

LETTER FROM ROME.

THE victories of to-day, it is true, are less brilliant than those of old; but we can flatter ourselves upon a superior wisdom which will ever prevent their inscription on stone, and the consequent awkward result. Future historians may gain little startling incidents from the present for their work; but it is no consolation to know that fallen, over our ruin fewer exasperating philosophers will moralise, fewer poets pipe their plaintive lays?

"Rome is no more than Jerusalem," and in spite of all the ignominy of the Ghetto, the desolate Jewish quarter; in spite of forced racing and forced church-going, no mean compensation must be offered the Israelite, as he slinks by the Arch of Titus—he will not pass under it—when on one side he may behold the silent Forum, on the other side a hill of crumbling palaces. "Il ne faut qu'attendre dans la vie."

The Arch of Titus, as you know, was built to commemorate the taking of Jerusalem. Its bas-reliefs represent various scenes from the capture of the city—the falling Temple, a procession of the conquerors carrying the holy candlesticks, while a reverse to this sad picture shows us Titus victorious, surrounded by generals, magistrates, and priests.

Now, as we move on step by step, that once impalpable concourse of purple-robed magnates, those hard facts we had unreasoning and unreasonably to learn by heart—the Roman Emperors take body, as it were. We have come to their homes, and ere long they will rise before us living—nay, but almost so, in the Museum of the Capitol.

If any portion of this free earth may be called essentially aristocratic, it is the Palatine. Never have plebeians inhabited its noble precincts, and even now when we look down upon so many ruins these rise proudly above us. Here the grave of the Past has been opened to expose—alas! much mutilated members. It is here we find remnants of the embryo city, Roma Quadrata, in the shape of huge blocks of tufa; a portion of the wall of Romulus, and the foundations of his Temple of Jupiter Stator. But, unfortunately for us, not only during the Middle Ages did the work of concealment begin. Even in the Emperor Vespasian's time the chambers of the Palace of Augustus were filled with earth, and its walls made to serve as substructures to the new buildings of the former. Imperial abodes met a similar fate to that of Imperial fora. With characteristic audacity did mediæval monasteries and fortified towers choke out, almost obliterate, the homes of the Cæsars. Thus can we account for a wild confusion—subterranean rooms, with windows showing they were once above ground, and garden-crowned palaces! What may be gained to help our imagination in forming some approximate idea of private life and dwellings in ancient Rome is best obtained from a visit to the Palatine. Indeed, with some patience and a fair share of fancy, a picture intelligible enough can be painted. We have here the valet's privilege of seeing the heroes of old *en robe de chambre*—is it necessary to say with a result not dissimilar?

Ere Romulus began to build his new city he traced around the Palatine the line of the future wall. Behind this were patricians to take up their residence, and at the foot of it plebs to crouch for safety—an enviable locality truly, from its commanding position and gorgeous views. The founder of Rome appears to have inspired a reverence similar to that lavished on more modern saints. One of the first things we find on entering these ruins is the Lupercal. Near it for centuries were revered the hut of Faustulus and the sacred fig-tree, "and even Plutarque," says Ampère, "saw the cradle of Romulus, the Santo-Presepio of the ancients." Now, moving eastward from this northern slope of the hill, we come into the rather intricately arranged apartments of the Palace of Caligula. Here are remains of the bridge the humble-minded Emperor caused to be thrown across the Forum, that he might the more easily converse with the Capitoline Jupiter! Behind this palace stood that of Tiberius, quite concealed in the sixteenth century by the Farnese Gardens, which to-day spread over the north-eastern portion of the Palatine. A small house, close by the Casa di Livia, gives us a foretaste of Pompeii. Three small rooms, the Triclinium, or dining-room, and an apartment on either side open into a mosaic-paved court. Marvellously preserved are the charming frescoes and the rich red colouring of the walls. But distressingly cold and formal these painfully square chambers, and yet perhaps it is our depraved taste which supplants with fantastic contrivances and tawdry ornament that graver beauty of intrinsic worth.

First of the "Palaces of Cæsars" was the one of Augustus, rising in the southern portion of the Palatine. You have already seen how it was obliterated by the building operations of Vespasian. These, completed by Domitian, form what to-day is called the Palace of the Flavii. Among its ruins none of the private apartments of the Emperors can be traced; but we find remains of public ones infinitely interesting. The Tablinum, or throne-room, is flanked on one side by the Lararium, or chapel dedicated to the household gods, and on the other by the Basilica. It is not a little curious to perceive how closely Christian churches copied the style of the latter. Thus, we read, the *tribunal* of this ancient Law Court became the *tribuna* and the *confession*, bar of justice, at which a criminal was placed, the *confessional*. Some bases, and an entire column, a portion of the low marble screen that separated the *tribuna* from the rest of the building, and a single leg of the Emperor's chair are all that remains of the stern, beautiful, pitiless Flavian Basilica. It is just possible St. Paul's trial took place here, for Vespasian may have preserved the law court of Nero. In any case there is no harm, and interest is certainly added, in believing this. Faith and imagination are requisite for the full enjoyment of anything, preëminently so for Rome.

