

our's face, is one of the relics shown in St. Peter's during the Holy Week.

We did not follow far, but stood at a distance contemplating the strange sight—the dark, immeasurable ruin—the throng moving to the doleful chant, and ever and anon dropping on their knees before the shrines—while the clouds in the unsettled sky, by turns gathering and dispersing, added to the effect of the scene. High up among the vaultings, dwarfed to pigmies, were a few strangers who had come to see the Colosseum, and who looked down from the seats where myriads of eyes once feasted on the sight of martyrs perishing in the fangs of the wild beasts. Above them the birds, which made their nests in the loose stones, held an airy revel, undisturbed by the presence of the visitors or by the chanting below, which went on deepening at length into what we supposed to be the Litany of the Passion.

Some ladies, who like ourselves, had been witnesses of the scene, were more curious, and observed that the brown friars' habit and hempen cord, were not worn over a penitential hair-shirt, and that the hideous mask did not cover the rough shaven face of a mendicant brother. One or two of the wearers were engaged in a by-play during the ceremony, during which the mask was partly twitched aside, and the loose sleeve falling back revealed dainty linen beneath. We were told that the service was imposed as a penance at the confessional on young noblemen and others of the higher ranks.

Signor Cipriani, a Roman artist, went with us to the Colosseum, and at our request made a rapid sketch from one of the lofty terraces overlooking the Appian way. What luxury for an artist's hand to follow his eye over this mosaic of histories! The purple Campagna was soon dashed in upon the horizon and immersed in its purple the spectral forms of the things that have been.

The eye cannot reach the horizon here in

any direction without travelling over ruins, here standing up airily and wasting in the wind, there crumbling in masses. Not one structure has the sharp lines of life, unless it be the Arch of Constantine, seen close by in downward prospective, which stands nearly perfect—though Clement the Eighth filched one of the *giallo antico* pillars for his own purposes.

The Porta Appia of the Aurelian wall, and the triumphal Arch of Drusus, lead the eye towards the tomb of the Scipios on our left, and in the picture are the ancient Porta Ostiensis, the most picturesque of the entrances to Rome, the slope of the Aventine, green and beautiful, though bare now of its temples, with the Circus Maximus at its foot and the Palatine Hill, the home of the Cæsars, Romulus, the Sabines, Nero, St. Paul, Totila, Belisarius—where is one to begin or end among the names recalled by my ten-inch picture? I see the power of the kings, the splendour of the emperors, the reign of art, the triumph of war, the triumph of martyrdom—glory and superstition—the pride, the fall.

The brush revels in the warm brown tint of Roman ruins, the richest possible in the foreground, and becoming transparent in the ethereal light of distance. April casts her green around it like dimpled arms around the neck of old age.

In the midst of our study we were surprised by a thunder-storm. The murky cloud, the thunder and lightning seemed to claim the giant ruins as their own. The desolate corridors, the yawning arches, the unpeopled arena, the grass-grown fragments of ruin, invited the revelry of the storm. Currents of wind loaded with vapour swept through the spaces, darkness descended from the brooding clouds, the rain poured in torrents and gushed gurgling in a black flood from the immense drain in front of the grand entrance as though it came boiling from Tartarus. Then it fell more softly: the green grass of the arena seemed to grow