Riviera. The two streets called *Strada Balbi* and *Strada Nuova*, are continued double ranges of palaces adorned with gardens and fountains: but their being painted on the outside has, in my opinion, a poor effect.

The commerce of this city is, at present, not very considerable; yet it has the face of business. The streets are crouded with people; the shops are well furnished; and the markets abound with all sorts of excellent provision. The wine made in this neighbourhood is, however, very indifferent; and all that is consumed must be bought at the public cantine, where it is sold for the benefit of the state. Their bread is the whitest and the best I have tasted any where; and the beef, which they have from Piedmont, is juicy and delicious. The expence of eating in Italy is nearly the same as in France, about three shillings a head for every meal. The state of Genoa is very poor, and their bank of St. George[3] has received such rude shocks, first from the revolt of the Corsicans, and afterwards from the misfortunes of the city, when it was taken by the Austrians in the war of 1745,[4] that it still continues to languish without any near prospect of its credit being restored. Nothing shews the weakness of their state more than their having recourse to the assistance of France to put a stop to the progress of Paoli in Corsica; for after all that has been said of the gallantry and courage of Paoli and his islanders, I am very credibly informed that they might be very easily suppressed, if the Genoese had either vigour in the council or resolution in the field.[5]

True it is, they made a noble effort in expelling the Austrians who had taken possession of their city; but this effort was the effect of oppression and despair, and if I may believe the insinuations of some politicians in this part of the world, the Genoese would not have succeeded in that attempt, if they had not previously purchased with a large sum of money the connivance of the only person who could defeat the enterprize. For my own part, I can scarce entertain thoughts so prejudicial to the character of human nature, as to suppose a man capable of sacrificing to such a consideration, the duty he owed his prince, as well as all regard to the lives of his soldiers, even those who lay sick in hospitals, and who being dragged forth, were miserably butchered by the

furious populace. There is one more presumption of his innocence; he still retains the favour of his sovereign, who could not well be supposed to share in the booty.[6] "There are mysteries in politics which were never dreamed of in our philosophy, Horatio!"[7] The possession of Genoa might have proved a troublesome bone of contention, which it might be convenient to lose by accident. Certain it is, when the Austrians returned after their expulsion, in order to retake the city, the engineer, being questioned by the general, declared he would take the place in fifteen days, on pain of losing his head; and in four days after this declaration the Austrians retired. This anecdote I learned from a worthy gentleman of this country, who had it from the engineer's own mouth. Perhaps it was the will of heaven. You see how favourably providence has interposed in behalf of the reigning empress of Russia, first in removing her husband; secondly in ordaining the assassination of prince Ivan, for which the perpetrators have been so liberally rewarded; it even seems determined to shorten the life of her own son, the only surviving rival from whom she had any thing to fear.[8]

The Genoese have now thrown themselves into the arms of France for protection: I know not whether it would not have been a greater mark of sagacity to cultivate the friendship of England, with which they carry on an advantageous commerce. While the English are masters of the Mediterranean, they will always have it in their power to do incredible damage all along the Riviera, to ruin the Genoese trade by sea, and even to annoy the capital; for notwithstanding all the pains they have taken to fortify the mole and the city, I am greatly deceived if it is not still exposed to the danger, not only of a bombardment, but even of a cannonade. I am even sanguine enough to think a resolute commander might, with a strong squadron, sail directly into the harbour, without sustaining much damage, notwithstanding all the cannon of the place, which are said to amount to near five hundred. I have seen a cannonade of above four hundred pieces of artillery, besides bombs and cohorns, maintained for many hours, without doing much mischief.[9]

During the last siege of Genoa, the French auxiliaries were obliged to wait at Monaco, until a gale of wind had driven

the English squadron off the coast, and then they went along shore in small vessels at the imminent risque of being taken by the British cruisers. By land I apprehend their march would be altogether impracticable, if the king of Sardinia had any interest to oppose it. He might either guard the passes, or break up the road in twenty different places, so as to render it altogether impassable. Here it may not be amiss to observe, that when Don Philip[10] advanced from Nice with his army to Genoa, he was obliged to march so close to the shore, that in above fifty different places, the English ships might have rendered the road altogether impassable. The path, which runs generally along the face of a precipice washed by the sea, is so narrow that two men on horseback can hardly pass each other; and the road itself so rugged, slippery, and dangerous, that the troopers were obliged to dismount, and lead their horses one by one. On the other hand, baron de Leutrum,[11] who was at the head of a large body of Piedmontese troops, had it in his power to block up the passes of the mountains, and even to destroy this road in such a manner, that the enemy could not possibly advance. Why these precautions were not taken, I do not pretend to explain: neither can I tell you wherefore the prince of Monaco, who is a subject and partizan of France, was indulged with a neutrality for his town, which served as a refreshing-place, a safe port, and an intermediate post for the French succours sent from Marseilles to Genoa. This I will only venture to affirm, that the success and advantage of great alliances are often sacrificed to low, partial, selfish, and sordid considerations. The town of Monaco is commanded by every heighth in its neighbourhood; and might be laid in ashes by a bomb-ketch in four hours by sea.

I was fortunate enough to be recommended to a lady in Genoa, who treated us with great politeness and hospitality. She introduced me to an *abbate*,[12] a man of letters, whose conversation was extremely agreeable. He already knew me by reputation, and offered to make me known to some of the first persons in the republic, with whom he lived in intimacy. The lady is one of the most intelligent and best-bred persons I have known in any country. We assisted at her conversazione, which was numerous. She pressed us to pass the

winter at Genoa; and indeed I was almost persuaded: but I had attachments at Nice, from which I could not easily disengage myself.

The few days we stayed at Genoa were employed in visiting the most remarkable churches and palaces. In some of the churches, particularly that of the *Annunciata*, I found a profusion of ornaments, which had more magnificence than taste. There is a great number of pictures; but very few of them are capital pieces. I had heard much of the *Ponte Carignano*, which did not at all answer my expectation. It is a bridge that unites two eminences which form the higher part of the city, and the houses in the bottom below do not rise so high as the springing of its arches. There is nothing at all curious in its construction, nor any way remarkable, except the heighth of the piers from which the arches are sprung. Hard by the bridge there is an elegant church,[13] from the top of which you have a very rich and extensive prospect of the city, the sea and the adjacent country, which looks like a continent of groves and villas. The only remarkable circumstance about the cathedral,[14] which is Gothic and gloomy, is the chapel where the pretended bones of John the Baptist are deposited, and in which thirty silver lamps are continually burning. I had a curiosity to see the palaces of Durazzo and Doria, but it required more trouble to procure admission than I was willing to give myself: as for the arsenal, and the rostrum of an ancient galley which was found by accident in dragging the harbour, I postponed seeing them till my return.

Having here provided myself with letters of credit for Florence and Rome, I hired the same boat which had brought us hither, to carry us forward to Lerici, which is a small town about half way between Genoa and Leghorn, where travellers, who are tired of the sea, take post-chaises to continue their route by land to Pisa and Florence. I payed three loui'dores for this voyage of about fifty miles; though I might have had a feluca for less money. When you land on the wharf at Genoa, you are plied by the feluca men just as you are plied by the watermen at Hungerford-stairs[15] in London. They are always ready to set off at a minute's warning for Lerici, Leghorn, Nice, Antibes, Marseilles, and

every part of the Riviera.

The wind being still unfavourable, though the weather was delightful, we rowed along shore, passing by several pretty towns, villages, and a vast number of *cassines*, or little white houses, scattered among woods of olive trees, that cover the hills; and these are the habitations of the velvet and damask weavers. Turning Capo Fino we entered a bay, where stand the towns of Porto Fino, Lavagna, and Sestri di Levante, at which last we took up our night's lodging. The house was tolerable, and we had no great reason to complain of the beds: but, the weather being hot, there was a very offensive smell, which proceeded from some skins of beasts new killed, that were spread to dry on an out-house in the yard. Our landlord was a butcher, and had very much the looks of an assassin. His wife was a great masculine virago, who had all the air of having frequented the slaughter-house. Instead of being welcomed with looks of complaisance, we were admitted with a sort of gloomy condescension, which seemed to say, "We don't much like your company; but, however, you shall have a night's lodging in favour of the *patron of the gondola*, who is our acquaintance." In short, we had a very bad supper, miserably dressed, passed a very disagreeable night, and payed a very extravagant bill in the morning, without being thanked for our custom. I was very glad to get out of the house with my throat uncut.

Sestri di Levante is a little town pleasantly situated on the sea-side; but has not the conveniency of a harbour. The fish taken here is mostly carried to Genoa. This is likewise the market for their oil, and the paste called *macaroni*, of which they make a good quantity.

Next day, we skirted a very barren coast, consisting of almost perpendicular rocks, on the faces of which, however, we saw many peasants' houses and hanging terraces for vines, made by dint of incredible labour. In the afternoon, we entered by the Porto di Venere into the bay, or gulf of Spetia or Spezza, which was the Portus Lunæ of the ancients. This bay, at the mouth of which lies the island Palmaria, forms a most noble and secure harbour, capacious enough to contain all the navies in Christendom. The entrance on one side is defended by a small fort built above the town of Porto

Venere, which is a very poor place. Farther in there is a battery of about twenty guns; and on the right hand, opposite to Porto Venere, is a block-house, founded on a rock in the sea. At the bottom of the bay is the town of Spetia on the left, and on the right that of Lerici, defended by a castle of very little strength or consequence. The whole bay is surrounded with plantations of olives and oranges, and makes a very delightful appearance. In case of a war, this would be an admirable station for a British squadron, as it lies so near Genoa and Leghorn; and has a double entrance, by means of which the cruisers could sail in and out continually, which way soever the wind might chance to sit. I am sure the fortifications would give very little disturbance.