South of the Tablinum is the Peristylum, that delicious adjunct to the houses of ancient days. A lovely marble-paved court, with trees and flowers and murmuring fountains, upon which opened the entire width of

the Triclinium, or dining-room. But alas! striving to build up by fancy a palace bearing even some slight resemblance to Vespasian's edifice is no easy task; so faint are the hints afforded us by crumbling foundations and broken columns, of its magnificence. Indeed, even to draw an outline of the structure, not a little of the ingenuity requisite in constellation tracing must be employed. At the back of the Triclinium stands a colonnade, or rather remnants of one, through which what is supposed to have been a Biblioteca is reached. Beyond is the little theatre in which the Emperor Vespasian used to act his own plays.

And now passing towards the southern part of the hill we find the most picturesque ruins of all—ruins of the palaces of Nero, Severus, and Domitian. As late as the seventh century portions of the former were inhabitable. The second was finally destroyed after the manner of so many other ancient buildings, by a pope, Sextus V., who carried off its materials for the construction of St. Peter's. Here those flowering shrubs that add such infinite beauty to English castles and abbeys, and which Italian ruins so often lack, are not wanting. Lovelier frames to lovelier views there could not be than these giant brick arches with delicate vines encircled, giving us exquisite glimpses of lovely churches, hazy campagna, and azure sky.

On the Palatine's western slope was the Pædagogium, or school for Imperial slaves. Its walls are scratched over with the most curious sketches; one of which, however, has been moved to a museum. Strangely these rude *graffiti* affect us. Princes and senators, imperial palaces, and gorgeous temples, dead and ruined, called forth our tears truly; but they have fame and power still—whereas this poor "undergrowth," the thoughtless, laughing, boyish artists of these scrawls had only their life, and it has gone from them.

Amongst the youthful soldiers' pictorial representations was found the famous caricature of Christ upon the cross, now preserved under glass in the Museo Kircheriano. It is extremely grotesque, and resembles our infantile productions. A figure, with an ass's head, is drawn as the Crucified, while another figure stands beside; underneath runs the inscription in Greek characters: *Alexamenos adores his God*. The sketch was evidently made by some young Pagan in derision of a Christian comrade.

Besides the Emperors, such men as Hortensius, Catiline, Cicero, Clodius, Caius Gracchus, and others, had houses upon the Palatine. Just below, down there in the Forum, you can see those mighty orators, with flashing eyes and burning lips; and see, too, how their words, their wonderful irresistible eloquence, sways, like winds and a stormy sea, the multitude, that rudderless ship before them. At this sight, the grandest on earth, when men seem to have well nigh attained the puissance of the gods, we lesser souls avert our faces, and wonder if it is "pro patria" after all. However distasteful, as perchance may be to us the achievements of heroes in the Senate Chamber, I fear to few will their petty doings upon the Palatine prove uninteresting. Thus we read, with disgust, of the extravagance of Hortensius, who watered his trees with wine. Caius Gracchus seems not so far from modern revolutionists when, to curry favour with the people, he leaves this aristocratic quarter to take up his residence in the more plebeian suburra. The only difference is, this Democrat *did* what his successors propose *should be* done. That enterprising young Tribune, Clodius, the lover of Caesar's wife, Pompeia, was his never-ceasing torment of Cicero, not worthy of—a thousand wealthy citizens of to-day? And again, the great orator's abode, it seems, was a little below that of his young enemy; so we learn the mighty Cicero threatened to increase the height of his house in order to shut out his neighbour's view of the city! No; let us not dwell longer on tales so contemptible. "The evil that men do lives after them." Yes, if we will it; but rather is it to our advantage that the good should be eternal.

L. L.

SCENES IN HAWAII.

DURING the month of January, 1883, we received a card of invitation of enormous size, with a border of scarlet and gold, engraved in gold letter, and with the royal coat of arms emblazoned at the top. It ran thus:

"The King's Chamberlain is commanded by His Majesty King Kalakua to invite you to be present at the Coronation ceremonies, to be held at the Iolani Palace, on February 12th, at 11.30 o'clock.

C. H. JUDD, Colonel.

The direction accompanying this magnificent card assigned us seats in the "Pavilion." We had heard a great deal of the fact that King Kalakua, having reigned some twelve years, now thought it necessary to have himself crowned formally in the presence of his loving subjects, bringing on himself a great deal of abuse from those in opposition to his Government. But His Majesty calmly pursued the even tenor of his way, paying no attention whatever to the flood of newspaper articles which deluged the country every week, heaping satire, sneers, and unkind remarks of all sorts, tempered now and then by dignified announcements of the different ceremonies which were to take place during the fortnight of festivities, and also by praise from the Government organ for his determination to carry through his own wishes. Party politics run high in Hawaii, and the contemptuous expressions indulged in by the rival papers, the *Pacific Advertiser* and the *Hawaiian Gazette*, always reminded us of the celebrated journals of Pickwick fame. We determined to take advantage of a lull in the plantation work just then, and accept our invitation. And one beautiful morning we set off. Our equipage consisted of a large double rockaway, with leather sides, which could be pulled down for shelter from any of the fiercely sudden rain storms which assail one often in the tropics, especially if the road runs near the sea. The carriage was drawn by two stout mules, preferred to horses, as they are so sure-footed, and our way ran up and