, as unusual privileges were showered upon them at a stroke of the pen, and as, under the settlement in the Corso and Via Con-

dotti of a host of bustling merchants' trade had a brisk send-off. The population was dazzled, and looked for wonders. But the tinsel of first appearances soon wore off when it was found that the promised prosperity had feeble foundation. What had been the support of the city suddenly ceased. The wealthy foreign visitors, who had been accustomed to spend their winters between the Coliseum and the Vatican, failed to put in an appearance or to furnish the "ways and means." There has consequently been no little misery and grumbling among the citizens, reduced to live off the dribbles vouchsafed by government employees and cheap tourists, travelling for the most part with small satchels instead of big trunks. Owing to the influx of settlers in the wake of government and court, the population amounted, according to the census taken on Dec. 31 of last year, to 301,680, showing an increase of 75,000 in the last decade. From the very commencement of the new era, rent, provisions, and clothes, and living in general grow dearer. Gold and silver vanished early, and are never seen now as in the days when the foreign world distributed so lavishly the precious metals. Trade and manufactures have not, so far, been built up extensively, except among a small minority of the citizens. The ruins have been excavated, restored, repaired; new houses built; entire quarters put up by a syndicate of speculating capitalists, old ones demolished or freshly washed, and new streets run, until the city's old picturesqueness has been seriously curtailed. From a modern point of view, of course, numerous improvements have been made. At the same time, as Rome was not built in one day, neither can it be pulled down in a day, and the modernizing process has not gone so far but that an abundance of the antique is left to maintain the city's reputation as the richest of curiosity shops. The municipality has been chiefly at the expense of constructing new streets—foremost among which is the Via Nazionale—and in establishing public free schools, which are now more numerous and better managed than those of any other Italian city. The pupils learn with a remarkable aptness, and the younger generation of Romans, unlike their fathers and mothers, will start in life with a fair amount of elementary knowledge. The children of the nobility and upper classes of Roman society are still invariably educated in the Roman Catholic schools.

A decade with Rome as capital has rendered a change very perceptible in Italian society at large. It has, above all, become far more practical and less impressionable than in the ante-revolutionary war. Uniformity of aims and methods has already levelled those individualisms which were formerly established landmarks in town and country. Even the peasantry have joined in the modern chase after comfort, and, no longer content to vegetate in their poverty-stricken districts, are emigrating in swarms to both Americas in search of fortunes. Not so much to the density of population in the kingdom, numbering now twenty-seven millions of inhabitants, is this emigration due, as to the awakening of a new spirit which has rendered the old starvation unpalatable.

But the completion of Italy's long-expected unity has within the last ten years doubled its debt. Its currency of paper money is at a discount of 15 per cent.; taxes and deficits are yearly on the increase. The finances have been wretchedly mismanaged since Cavour's death, the expenses being many times over what they should have been. The excuse has been wars, great armies, and works of internal improvement, such as the Mont Cenis and Gotthard tunnels, docks, ports, ships, and railroads. In constructing them the Italian legislators and financiers acted as if several Californians were under their thumb, and, indeed, as if no bills were ultimately to be presented for payment. An army and navy, increased out of all proportion to the requirements of the nation, continue to drain the national exchequer, and no prospect of stopping this drain is seen to glimmer even faintly on the horizon. Withal it is amusing to see with what levity the ministerial organs at Rome touch upon the national indebtedness. "Baron Rothschild, of Paris," said one of them, lately, "spoke very encouragingly of our finances." He must have spoken, then, with a view to his own pocket, or to get possession of a portion of the country as collateral for the money the rulers borrowed from him and dissipated.

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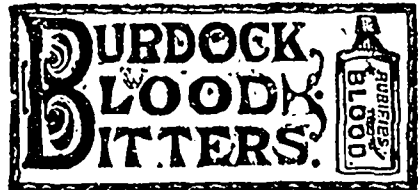
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