At the post-house in Lerici, the accommodation is intolerable. We were almost poisoned at supper. I found the place where I was to lie so close and confined, that I could not breathe in it, and therefore lay all night in an outward room upon four chairs, with a leathern portmanteau for my pillow. For this entertainment I payed very near a loui'dore. Such bad accommodation is the less excusable, as the fellow has a great deal of business, this being a great thoroughfare for travellers going into Italy, or returning from thence.

I might have saved some money by prosecuting my voyage directly by sea to Leghorn: but, by this time, we were all heartily tired of the water: the business then was to travel by land to Florence, by the way of Pisa, which is seven posts distant from Lerici. Those who have not their own carriage must either hire chaises to perform the whole journey, or travel by way of *cambiatura*, which is that of changing the chaises every post, as the custom is in England. In this case the great inconvenience arises from your being obliged to shift your baggage every post. The chaise or *calesse* of this country, is a wretched machine with two wheels, as uneasy as a common cart, being indeed no other than what we should call in England a very ill-contrived one-horse chair, narrow, naked, shattered and shabby. For this vehicle and two horses you pay at the rate of eight *paoli* a stage, or four shillings sterling; and the postilion expects two *paoli* for his gratification: so that every eight miles cost about five shillings, and four only, if you travel in your own carriage, as in that case

you pay no more than at the rate of three *paoli* a horse.[16]

About three miles from Lerici, we crossed the Magra, which appeared as a rivulet almost dry, and in half a mile farther arrived at Sarzana, a small town at the extremity of the Genoese territories, where we changed horses. Then entering the principalities of Massa and Carrara, belonging to the duke of Modena,[17] we passed Lavenza, which seems to be a decayed fort with a small garrison, and dined at Massa, which is an agreeable little town, where the old dutchess of Modena resides. Notwithstanding all the expedition we could make, it was dark before we passed the Cerchio, which is an inconsiderable stream in the neighbourhood of Pisa, where we arrived about eight in the evening.

The country from Sarzana to the frontiers of Tuscany is a narrow plain, bounded on the right by the sea, and on the left by the Appenine mountains. It is well cultivated and inclosed, consisting of meadow-ground, corn fields, plantations of olives; and the trees that form the hedge-rows serve as so many props to the vines, which are twisted round them, and continued from one to another. After entering the dominions of Tuscany, we travelled through a noble forest of oak trees of a considerable extent, which would have appeared much more agreeable, had we not been benighted and apprehensive of robbers. The last post but one in this day's journey, is at the little town of Viareggio, a kind of sea-port on the Mediterranean, belonging to Lucca. The roads are indifferent, and the accommodation is execrable. I was glad to find myself housed in a very good inn at Pisa, where I promised myself a good night's rest, and was not disappointed. I heartily wish you the same pleasure, and am very sincerely

Yours.

LETTER XXVII.

Nice, January 28, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

Pisa is a fine old city that strikes you with the same veneration you would feel at sight of an antient temple which bears the marks of decay, without being absolutely delapidated. The houses are well built, the streets open, straight, and well paved; the shops well furnished; and the markets well supplied: there are some elegant palaces, designed by great masters. The churches are built with taste, and tolerably ornamented. There is a beautiful wharf of free-stone on each side of the river Arno, which runs through the city, and three bridges thrown over it, of which that in the middle is of marble, a pretty piece of architecture: but the number of inhabitants is very inconsiderable; and this very circumstance gives it an air of majestic solitude, which is far from being unpleasant to a man of a contemplative turn of mind. For my part, I cannot bear the tumult of a populous commercial city; and the solitude that reigns in Pisa would with me be a strong motive to choose it as a place of residence.[1] Not that this would be the only inducement for living at Pisa. Here is some good company, and even a few men of taste and learning. The people in general are counted sociable and polite; and there is great plenty of provisions, at a very reasonable rate. At some distance from the more frequented parts of the city, a man may hire a large house for thirty crowns a year: but near the center, you cannot have good lodgings, ready furnished, for less than a *scudo* (about five shillings) a day. The air in summer is reckoned unwholesome by the exhalations arising from stagnant water in the neighbourhood of the city, which stands in the midst of a fertile plain, low and marshy: yet these marshes have been considerably drained; and the air is much meliorated. As for the Arno, it is no longer navigated by vessels of any burthen. The university of Pisa is very much decayed; and except the little business occasioned by the emperor's gallies, which are built in this town,*[2] I know of no commerce it carries on: perhaps the

* This is a mistake—no gallies have been built here for a great many years; and the dock is now converted into stables for the grand duke's horse guards.

inhabitants live on the produce of the country, which consists of corn, wine, and cattle. They are supplied with excellent water for drinking, by an aqueduct consisting of above a thousand arches, begun by Cosmo,[3] and finished by Ferdinand I.[4] grand-dukes of Tuscany; it conveys the water from the mountains at the distance of four miles. This noble city, formerly the capital of a flourishing and powerful republic, which contained above one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants within its walls, is now so desolate that grass grows in the open streets; and the number of its people do not exceed sixteen thousand.

You need not doubt but I visited the Campanile, or hanging-tower, which is a beautiful cylinder of eight stories, each adorned with a round of columns, rising one above another. It stands by the cathedral, and inclines so far on one side from the perpendicular, that in dropping a plummet from the top, which is one hundred and eighty-eight feet high, it falls sixteen feet from the base. For my part, I should never have dreamed that this inclination proceeded from any other cause, than an accidental subsidence of the foundation on this side, if some connoisseurs had not taken great pains to prove it was done on purpose by the architect. Any person who has eyes may see that the pillars on that side are considerably sunk; and this is the case with the very threshold of the door by which you enter. I think it would have been a very preposterous ambition in the architects, to shew how far they could deviate from the perpendicular in this construction; because in that particular any common mason could have rivalled them;* and if they really intended it as a specimen of their art, they should have shortened the pilasters on that side, so as to exhibit them intire, without the appearance of sinking. These leaning towers are not unfrequent in Italy; there is one at Bologna, another at Venice, a third betwixt Venice and Ferrara, and a fourth at Ravenna; and the inclination in all of them has been supposed owing to the foundations giving way on one side only.

* All the world knows that a building with such inclination, may be carried up till a line drawn from the centre of gravity, falls without the circumference of the base.

LETTER XXVII.

In the cathedral, which is a large Gothic* pile, there is a great number of massy pillars of porphyry, granite, jasper, giullo, and verde antico, together with some good pictures and statues: but the greatest curiosity is that of the brass gates, designed and executed by John of Bologna,[8] representing, embossed in different compartments, the history of the Old and New Testament. I was so charmed with this work, that I could have stood a whole day to examine and admire it. In the Baptisterium, which stands opposite to this front, there are some beautiful marbles, particularly the font, and a pulpit, supported by the statues of different animals.

Between the cathedral and this building, about one hundred paces on one side, is the famous burying-ground, called *Campo Santo*, from its being covered with earth brought from Jerusalem. It is an oblong square, surrounded by a very high wall, and always kept shut. Within-side there is a spacious corridore round the whole space, which is a noble walk for a contemplative philosopher. It is paved chiefly with flat grave-stones: the walls are painted in fresco by Ghiotto, Giottino, Stefano, Bennoti, Buffalmaco,[9] and some others of his cotemporaries and disciples, who flourished immediately after the restoration of painting. The subjects are taken from the Bible. Though the manner is dry, the drawing incorrect, the design generally lame, and the colouring unnatural; yet there is merit in the expression: and the whole remains as a curious monument of the efforts made by this noble art immediately after her revival.† Here are some deceptions in perspective equally ingenious and pleasing; particularly the figures of certain animals, which exhibit exactly the same appearance, from whatever different points

*This edifice is not absolutely Gothic. It was built in the twelfth century after the design of a Greek architect from Constaninople[5] where by that time the art was much degenerated. The pillars of *granite* are mostly from the islands of *Elba* and *Giglia* on the coast of *Tuscany*, where those quarries were worked by the antient Romans. The *giullo*, and *verde antico*,[6] are very beautifull species of marble, yellow and green; the first, antiently called *marmor numidicum*, came from *Africa*; the other was found (according to *Strabo*) on the *mons Taygetus* in *Lacedemonia*:[7] but, at present, neither the one, nor the other is to be had except among the ruins of antiquity.

†The history of *Job* by *Giotto* is much admired.[10]

of view they are seen. One division of the burying-ground consists of a particular compost, which in nine days consumes the dead bodies to the bones: in all probability, it is no other than common earth mixed with quick-lime. At one corner of the corridore, there are the pictures of three bodies represented in the three different stages of putrefaction which they undergo when laid in this composition. At the end of the three first days, the body is bloated and swelled, and the features are enlarged and distorted to such a degree, as fills the spectator with horror. At the sixth day, the swelling is subsided, and all the muscular flesh hangs loosened from the bones: at the ninth, nothing but the skeleton remains. There is a small neat chapel at one end of the *Campo Santo*, with some tombs, on one of which is a beautiful bust by Buona Roti.*[11] At the other end of the corridore, there is a range of antient sepulchral stones ornamented with basso relievo, brought hither from different parts by the *Pisan* fleets, in the course of their expeditions. I was struck with the figure of a woman lying dead on a tomb-stone, covered with a piece of thin drapery, so delicately cut as to shew all the flexures of the attitude, and even all the swellings and sinuosities of the muscles. Instead of stone, it looks like a sheet of wet linen.†

*Here is a sumptuous *cenotaph* erected by pope Gregory XIII.[12] to the memory of his brother *Giovanni Buoncampagni*. It is called the *Monumentum Gregorianum*, of a violet coloured marble from *Seravezza* in this neighbourhood, adorned with a couple of columns of *touchstone*,[13] and two beautifull, spherical plates of alabaster.

