

Editorial Correspondence.

TOWARDS ROME.

WOULD not see Rome if he had the chance? On the 7th of February, I became the happy owner of a circular ticket entitling me to travel from Lausanne to Geneva, Modane, Turin, Genoa, Pisa, Leghorn, Rome and Naples; and thence, *via* Rome, Florence, Bologna, Padua, Venice, Verona, Milan and Lucerne, back to the place of beginning. Surely \$36.50 could not be much better invested! The entire distance is close on two thousand miles, and from beginning to end, the journey is full of interest. At the outset, I made two mental resolves—(1) to avoid night travelling, in order to see as much as possible; (2) to keep my ears open; especially to hear as much as I could about the present position and prospects of Protestantism in Italy. Enough has already been said about Geneva and its neighborhood. One gets a fair idea of the average rate of railway travelling in this mountainous country when it is stated that the distance from Geneva to Turin is about 196 miles, and that the time by express train is eleven hours, including two stoppages of half an hour each. We breakfast at Culoz, in France, *a la mode*; *i.e.*, we have a quart of coffee served in a soup tureen and a very hard roll. At a loss how to proceed to business, I watch how my neighbour managed. The obdurate roll—best of bread all the same, was broken in small pieces, mixed with the coffee, and then supped with a table spoon—a famous breakfast! Soon after this repast, we are skirting the margin of the Lac du Bourget and reach Aix-Les-Bain, a famous watering-place, situated amid fine scenery, with splendid hotels and beautiful gardens, and including, among its many thousands of visitors, Queen Victoria. At Chambery, the capital of Savoy, we pass under the shadow of Mt. Granier, 6,358 feet high, from which a landslip came down many years ago, that buried sixteen villages and made the mountain the gigantic ruin it now is. Our iron horse must now climb, for we are nearing Mount Cenis. Following the windings of the river Arc, the locomotive bites the rail, and wriggles the long train like a serpent up the steep in-

cline, and halts at Modane to draw a long breath before it dives into the great tunnel. It is not the longest tunnel through which we pass, nor as a feat of engineering to be compared with the St. Gothard, but this was the *first* hole bored through the Alps. In the centre of the platform at Modane, there is a marble bust, representing a man with a grand head on his shoulders, and on the pedestal, this simple but expressive inscription, — “Sommeiler; premier percée des Alps, 1857–1871.” So this was the daring and successful engineer, and it took him fourteen years of prodigious thought and work to prepare the way for us through seven and a half miles of darkness unrelieved, save here and there by a flickering lamp that only served to make the darkness visible. The tunnel is 3,400 feet above sea level, and above it are the wild peaks of Mount Cenis, 3,500 feet higher still. We shoot through it in just half an hour, to find that we have crossed the watershed, and emerge into the bright sunshine of an unclouded Italian sky. It was over this mountain that Napoleon constructed his wonderful road in 1807. With accelerated speed, we follow the mountain torrent that develops by and by into the river Dora. A thousand feet above it, we chase it down the gorge, passing through a long series of intermittent tunnels, between which we have wonderful peeps into a valley, singularly picturesque, with very old towns and villages stuck on to the rough mountain's side, vineyards cultivated in what seem to be impossible places and that exquisite zig-zag turnpike road climbing the heights. Gradually we descend into the plains of Piedmont, as level as a bowling green, and in half an hour we are at Turin—formerly the capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia, and the residence of the illustrious line of Emannuels up to 1865, when the seat of Government was temporarily transferred to Florence, and five years later, to Rome. Instead of rushing on to Turin, had we but deflected by the space of an hour to the right, we had been at *La Tour*, in the centre of the Vaudois valleys, and among the Waldenses, who, amid centuries of persecution, kept the lamp of truth burning amid surrounding darkness, and of whom Milton in his famous sonnet sang,—

“Avenge, O Lord! thy scattered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered in the Alpine mountains cold.”