

greener, and Spring shone forth in her beauty over the dismantled seats of the spectators of gladiatorial shows in the Flavian Amphitheatre.

We were like a ship's company—the few tourists who were there, the little band of zouaves, the porter, the Greek selling Roman pearls, and the poor dwarf, whose withered legs could not lift him from the ground, and who sat upon the damp earth like a speck among the gigantic pillars that once bore up the mighty awning overhead.

As I walked among the arches waiting for a carriage, I noticed what I had not seen before. On one of the piers was a cross, inlaid, and under it the following inscription: "On kissing the cross one gains an indulgence for one year and forty days." On our return home, I had a talk with the pretty and piquant little Signora G. about the kissing of the cross. She explained that the Pope had blessed the *legno*, thereby giving it efficacy, and that to one who had kissed the cross, all sins committed in the time specified were forgiven, unless they were mortal sins! The conversation that ensued about the distinction between mortal and other sins, was sadly interrupted by the noisy and imperious demonstrations of one little Ernesto; but ended, by what process of reasoning I cannot tell, by assuring me that my misgivings had no foundation whatever. "And how are you sure that the kissing of the cross will procure pardon?" "Oh, because, as I said, the Pope has blessed it, and he is not an ordinary man; besides, it is found in the holy writings." On my inquiring what holy writings she meant, she replied: "Oh, the writings of St. Bridget and St. Paul, and several others"—*diversi altri*.

The Pope has his foot upon the Palatine Hill, having bought back a portion of it from the Emperor of Russia. But he comes not to build like his predecessors, the kings or emperors, but only to excavate, and look at the excavations. This part of the hill

is little frequented by tourists. If you tell your driver to go to the Palatine, you will be taken to the portion in possession of the Emperor Napoleon, and will get no hint of anything else to be seen. Say *Palazzo di Cesare del Papa*, and you will be driven to the Vatican or the Quirinal, unless you can set the horses' heads for yourself. There is far more of masonry and marble in Napoleon's part certainly, but it is all swept, all under watch and ward, can be seen regularly on Thursday, and leaves your imagination as little at home as a bird that flies in at a window. The fragments of beauty are set up in a museum, where they are placed with French taste, to heighten effects. Everything is laid bare to the sun. Nero is made to get up out of his grave to be looked at, and Domitian is forced to point out the window at which he caught the flies.

When we had once found out the sunny southern slope of the house of Augustus, it became our haunt. In our first visit, we were accompanied by an antiquarian fresh from the discussions of the British Archaeological Society, whose delegates had just gone over this ground. He guided us to the wall of Romulus—which we thought Remus need not have laughed at, for it has come down to us a substantial stone wall—crossed over his *Roma Quadrata*, and came to the house of Augustus, the most exquisite of all these remains. Here our antiquarian friend leaned on his staff and began, with as much earnestness as if he were proving the title to his own possessions, to demonstrate that this *is* the house which Cæsar Augustus built. Indeed, it was in a way his own possession, for he told us that he often spent days in the balmy air of this southern slope, when his delicate lungs could not bear the wind on the other side of the Palatine. Then we descended into substructions, passed through a beautiful vista of arches, and reached the penetralia of the Roman Antiquarian Society, where their plan of the Palatine was spread out. We picked up precious fragments, not