†One of these antiquities representing the hunting of *Meleager*,[14] was converted into a coffin for the countess *Beatrice*,[15] mother of the famous countess *Mathilda*. It is now fixed to the outside of the church wall just by one of the doors, and is a very elegant piece of sculpture. Near the same place is a fine pillar of porphyry supporting the figure of a lyon and a kind of urn which seems to be a *sarcophagus*, though an inscription round the base, declares it is a *talentum* in which the antient *Pisans* measured the *census* or tax which they payed to *Augustus:* but in what metal or specie this census was payed, we are left to divine. There are likewise in the *Campo Santo* two antique Latin edicts of the *Pisan* Senate injoining the citizens to go into mourning for the death of *Caius* and *Lucius Caesar* the sons of *Agrippa*, and heirs declared of the emperor.[16] Fronting this cemetery on the other side of the Piazza of the Dome, is a large, elegant hospital in which the sick are conveniently and comfortably lodged, entertained and attended.

For four zechines I hired a return-coach and four from Pisa to Florence. This road, which lies along the Arno, is very good; and the country is delightful, variegated with hill and vale, wood and water, meadows and corn-fields, planted and inclosed like the counties of Middlesex and Hampshire; with this difference, however, that all the trees in this tract were covered with vines, and the ripe clusters black and white, hung down from every bough in the most luxuriant and romantic abundance. The vines in this country are not planted in rows, and propped with sticks, as in France and the county of Nice, but twine around the hedge-row trees, which they almost quite cover with their foliage and fruit. The branches of the vine are extended from tree to tree, exhibiting beautiful festoons of real leaves, tendrils, and swelling clusters a foot long. By this œconomy the ground of the inclosure is spared for corn, grass, or any other production. The trees commonly planted for the purpose of sustaining the vines, are maple, elm, and aller,[17] with which last the banks of the Arno abound.* This river, which is very inconsiderable with respect to the quantity of water, would be a charming pastoral stream, if it was transparent; but it is always muddy and discoloured. About ten or a dozen miles below Florence, there are some marble quarries on the side of it, from whence the blocks are conveyed in boats, when there is water enough in the river to float them, that is, after heavy rains, or the melting of the snow upon the mountains of Umbria, being part of the Appenines, from whence it takes its rise.

Florence is a noble city, that still retains all the marks of a majestic capital, such as piazzas, palaces, fountains, bridges, statues, and arcades. I need not tell you that the churches here are magnificent, and adorned not only with pillars of oriental granite, porphyry, jasper, verde antico, and other precious stones; but also with capital pieces of painting by the most eminent masters. Several of these churches, however, stand without fronts, for want of money to complete the plans. It may also appear superfluous to mention my having viewed

* It would have been still more for the advantage of the country and the prospect, if instead of these they had planted fruit trees for this purpose.

the famous gallery of antiquities, the chapel of St. Lorenzo, the palace of Pitti, the cathedral, the baptisterium, the *Ponte de Trinita*, with its statues, the triumphal arch, and every thing which is commonly visited in this metropolis. But all these objects having been circumstantially described by twenty different authors of travels, I shall not trouble you with a repetition of trite observations.

That part of the city which stands on each side of the river, makes a very elegant appearance, to which the four bridges and the stone-quay between them, contribute in a great measure. I lodged at the widow Vanini's, an English house delightfully situated in this quarter. The landlady, who is herself a native of England, we found very obliging. The lodging-rooms are comfortable; and the entertainment is good and reasonable.[18] There is a considerable number of fashionable people at Florence, and many of them in good circumstances. They affect a gaiety in their dress, equipage, and conversation; but stand very much on their punctilio with strangers; and will not, without great reluctance, admit into their assemblies any lady of another country, whose noblesse is not ascertained by a title. This reserve is in some measure excusable among a people who are extremely ignorant of foreign customs, and who know that in their own country, every person, even the most insignificant, who has any pretensions to family, either inherits, or assumes the title of *principe*, *conte*, or *marchese*.

With all their pride, however, the nobles of Florence are humble enough to enter into partnership with shop-keepers, and even to sell wine by retail. It is an undoubted fact, that in every palace or great house in this city, there is a little window fronting the street, provided with an iron-knocker, and over it hangs an empty flask, by way of sign-post. Thither you send your servant to buy a bottle of wine. He knocks at the little wicket, which is opened immediately by a domestic, who supplies him with what he wants, and receives the money like the waiter of any other cabaret. It is pretty extraordinary, that it should not be deemed a disparagement in a nobleman to sell half a pound of figs, or a palm[19] of ribbon or tape, or to take money for a flask of sour wine; and yet be counted infamous to match his daughter in

the family of a person who has distinguished himself in any one of the learned professions.

Though Florence be tolerably populous, there seems to be very little trade of any kind in it: but the inhabitants flatter themselves with the prospect of reaping great advantage from the residence of one of the arch-dukes, for whose reception they are now repairing the palace of Pitti.[20] I know not what the revenues of Tuscany may amount to, since the succession of the princes of Lorraine; but, under the last dukes of the Medici family, they were said to produce two millions of crowns, equal to five hundred thousand pounds sterling. These arose from a very heavy tax upon land and houses, the portions of maidens, and suits at law, besides the duties upon traffick, a severe gabelle upon the necessaries of life, and a toll upon every eatable entered into this capital. If we may believe Leti, the grand duke was then able to raise and maintain an army of forty thousand infantry, and three thousand horse; with twelve gallies, two galeasses, and twenty ships of war.[21] I question if Tuscany can maintain at present above one half of such an armament. He that now commands the emperor's navy, consisting of a few frigates, is an Englishman, called Acton, who was heretofore captain of a ship in our East India company's service. He has lately embraced the catholic religion, and been created admiral of Tuscany.[22]

There is a tolerable opera in Florence for the entertainment of the best company, though they do not seem very attentive to the musick. Italy is certainly the native country of this art; and yet, I do not find the people in general either more musically inclined, or better provided with ears than their neighbours. Here is also a wretched troop of comedians for the bourgeois, and lower class of people: but what seems most to suit the taste of all ranks, is the exhibition of church pageantry. I had occasion to see a procession, where all the noblesse of the city attended in their coaches, which filled the whole length of the great street called the *Corso*. It was the anniversary of a charitable institution[23] in favour of poor maidens, a certain number of whom are portioned every year. About two hundred of these virgins walked in procession, two and two together, cloathed in violet-coloured wide

gowns, with white veils on their heads, and made a very classical appearance. They were preceded and followed by an irregular mob of penitents in sack-cloth, with lighted tapers, and monks carrying crucifixes, bawling and bellowing the litanies: but the great object was a figure of the Virgin Mary, as big as the life, standing within a gilt frame, dressed in a gold stuff, with a large hoop, a great quantity of false jewels, her face painted and patched, and her hair frizzled and curled in the very extremity of the fashion. Very little regard had been paid to the image of our Saviour on the cross; but when his lady-mother appeared on the shoulders of three or four lusty friars, the whole populace fell upon their knees in the dirt. This extraordinary veneration paid to the Virgin, must have been derived originally from the French, who pique themselves on their gallantry to the fair sex.

Amidst all the scenery of the Roman catholic religion, I have never yet seen any of the spectators affected at heart, or discover the least signs of fanaticism. The very disciplinants, who scourge themselves in the Holy-week, are generally peasants or parties hired for the purpose. Those of the confrairies, who have an ambition to distinguish themselves on such occasions, take care to secure their backs from the smart, by means of secret armour, either women's boddice, or quilted jackets. The confrairies are fraternities of devotees, who inlist themselves under the banners of particular saints. On days of procession they appear in a body dressed as penitents and masked, and distinguished by crosses on their habits. There is scarce an individual, whether noble or plebeian, who does not belong to one of these associations, which may be compared to the Free-Masons, Gregoreans, and Antigallicans[24] of England.

Just without one of the gates of Florence, there is a triumphal arch erected on occasion of the late emperor's making his public entry, when he succeeded to the dukedom of Tuscany: and here in the summer evenings, the quality resort to take the air in their coaches. Every carriage stops, and forms a little separate conversazione. The ladies sit within, and the cicisbei[25] stand on the foot-boards, on each side of the coach, entertaining them with their discourse. It would be no unpleasant inquiry to trace this sort of gallantry

to its original, and investigate all its progress. The Italians, having been accused of jealousy, were resolved to wipe off the reproach, and, seeking to avoid it for the future, have run into the other extreme. I know it is generally supposed that the custom of choosing cicisbei, was calculated to prevent the extinction of families, which would otherwise often happen in consequence of marriages founded upon interest, without any mutual affection in the contracting parties. How far this political consideration may have weighed against the jealous and vindictive temper of the Italians, I will not pretend to judge: but, certain it is, every married lady in this country has her cicisbeo, or servente, who attends her every where, and on all occasions; and upon whose privileges the husband dares not encroach, without incurring the censure and ridicule of the whole community. For my part, I would rather be condemned for life to the gallies, than exercise the office of a cicisbeo, exposed to the intolerable caprices and dangerous resentment of an Italian virago. I pretend not to judge of the national character, from my own observation: but, if the portraits drawn by Goldoni[26] in his Comedies are taken from nature, I would not hesitate to pronounce the Italian women the most haughty, insolent, capricious and revengeful females on the face of the earth. Indeed, their resentments are so cruelly implacable, and contain such a mixture of perfidy, that, in my opinion, they are very unfit subjects for comedy, whose province it is, rather to ridicule folly than to stigmatize such atrocious vice.

You have often heard it said, that the purity of the Italian is to be found in the *lingua Toscana*, and *bocca Romana*. Certain it is, the pronunciation of the Tuscans is disagreeably guttural: the letters C and G they pronounce with an aspiration, which hurts the ear of an Englishman; and is, I think, rather rougher than that of the X, in Spanish. It sounds as if the speaker had lost his palate. I really imagined the first man I heard speak in Pisa, had met with that misfortune in the course of his amours.

One of the greatest curiosities you meet with in Italy, is the Improvisatore;[27] such is the name given to certain individuals, who have the surprising talent of reciting verses extempore, on any subject you propose. Mr. Corvesi, my

landlord,[28] has a son, a Franciscan friar, who is a great genius in this way. When the subject is given, his brother tunes his violin to accompany him, and he begins to rehearse in recitative, with wonderful fluency and precision. Thus he will, at a minute's warning, recite two or three hundred verses, well turned, and well adapted, and generally mingled with an elegant compliment to the company. The Italians are so fond of poetry, that many of them have the best part of Ariosto, Tasso, and Petrarch, by heart; and these are the great sources from which the Improvisatori draw their rhimes, cadence, and turns of expression. But, lest you should think there is neither rhime nor reason in protracting this tedious epistle, I shall conclude it with the old burden of my song, that I am always

Your affectionate humble servant.

LETTER XXVIII.

Nice, February 5, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

Your entertaining letter of the fifth of last month, was a very charitable and a very agreeable donation: but your suspicion is groundless. I assure you, upon my honour, I have no share whatever in any of the disputes which agitate the public: nor do I know any thing of your political transactions, except what I casually see in one of your newspapers, with the perusal of which I am sometimes favoured by our consul at Villefranche. You insist upon my being more particular in my remarks on what I saw at Florence, and I shall obey the injunction. The famous gallery which contains the antiquities, is the third story of a noble stone-edifice, built in the form of the Greek Π, the upper part fronting the river Arno, and one of the legs adjoining to the ducal-palace, where the courts of justice are held.[1] As the house of Medici had for some centuries resided in the palace of Pitti, situated on the other side of the river, a full mile from these tribunals, the architect Vasari,[2] who planned the new edifice, at the same time contrived a corridore, or covered passage, extending from the palace of Pitti along one of the bridges, to the gallery of curiosities, through which the grand-duke passed unseen, when he was disposed either to amuse himself with his antiquities, or to assist at his courts of judicature: but there is nothing very extraordinary either in the contrivance or execution of this corridore.

If I resided in Florence I would give something extraordinary for permission to walk every day in the gallery, which I should much prefer to the Lycæum, the groves of Academus,[3] or any porch or philosophical alley in Athens or in Rome. Here by viewing the statues and busts ranged on each side, I should become acquainted with the faces of all the remarkable personages, male and female, of antiquity, and even be able to trace their different characters from the expression of their features. This collection is a most excellent commentary upon the Roman historians, particularly Suetonius[4] and Dion Cassius.[5] There was one circumstance that struck me in viewing the busts of Caracalla,[6] both here

and in the Capitol at Rome; that was a certain ferocity in the eyes, which seemed to contradict the sweetness of the other features, and remarkably justified the epithet *Caracuyl*, by which he was distinguished by the antient inhabitants of North-Britain. In the language of the Highlanders *caracuyl* signifies *cruel eye*, as we are given to understand by the ingenious editor of Fingal, who seems to think that Caracalla is no other than the Celtic word, adapted to the pronunciation of the Romans: but the truth is, Caracalla was the name of a Gaulish vestment, which this prince affected to wear; and hence he derived that surname.[7] The Caracuyl of the Britons, is the same as the *ὑπόδρα ἰδών*[8] of the Greeks, which Homer has so often applied to his Scolding Heroes. I like the Bacchanalian, chiefly for the fine drapery. The wind, occasioned by her motion, seems to have swelled and raised it from the parts of the body which it covers. There is another gay Bacchanalian, in the attitude of dancing, crowned with ivy, holding in her right hand a bunch of grapes, and in her left the thyrsus.[9] The head of the celebrated Flora is very beautiful: the groupe of Cupid and Psyche, however, did not give me all the pleasure I expected from it.

Of all the marbles that appear in the open gallery, the following are those I most admire. Leda with the Swan; as for Jupiter, in this transformation, he has much the appearance of a goose. I have not seen any thing tamer: but the sculptor has admirably shewn his art in representing Leda's hand partly hid among the feathers, which are so lightly touched off, that the very shape of the fingers are seen underneath. The statue of a youth, supposed to be Ganymede,[10] is compared by the connoisseurs to the celebrated Venus, and as far as I can judge, not without reason: it is, however, rather agreeable than striking, and will please a connoisseur much more than a common spectator. I know not whether it is my regard to the faculty that inhances the value of the noted Æsculapius,[11] who appears with a venerable beard of delicate workmanship. He is larger than the life, cloathed in a magnificent pallium,[12] his left arm resting on a knotted staff, round which the snake is twined, according to Ovid:

Hunc modo serpentem baculum qui nexibus ambit

Perspice——[13]

Behold the snake his mystic rod intwine.

He has in his hand the *fascia herbarum*, and the *crepidæ*[14] on his feet. There is a wild-boar represented lying on one side, which I admire as a master-piece. The savageness of his appearance is finely contrasted with the ease and indolence of the attitude. Were I to meet with a living boar lying with the same expression, I should be tempted to stroke his bristles. Here is an elegant bust of Antinous, the favourite of Adrian;[15] and a beautiful head of Alexander the Great, turned on one side, with an expression of languishment and anxiety in his countenance. The virtuosi are not agreed about the circumstance in which he is represented; whether fainting with the loss of blood which he suffered in his adventure at Oxydrace;[16] or languishing with the fever contracted by bathing in the Cydnus,[17] or finally complaining to his father Jove, that there were no other worlds for him to conquer.[18] The kneeling Narcissus is a striking figure, and the expression admirable. The two Bacchi are perfectly well executed; but (to my shame be it spoken) I prefer to the antique that which is the work of Michael Angelo Buonaroti, concerning which the story is told which you well know. The artist having been blamed by some pretended connoisseurs, for not imitating the manner of the ancients, is said to have privately finished this Bacchus, and buried it, after having broke off an arm, which he kept as a voucher. The statue, being dug up by accident, was allowed by the best judges, to be a perfect antique; upon which Buonaroti produced the arm, and claimed his own work. *Bianchi* looks upon this as a fable; but owns that Vasari tells such another of a child cut in marble by the same artist, which being carried to Rome, and kept for some time under ground, was dug up as an antique, and sold for a great deal of money.[19] I was likewise attracted by the Morpheus in touchstone, which is described by Addison,[20] who, by the bye, notwithstanding all his taste, has been convicted by Bianchi of several gross blunders in his account of this gallery.

With respect to the famous Venus Pontia, commonly called *de Medicis*, which was found at Tivoli, and is kept in a

separate apartment called the *Tribuna*, I believe I ought to be intirely silent, or at least conceal my real sentiments, which will otherwise appear equally absurd and presumptuous. It must be want of taste that prevents my feeling that enthusiastic admiration with which others are inspired at sight of this statue: a statue which in reputation equals that of Cupid by Praxiteles,[21] which brought such a concourse of strangers of old to the little town of Thespiæ.[22] I cannot help thinking that there is no beauty in the features of Venus; and that the attitude is aukward and out of character.[23] It is a bad plea to urge that the antients and we differ in the ideas of beauty. We know the contrary, from their medals, busts, and historians. Without all doubt, the limbs and proportions of this statue are elegantly formed, and accurately designed, according to the nicest rules of symmetry and proportion; and the back parts especially are executed so happily, as to excite the admiration of the most indifferent spectator. One cannot help thinking it is the very Venus of *Cnidos* by Praxiteles, which Lucian describes. "Hercle quanta dorsi concinnitas! ut exuberantes lumbi amplexantes manus implent! quam scite circumductæ clunium pulpæ in se rotundantur, neque tenues nimis ipsis ossibus adstrictæ, neque in immensam effusæ pinguedinem!" "Heavens! what a beautifull back! the loins, with what exuberance they fill the grasp! how finely are the swelling buttocks rounded, neither too thinly cleaving to the bone, nor effused into a huge mass of flabby consistence!"[24] That the statue thus described was not the *Venus de Medicis*, would appear from the Greek inscription on the base, ***ΚΛΕΟΜΕΝΗΣ ΑΠΟΛΛΟΔΟΡΟΥ ΑΘΗΝΑΙΟΣ ΕΠΩΕΣΕΝ***. *Cleomenes filius Apollodori fecit*; did we not know that this inscription is counted spurious, and that instead of ***ΕΠΩΕΣΣΕΝ***, it should be ***ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕ***. This, however, is but a frivolous objection, as we have seen many inscriptions undoubtedly antique, in which the orthography is false, either from the ignorance or carelessness of the sculptor. Others suppose, not without reason, that this statue is a representation of the famous Phryne, the courtesan of Athens, who at the celebration of the Eleusinian games, exhibited herself coming out of the bath, naked, to the eyes of the whole Athenian people.[25] I was much pleased with the

dancing faun; and still better with the Lotti, or wrestlers, the attitudes of which are beautifully contrived to shew the different turns of the limbs, and the swelling of the muscles: but, what pleased me best of all the statues in the Tribuna was the Arrotino, commonly called the Whetter, and generally supposed to represent a slave, who in the act of whetting a knife, overhears the conspiracy of Cataline.[26] You know he is represented on one knee; and certain it is, I never saw such an expression of anxious attention, as appears in his countenance. But it is not mingled with any marks of surprise, such as could not fail to lay hold on a man who overhears by accident a conspiracy against the state. The marquis de Maffei[27] has justly observed that Sallust, in his very circumstantial detail of that conspiracy, makes no mention of any such discovery. Neither does it appear, that the figure is in the act of whetting, the stone which he holds in one hand being rough and unequal, no ways resembling a whetstone. Other alledge it represents Milico, the freedman of Scævinus, who conspired against the life of Nero, and gave his poignard to be whetted to Milico, who presented it to the emperor, with an account of the conspiracy:[28] but the attitude and expression will by no means admit of this interpretation. *Bianchi*, who shews the gallery,* thinks the statue represents the augur Attius Navius,[29] who cut a stone with a knife, at the command of Tarquinius Priscus. This conjecture seems to be confirmed by a medallion of Antoninus Pius, inserted by Vaillant[30] among his Numismata Prestantiora, on which is delineated nearly such a figure as this in question, with the following legend, "Attius Navius genuflexus ante Tarquinium Priscum cotem cultro discidit." He owns indeed that in the statue, the augur is not distinguished either by his habit or emblems; and he might have added, neither is the stone a cotes.[31] For my own part, I think neither of these three opinions is satisfactory, though the last is very ingenious. Perhaps the figure alludes to a private incident, which never was recorded in any history.[32] Among the great

* This antiquarian is now imprisoned for life, for having robbed the gallery and then set it on fire.

number of pictures in this Tribuna, I was most charmed with the Venus by Titian, which has a sweetness of expression and tenderness of colouring, not to be described. In this apartment, they reckon three hundred pieces, the greatest part by the best masters, particularly by Raphael, in the three manners by which he distinguished himself at different periods of his life. As for the celebrated statue of the hermaphrodite, which we find in another room, I give the sculptor credit for his ingenuity in mingling the sexes in the composition; but it is, at best, no other than a monster in nature, which I never had any pleasure in viewing: nor, indeed, do I think there was much talent required in representing a figure with the head and breasts of a woman, and all the other parts of the body masculine. There is such a profusion of curiosities in this celebrated musæum; statues, busts, pictures, medals, tables inlaid in the way of marquetry, cabinets adorned with precious stones, jewels of all sorts, mathematical instruments, antient arms and military machines, that the imagination is bewildered; and a stranger of a visionary turn, would be apt to fancy himself in a palace of the fairies, raised and adorned by the power of inchantment.

In one of the detached apartments, I saw the antependium of the altar, designed for the famous chapel of St. Lorenzo. It is a curious piece of architecture, inlaid with coloured marble and precious stones, so as to represent an infinite variety of natural objects. It is adorned with some crystal pillars, with capitals of beaten gold. The second story of the building is occupied by a great number of artists employed in this very curious work of marquetry, representing figures with gems and different kinds of coloured marble, for the use of the emperor. The Italians call it *pietre commesse*, a sort of inlaying with stones, analogous to the fineering of cabinets in wood. It is peculiar to Florence, and seems to be still more curious than the Mosaic work, which the Romans have brought to great perfection.

The cathedral of Florence is a great Gothic building, encrusted on the outside with marble; it is remarkable for nothing but its cupola, which is said to have been copied by the architect of St. Peter's at Rome, and for its size, which is

much greater than that of any other church in Christendom.* The baptistery, which stands by it, was an antient temple, said to be dedicated to Mars. There are some good statues of marble within; and one or two of bronze on the outside of the doors; but it is chiefly celebrated for the embossed work of its brass gates, by Lorenzo Ghiberti,[35] which Buonaroti used to say, deserved to be made the gates of Paradise. I viewed them with pleasure: but still I retained a greater veneration for those of Pisa, which I had first admired: a preference which either arises from want of taste, or from the charm of novelty, by which the former were recommended to my attention. Those who would have a particular detail of every thing worth seeing at Florence, comprehending churches, libraries, palaces, tombs, statues, pictures, fountains, bridges, &c. may consult Keysler, who is so laboriously circumstantial in his descriptions, that I never could peruse them, without suffering the headach, and recollecting the old observation, That the German genius lies more in the back than in the brain.[36]

I was much disappointed in the chapel of St. Lorenzo. Notwithstanding the great profusion of granite, porphyry, jasper, verde antico, lapis-lazuli, and other precious stones, representing figures in the way of marquetry, I think the whole has a gloomy effect. These *pietre commesse* are better calculated for cabinets, than for ornaments to great buildings, which ought to be large masses proportioned to the greatness of the edifice. The compartments are so small, that they produce no effect in giving the first impression when one enters the place; except to give an air of littleness to the whole, just as if a grand saloon was covered with pictures painted in miniature. If they have as little regard to propor-

* In this cathedral is the tomb of *Johannes Acutus Anglus*, which a man would naturally interpret *John Sharp*; but his name was really *Hawkwood*, which the Italians have corrupted into *Acut*. He was a celebrated general or *condottiere*, who arrived in Italy at the head of four thousand soldiers of fortune, mostly Englishmen who had served with him in the army of King Edward III., and were dismissed at the Peace of *Bretigny*.[33] *Hawkwood* greatly distinguished himself in *Italy*, by his valour and conduct, and died a very old man in the *Florentine* service. He was the son of a tanner in Essex, and had been put apprentice to a taylor.[34]

tion and perspective, when they paint the dome, which is not yet finished, this chapel will, in my opinion, remain a monument of ill taste and extravagance.

The court of the palace of Pitti is formed by three sides of an elegant square, with arcades all round, like the palace of Holyrood house at Edinburgh; and the rustic work, which constitutes the lower part of the building, gives it an air of strength and magnificence. In this court, there is a fine fountain, in which the water trickles down from above; and here is also an admirable antique statue of Hercules, inscribed *ΑΥΣΙΠΠΟΥ ΕΡΓΟΝ*, the work of Lysippus.[37]

The apartments of this palace are generally small, and many of them dark. Among the paintings, the most remarkable is the Madonna de la Seggiola, by Raphael, counted one of the best coloured pieces of that great master. If I was allowed to find fault with the performance, I should pronounce it defective in dignity and sentiment. It is the expression of a peasant rather than of the mother of God. She exhibits the fondness and joy of a young woman towards her first-born son, without that rapture of admiration which we expect to find in the Virgin Mary, while she contemplates, in the fruit of her own womb, the Saviour of mankind. In other respects, it is a fine figure, gay, agreeable, and very expressive of maternal tenderness; and the *bambino* is extremely beautiful. There was an English painter employed in copying this picture, and what he had done was executed with great success. I am one of those who think it very possible to imitate the best pieces in such a manner, that even the connoisseurs shall not be able to distinguish the original from the copy. After all, I do not set up for a judge in these matters, and very likely I may incur the ridicule of the virtuosi for the remarks I have made: but I am used to speak my mind freely on all subjects that fall under the cognizance of my senses; though I must as freely own, there is something more than common sense required to discover and distinguish the more delicate beauties of painting. I can safely say, however, that without any daubing at all, I am, very sincerely,

Your affectionate humble servant.

LETTER XXIX.

Nice, February 20, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

Having seen all the curiosities of Florence, and hired a good travelling coach for seven weeks, at the price of seven zequines, something less than three guineas and a half, we set out post for Rome, by the way of Sienna, where we lay the first night. The country through which we passed is mountainous but agreeable. Of Sienna I can say nothing from my own observation, but that we were indifferently lodged in a house that stunk like a privy, and fared wretchedly at supper. The city is large and well built: the inhabitants pique themselves upon their politeness, and the purity of their dialect. Certain it is, some strangers reside in this place on purpose to learn the best pronunciation of the Italian tongue. The Mosaic pavement of their duomo, or cathedral, has been much admired; as well as the history of Æneas Sylvius, afterwards pope Pius II.[1] painted on the walls of the library, partly by Pietro Perugino,[2] and partly by his pupil Raphael D'Urbino.

Next day, at Buon Convento, where the emperor Henry VII.[3] was poisoned by a friar with the sacramental wafer, I refused to give money to the hostler, who in revenge put two young unbroke stone-horses[4] in the traces next to the coach, which became so unruly, that before we had gone a quarter of a mile, they and the postilion were rolling in the dust. In this situation they made such efforts to disengage themselves, and kicked with such violence, that I imagined the carriage and all our trunks would have been beaten in pieces. We leaped out of the coach, however, without sustaining any personal damage, except the fright; nor was any hurt done to the vehicle. But the horses were terribly bruised, and almost strangled, before they could be disengaged. Exasperated at the villany of the hostler, I resolved to make a complaint to the *uffiziale* or magistrate of the place. I found him wrapped in an old, greasy, ragged, great-coat, sitting in a wretched apartment, without either glass, paper, or boards in the windows; and there was no sort of furniture but a couple of broken chairs and a miserable truckle-bed. He looked pale,

and meagre, and had more the air of a half-starved prisoner than of a magistrate. Having heard my complaint, he came forth into a kind of outward room or bellfrey, and rung a great bell with his own hand. In consequence of this signal, the post-master came up stairs, and I suppose he was the first man in the place, for the *uffiziale* stood before him cap-in-hand, and with great marks of humble respect repeated the complaint I had made. This man assured me, with an air of conscious importance, that he himself had ordered the hostler to supply me with those very horses, which were the best in his stable; and that the misfortune which happened was owing to the misconduct of the fore-postilion, who did not keep the fore horses to a proper speed proportioned to the mettle of the other two. As he took the affair upon himself, and I perceived had an ascendancy over the magistrate, I contented myself with saying, I was certain the two horses had been put to the coach on purpose, either to hurt or frighten us; and that since I could not have justice here I would make a formal complaint to the British minister at Florence.[5] In passing through the street to the coach, which was by this time furnished with fresh horses, I met the hostler, and would have caned him heartily; but perceiving my intention, he took to his heels and vanished. Of all the people I have ever seen, the hostlers, postilions, and other fellows hanging about the post-houses in Italy, are the most greedy, impertinent, and provoking. Happy are those travellers who have phlegm enough to disregard their insolence and importunity: for this is not so disagreeable as their revenge is dangerous. An English gentleman at Florence told me, that one of those fellows, whom he had struck for his impertinence, flew at him with a long knife, and he could hardly keep him at sword's point. All of them wear such knives, and are very apt to use them on the slightest provocation. But their open attacks are not so formidable as their premeditated schemes of revenge; in the prosecution of which the Italians are equally treacherous and cruel.

This night we passed at a place called Radicofani, a village and fort, situated on the top of a very high mountain. The inn stands still lower than the town. It was built at the expence of the last grand-duke of Tuscany; is very large, very cold, and

uncomfortable. One would imagine it was contrived for coolness, though situated so high, that even in the midst of summer, a traveller would be glad to have a fire in his chamber. But few, or none of them have fire-places, and there is not a bed with curtains or tester in the house. All the adjacent country is naked and barren. On the third day we entered the pope's territories, some parts of which are delightful. Having passed Aqua-Pendente, a beggarly town, situated on the top of a rock, from whence there is a romantic cascade of water, which gives it the name, we travelled along the side of the lake Bolsena, a beautiful piece of water about thirty miles in circuit, with two islands in the middle, the banks covered with noble plantations of oak and cypress. The town of Bolsena standing near the ruins of the antient Volsinium, which was the birth-place of Sejanus,[6] is a paultry village; and Montefiascone, famous for its wine, is a poor decayed town in this neighbourhood, situated on the side of a hill, which, according to the author of the Grand Tour,[7] the only directory I had along with me, is supposed to be the Soracte of the ancients. If we may believe Horace, Soracte was visible from Rome: for, in his ninth ode, addressed to Thaliarchus, he says,

> *Vides, ut alta stet nive candidum*
> *Soracte*——[8]
>
> You see how deeply wreath'd with snow,
> *Soracte* lifts his hoary head,

but, in order to see Montefiascone, his eye-sight must have penetrated through the Mons Cyminus, at the foot of which stands the city of Viterbo. Pliny tells us, that Soracte was not far from Rome, *haud procul ab urbe Roma*;[9] but Montefiascone is fifty miles from this city. And Desprez, in his notes upon Horace, says it is now called Monte S. Oreste.[10] Addison tells us he passed by it in the Campania.[11] I could not without indignation reflect upon the bigotry of Mathilda, who gave this fine country to the see of Rome, under the dominion of which no country was ever known to prosper.

About half way between Montefiascone and Viterbo, one

of our fore-wheels flew off, together with a large splinter of the axle-tree; and if one of the postilions had not by great accident been a remarkably ingenious fellow, we should have been put to the greatest inconvenience, as there was no town, or even house, within several miles. I mention this circumstance, by way of warning to other travellers, that they may provide themselves with a hammer and nails, a spare iron-pin or two, a large knife, and bladder of grease, to be used occasionally in case of such misfortune.

The mountain of Viterbo is covered with beautiful plantations and villas belonging to the Roman nobility, who come hither to make the *villegiatura*[12] in summer. Of the city of Viterbo I shall say nothing, but that it is the capital of that country which Mathilda gave to the Roman see. The place is well built, adorned with public fountains, and a great number of churches and convents; yet far from being populous, the whole number of inhabitants not exceeding fifteen thousand. The post-house is one of the worst inns I ever entered.

After having passed this mountain, the Cyminus of the antients, we skirted part of the lake, which is now called de Vico, and whose banks afford the most agreeable rural prospects of hill and vale, wood, glade and water, shade and sun-shine. A few other very inconsiderable places we passed, and descended into the Campania of Rome, which is almost a desert.[13] The view of this country, in its present situation, cannot but produce emotions of pity and indignation in the mind of every person who retains any idea of its antient cultivation and fertility. It is nothing but a naked withered down, desolate and dreary, almost without inclosure, cornfield, hedge, tree, shrub, house, hut, or habitation; exhibiting here and there the ruins of an antient castellum, tomb, or temple, and in some places the remains of a Roman via. I had heard much of these antient pavements, and was greatly disappointed when I saw them. The Via Cassia or Cymina is paved with broad, solid, flint-stones, which must have greatly incommoded the feet of horses that travelled upon it, as well as endangered the lives of the riders from the slipperiness of the pavement: besides, it is so narrow that two modern carriages could not pass one another upon it, without the most imminent hazard of being overturned. I am still of

opinion that we excel the ancient Romans in understanding the conveniencies of life.

The Grand Tour says, that within four miles of Rome you see a tomb on the road-side, said to be that of Nero, with sculpture in basso relievo at both ends.[14] I did see such a thing more like a common grave-stone, than the tomb of an emperor. But we are informed by Suetonius,[15] that the dead body of Nero, who slew himself at the villa of his freedman, was by the care of his two nurses and his concubine Atta, removed to the sepulchre of the Gens Domitia, immediately within the Porta del Popolo, on your left hand as you enter Rome, precisely on the spot where now stands the church of S. Maria del Popolo. His tomb was even distinguished by an epitaph, which has been preserved by Gruterus.[16] Giacomo Alberici tells us very gravely in his History of the Church,[17] that a great number of devils, who guarded the bones of this wicked emperor, took possession, in the shape of black ravens, of a walnut-tree, which grew upon the spot; from whence they insulted every passenger, until pope Paschal II.[18] in consequence of a solemn fast and a revelation, went thither in procession with his court and cardinals, cut down the tree, burned it to ashes, which, with the bones of Nero, were thrown into the Tyber: then he consecrated an altar on the place, where afterwards the church was built. You may guess what I felt at first sight of the city of Rome, which, notwithstanding all the calamities it has undergone, still maintains an august and imperial appearance. It stands on the farther side of the Tyber, which we crossed at the Ponte Molle, formerly called Pons Milvius, about two miles from the gate by which we entered. This bridge was built by Æmilius Censor,[19] whose name it originally bore. It was the road by which so many heroes returned with conquest to their country; by which so many kings were led captive to Rome; and by which the ambassadors of so many kingdoms and states approached the seat of empire, to deprecate the wrath, to sollicit the friendship, or sue for the protection of the Roman people. It is likewise famous for the defeat and death of Maxentius,[20] who was here overcome by Constantine the Great. The space between the bridge and Porta del Popolo, on the right hand, which is now taken up with

gardens and villas, was part of the antient Campus Martius, where the comitiæ[21] were held; and where the Roman people inured themselves to all manner of exercises: it was adorned with porticos, temples, theatres, baths, circi, basilicæ, obelisks, columns, statues, and groves. Authors differ in their opinions about the extent of it; but as they all agree that it contained the Pantheon, the Circus Agonis, now the Piazza Navona, the Bustum and Mausoleum Augusti, great part of the modern city must be built upon the antient Campus Martius. The highway that leads from the bridge to the city, is part of the Via Flaminia, which extended as far as Rimini; and is well paved, like a modern street. Nothing of the antient bridge remains but the piles; nor is there any thing in the structure of this, or of the other five Roman bridges over the Tyber, that deserves attention. I have not seen any bridge in France or Italy, comparable to that of Westminster, either in beauty, magnificence, or solidity; and when the bridge at Black-Friars is finished, it will be such a monument of architecture as all the world cannot parallel.[22] As for the Tyber, it is, in comparison with the Thames, no more than an inconsiderable stream, foul, deep, and rapid. It is navigable by small boats, barks, and lighters; and, for the conveniency of loading and unloading them, there is a handsome quay by the new custom-house, at the Porto di Ripetta, provided with stairs of each side, and adorned with an elegant fountain, that yields abundance of excellent water.

We are told that the bed of this river has been considerably raised by the rubbish of old Rome, and this is the reason usually given for its being so apt to overflow its banks. A citizen of Rome told me, that a friend of his lately digging to lay the foundation of a new house in the lower part of the city, near the bank of the river, discovered the pavement of an antient street, at the depth of thirty-nine feet from the present surface of the earth. He therefore concluded that modern Rome is near forty feet higher in this place, than the site of the antient city, and that the bed of the river is raised in proportion; but this is altogether incredible. Had the bed of the Tyber been antiently forty feet lower at Rome, than it is at present, there must have been a fall or cataract in it immediately above this tract, as it is not pretended that the

bed of it is raised in any part above the city; otherwise such an elevation would have obstructed its course, and then it would have overflowed the whole Campania. There is nothing extraordinary in its present overflowings: they frequently happened of old, and did great mischief to the antient city. Appian, Dio, and other historians, describe an inundation of the Tyber immediately after the death of Julius Cæsar, which inundation was occasioned by the sudden melting of a great quantity of snow upon the Appenines. This calamity is recorded by Horace in his ode to Augustus.

Vidimus flavum Tiberim retortis
Littore Etrusco violenter undis,
Ire dejectum monumenta regis,
Templaque Vestæ:
Iliæ dum se nimium querenti,
Jactat ultorem; vagus et sinistrâ
Labitur ripâ, Jove non probante
Uxorius Amnis.[23]

"We saw, push'd backward to his native Source,
The yellow Tiber roll his rapid Course,
With impious Ruin threatning Vesta's Fane,
And awful Monument's of Numa's Reign;
With Grief and Rage while Ilia's Bosom glows,
Boastful, for her Revenge, his Waters rose,
But now, th' uxorious River glides away,
So Jove commands, smooth-winding to the Sea."[24]

Livy expressly says, "*ita abundavit Tiberis, ut Ludi Apollinares, circo inundato, extra portam Collinam ad ædem Erycinae Veneris parati sint*"—[25] "There was such an inundation of the *Tyber* that, the *Circus* being overflowed, the *Ludi Apollinares* were exhibited without the gate *Collina*, hard by the temple of *Venus Erycina*." To this custom of transferring the *Ludi Apollinares* to another place when the Tyber had overflowed the *Circus Maximus*, Ovid alludes in his Fasti.

Altera gramineo spectabis equiria campo
Quem Tiberis curvis in latus urget aquis.
Qui tamen ejecta si forte tenebitur unda,
Cælius accipiet pulverulentus equos.[26]

Another race thy view shall entertain,
Where bending Tyber skirts the grassy plain;
Or, should his vagrant stream that plain o'erflow,
The *Cælian* hill the dusty course will shew.

The Porta del Popolo (formerly, Flaminia,) by which we entered Rome, is an elegant piece of architecture, adorned with marble columns and statues, executed after the design of Buonaroti. Within side you find yourself in a noble piazza, from whence three of the principal streets of Rome are detached. It is adorned with the famous Ægyptian obelisk, brought hither from the Circus Maximus, and set up by the architect Dominico Fontana[27] in the pontificate of Sixtus V.[28] Here is likewise a beautiful fountain designed by the same artist; and at the beginning of the two principal streets, are two very elegant churches fronting each other. Such an august entrance cannot fail to impress the stranger with a sublime idea of this venerable city.

Having given our names at the gate, we repaired to the dogana, or custom-house, where our trunks and carriage were searched; and here we were surrounded by a number of servitori de piazza, offering their services with the most disagreeable importunity. Though I told them several times I had no occasion for any, three of them took possession of the coach, one mounting before and two of them behind; and thus we proceeded to the Piazza d'Espagna, where the person lived to whose house I was directed. Strangers that come to Rome seldom put up at public inns, but go directly to lodging houses, of which there is great plenty in this quarter. The Piazza d'Espagna is open, airy, and pleasantly situated in a high part of the city immediately under the Colla Pinciana, and adorned with two fine fountains. Here most of the English reside: the apartments are generally commodious and well furnished; and the lodgers are well supplied with provisions and all necessaries of life. But, if I studied œconomy, I would choose another part of the town than the Piazza d'Espagna, which is, besides, at a great distance from the antiquities. For a decent first floor and two bed-chambers on the second, I payed no more than a scudo (five shillings) per day. Our table was plentifully furnished

by the landlord for two and thirty pauls, being equal to sixteen shillings. I hired a town-coach at the rate of fourteen pauls, or seven shillings a day; and a servitore di piazza for three pauls, or eighteen-pence. The coachman has also an allowance of two pauls a day. The provisions at Rome are reasonable and good; the vitella mongana,[29] however, which is the most delicate veal I ever tasted, is very dear, being sold for two pauls, or a shilling, the pound. Here are the rich wines of Montepulciano, Montefiascone, and Monte di Dragone; but what we commonly drink at meals is that of Orvieto, a small white wine, of an agreeable flavour. Strangers are generally advised to employ an antiquarian to instruct them in all the curiosities of Rome; and this is a necessary expence, when a person wants to become a connoisseur in painting, statuary, and architecture. For my own part I had no such ambition. I longed to view the remains of antiquity by which this metropolis is distinguished; and to contemplate the originals of many pictures and statues, which I had admired in prints and descriptions. I therefore chose a servant, who was recommended to me as a sober intelligent fellow, acquainted with these matters: at the same time I furnished myself with maps and plans of antient and modern Rome, together with the little manual, called, *Itinerario istruttivo per ritrovare con facilita tutte le magnificenze di Roma e di alcune citta', e castelli suburbani.*[30] But I found still more satisfaction in perusing the book in three volumes, intitled, *Roma antica, e moderna,*[31] which contains a description of every thing remarkable in and about the city, illustrated with a great number of copper-plates, and many curious historical annotations. This directory cost me a zequine; but a hundred zequines will not purchase all the books and prints which have been published at Rome on these subjects. Of these the most celebrated are the plates of Piranesi,[32] who is not only an ingenious architect and engraver, but also a learned antiquarian; though he is apt to run riot in his conjectures; and with regard to the arts of antient Rome, has broached some doctrines, which he will find it very difficult to maintain. Our young gentlemen who go to Rome will do well to be upon their guard against a set of sharpers, (some of them of our own country,) who deal in pictures and antiques,

and very often impose upon the uninformed stranger, by selling him trash, as the productions of the most celebrated artists. The English are more than any other foreigners exposed to this imposition. They are supposed to have more money to throw away; and therefore a greater number of snares are layed for them. This opinion of their superior wealth they take a pride in confirming, by launching out into all manner of unnecessary expence: but, what is still more dangerous, the moment they set foot in Italy, they are seized with the ambition of becoming connoisseurs in painting, musick, statuary, and architecture; and the adventurers of this country do not fail to flatter this weakness for their own advantage. I have seen in different parts of Italy, a number of raw boys, whom Britain seemed to have poured forth on purpose to bring her national character into contempt: ignorant, petulant, rash, and profligate, without any knowledge or experience of their own, without any director to improve their understanding, or superintend their conduct. One engages in play with an infamous gamester, and is stripped perhaps in the very first partie: another is poxed and pillaged by an antiquated cantatrice:[33] a third is bubbled by a knavish antiquarian; and a fourth is laid under contribution by a dealer in pictures. Some turn fiddlers, and pretend to compose: but all of them talk familiarly of the arts, and return finished connoisseurs and coxcombs, to their own country. The most remarkable phænomenon of this kind, which I have seen, is a boy of seventy-two,[34] now actually travelling through Italy, for improvement, under the auspices of another boy of twenty-two. When you arrive at Rome, you receive cards from all your country-folks in that city: they expect to have the visit returned next day, when they give orders not to be at home; and you never speak to one another in the sequel. This is a refinement in hospitality and politeness, which the English have invented by the strength of their own genius, without any assistance either from France, Italy, or Lapland. No Englishman above the degree of a painter or cicerone[35] frequents any coffee-house at Rome; and as there are no public diversions, except in carnival-time, the only chance you have for seeing your compatriots, is either in visiting the curiosities, or at a conversazione. The Italians are

very scrupulous in admitting foreigners, except those who are introduced as people of quality: but if there happens to be any English lady of fashion at Rome, she generally keeps an assembly, to which the British subjects resort. In my next, I shall communicate, without ceremony or affectation, what further remarks I have made at Rome, without any pretence, however, to the character of a connoisseur, which, without all doubt, would sit very aukwardly upon,

Dear Sir,

Your Friend and Servant.

LETTER XXX.

Nice, February 28, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

Nothing can be more agreeable to the eyes of a stranger, especially in the heats of summer, than the great number of public fountains that appear in every part of Rome, embellished with all the ornaments of sculpture, and pouring forth prodigious quantities of cool, delicious water, brought in aqueducts from different lakes, rivers, and sources, at a considerable distance from the city. These works are the remains of the munificence and industry of the antient Romans, who were extremely delicate in the article of water: but, however, great applause is also due to those beneficent popes who have been at the expence of restoring and repairing those noble channels of health, pleasure, and convenience. This great plenty of water, nevertheless, has not induced the Romans to be cleanly. Their streets, and even their palaces, are disgraced with filth. The noble Piazza Navona is adorned with three or four fountains, one of which is perhaps the most magnificent in Europe, and all of them discharge vast streams of water: but, notwithstanding this provision, the piazza is almost as dirty as West Smithfield, where the cattle are sold in London. The corridores, arcades, and even stair-cases of their most elegant palaces, are depositories of nastiness, and indeed in summer smell as strong as spirit of hartshorn.[1] I have a great notion that their ancestors were not much more cleanly. If we consider that the city and suburbs of Rome, in the reign of Claudius,[2] contained about seven millions of inhabitants, a number equal at least to the sum total of all the souls in England; that great part of antient Rome was allotted to temples, porticos, basilicæ, theatres, thermæ, circi, public and private walks and gardens, where very few, if any, of this great number lodged; that by far the greatest part of those inhabitants were slaves and poor people, who did not enjoy the conveniencies of life; and that the use of linen was scarce known; we must naturally conclude they were strangely crouded together, and that in general they were a very frowzy generation. That they were crouded together appears from the height of their

houses, which the poet Rutilius[3] compared to towers made for scaling heaven. In order to remedy this inconvenience, Augustus Cæsar published a decree, that for the future no houses should be built above seventy feet high, which, at a moderate computation, might make six stories. But what seems to prove, beyond all dispute, that the antient Romans were dirty creatures, are these two particulars. Vespasian[4] laid a tax upon urine and ordure, on pretence of being at a great expence in clearing the streets from such nusances; an imposition which amounted to about fourteen pence a year for every individual; and when Heliogabalus[5] ordered all the cobwebs of the city and suburbs to be collected, they were found to weigh ten thousand pounds. This was intended as a demonstration of the great number of inhabitants; but it was a proof of their dirt, rather than of their populosity. I might likewise add, the delicate custom of taking vomits at each other's houses, when they were invited to dinner, or supper, that they might prepare their stomachs for gormandizing; a beastly proof of their nastiness as well as gluttony. Horace, in his description of the banquet of Nasiedenus, says, when the canopy, under which they sat, fell down, it brought along with it as much dirt as is raised by a hard gale of wind in dry weather.

——"*trahentia pulveris atri,*
Quantum non aquilo Campanis excitat agris."[6]
"Such clouds of dust revolving in its train
As *Boreas*[7] whirls along the level plain."*

* The same author who lived like a man of fashion and may be supposed to have been as nice as others of the same rank, in his invitation to *Torquatus*, mentions as an inducement that he shall have a clean table cloth, and be served in pewter well scoured

–ne turpe toral, ne sordida mappa
corruget nares, ne non et cantharus, et lanx
ostendat tibi te–[8]
"—no dirty towel shall your nose offend—
My pots and dishes all are scour'd so bright,
As to reflect your image to the sight—"

A little lower in the same epistle, he says

Sed nimis arcta premunt olidæ convivia capræ[9]
"The crowded feast disgusting steams annoy—"

I might observe, that the streets were often encumbered with the putrifying carcasses of criminals, who had been dragged through them by the heels, and precipitated from the *Scalæ Gemoniæ*, or Tarpeian rock,[12] before they were thrown into the Tyber, which was the general receptacle of the *cloaca maxima*[13] and all the filth of Rome: besides, the bodies of all those who made away with themselves, without sufficient cause; of such as were condemned for sacrilege, or killed by thunder, were left unburned and unburied, to rot above ground.

I believe the moderns retain more of the customs of the antient Romans, than is generally imagined. When I first saw the infants at the *enfans trouvés*[14] in Paris, so swathed with bandages, that the very sight of them made my eyes water, I little dreamed, that the prescription of the antients could be pleaded for this custom, equally shocking and absurd: but in the Capitol at Rome, I met with the antique statue of a child swaddled exactly in the same manner; rolled up like an Ægyptian mummy from the feet. The circulation of the blood, in such a case, must be obstructed on the whole surface of the body; and nothing be at liberty but the head, which is the only part of the child that ought to be confined. Is it not surprising that common sense should not point out, even to the most ignorant, that those accursed bandages must heat the tender infant into a fever; must hinder the action of the muscles, and the play of the joints, so necessary to health and nutrition; and that while the refluent blood is obstructed

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Indeed it could not well be otherwise, if we consider that three persons at least were wedged together upon one couch or *triclinium*,[10] in a hot climate where the perspiration naturally rank and copious, was increased by the heat of the bed, the mutual contact of their bodies and the exercise of eating and drinking to excess. They had also another filthy custom which still prevails among the modern Italians; I mean that of spitting and hawking incessantly, and defiling the floor with slops of every kind. This was so much the case in antient times that the floor of the dining room was generally covered with *scobs* or saw-dust to absorb what Seneca calls the *purgamenta et jactus cœnuntium*,[11] "the excretions and discharges of the guests." The *scobs* became at length a point of luxury. *Heliogabalus* ordered his portico to be strewed in lieu of *scobs* with gold and silver dust, and lamented that he could not find amber enough for that purpose.

in the veins, which run on the surface of the body, the arteries, which lie deep, without the reach of compression, are continually pouring their contents into the head, where the blood meets with no resistance? The vessels of the brain are naturally lax, and the very sutures of the skull are yet unclosed. What are the consequences of this cruel swaddling? the limbs are wasted; the joints grow rickety; the brain is compressed, and a hydrocephalus, with a great head and sore eyes, ensues. I take this abominable practice to be one great cause of the bandy legs, diminutive bodies, and large heads, so frequent in the south of France, and in Italy.

I was no less surprised to find the modern fashion of curling the hair, borrowed in a great measure from the coxcombs and coquettes of antiquity. I saw a bust of Nero in the gallery at Florence, the hair represented in rows of buckles, like that of a French petit-maitre, conformable to the picture drawn of him by Suetonius. *Circa cultum adeo pudendum, ut comam semper in gradus formatam peregrinatione achaica, etiam pene verticem sumpserit.*[15] "So very finical in his dress, that he wore his hair in the Greek fashion, curled in rows almost to the crown of his head." I was very sorry however to find that this foppery came from Greece. As for Otho,[16] he wore a galericulum, or tour, on account of thin hair, *propter raritatem capillorum.*[17] He had no right to imitate the example of Julius Cæsar, who concealed his bald head with a wreath of laurel. But there is a bust in the Capitol of Julia Pia, the second wife of Septimius Severus,[18] with a moveable peruke, dressed exactly in the fashionable mode, with this difference, that there is no part of it frizzled; nor is there any appearance of pomatum and powder. These improvements the beau-monde have borrowed from the natives of the Cape of Good Hope.

Modern Rome does not cover more than one-third of the space within the walls; and those parts that were most frequented of old are now intirely abandoned. From the Capitol to the Coliseo, including the Forum Romanum and Boarium, there is nothing intire but one or two churches, built with the fragments of ancient edifices. You descend from the Capitol between the remaining pillars of two temples, the pedestals and part of the shafts sunk in the

rubbish: then passing through the triumphal arch of Septimius Severus, you proceed along the foot of Mons Palatinus, which stands on your right hand, quite covered with the ruins of the antient palace belonging to the Roman emperors, and at the foot of it, there are some beautiful detached pillars still standing. On the left you see the remains of the *Templum Pacis*, which seems to have been the largest and most magnificent of all the temples in Rome. It was built and dedicated by the emperor Vespasian, who brought into it all the treasure and precious vessels which he found in the temple of Jerusalem. The columns of the portico he removed from Nero's golden house, which he levelled with the ground. This temple was likewise famous for its library, mentioned by Aulus Gellius.[19] Farther on, is the arch of Constantine on the right, a most noble piece of architecture, almost entire; with the remains of the *Meta Sudans*[20] before it; and fronting you, the noble ruins of that vast amphitheatre, called the Colossæum, now Coliseo, which has been dismantled and dilapidated by the Gothic popes and princes of modern Rome, to build and adorn their paultry palaces. Behind the amphitheatre were the thermæ of the same emperor Titus Vespasian. In the same quarter was the *Circus Maximus*; and the whole space from hence on both sides, to the walls of Rome, comprehending above twice as much ground as the modern city, is almost covered with the monuments of antiquity. I suppose there is more concealed below ground than appears above. The miserable houses, and even garden-walls of the peasants in this district, are built with these precious materials, I mean shafts and capitals of marble columns, heads, arms, legs, and mutilated trunks of statues. What pity it is that among all the remains of antiquity, at Rome, there is not one lodging-house remaining. I should be glad to know how the senators of Rome were lodged. I want to be better informed touching the *cava ædium*, the *focus*, the *ara deorum penatum*, the *conclavia*, *triclinia*, and *cænationes*; the *atria* where the women resided, and employed themselves in the woolen manufacture; the *prætoria*,[21] which were so spacious as to become a nusance in the reign of Augustus; and the *xysta*, which were shady walks between two porticos, where the men exercised themselves in the

winter. I am disgusted by the modern taste of architecture, though I am no judge of the art. The churches and palaces of these days are crowded with petty ornaments, which distract the eye, and by breaking the design into a variety of little parts, destroy the effect of the whole. Every door and window has its separate ornaments, its moulding, frize, cornice, and tympanum;[22] then there is such an assemblage of useless festoons, pillars, pilasters, with their architraves, entablatures, and I know not what, that nothing great or uniform remains to fill the view; and we in vain look for that simplicity of grandeur, those large masses of light and shadow, and the inexpressible *EYΣYNOΠTON*,[23] which characterise the edifices of the antients. A great edifice, to have its full effect, ought to be *isolé*, or detached from all others, with a large space around it: but the palaces of Rome, and indeed of all the other cities of Italy, which I have seen, are so engaged among other mean houses, that their beauty and magnificence are in a great measure concealed. Even those which face open streets and piazzas are only clear in front. The other apartments are darkened by the vicinity of ordinary houses; and their views are confined by dirty and disagreeable objects. Within the court there is generally a noble colonnade all round, and an open corridore above: but the stairs are usually narrow, steep, and high: the want of sash-windows, the dullness of their small glass lozenges, the dusty brick floors, and the crimson hangings laced with gold, contribute to give a gloomy air to their apartments; I might add to these causes, a number of pictures executed on melancholy subjects, antique mutilated statues, busts, basso relievos, urns, and sepulchral stones, with which their rooms are adorned. It must be owned, however, there are some exceptions to this general rule. The villa of Cardinal Alexander Albani[24] is light, gay, and airy; yet the rooms are too small, and too much decorated with carving and gilding, which is a kind of gingerbread work.[25] The apartments of one of the princes Borghese are furnished in the English taste; and in the *palazzo di Colonna Connestabile*, there is a saloon, or gallery, which, for the proportions, lights, furniture, and ornaments, is the most noble, elegant, and agreeable apartment I ever saw.

LETTER XXX.

It is diverting to hear an Italian expatiate upon the greatness of modern Rome. He will tell you there are above three hundred palaces in the city; that there is scarce a Roman prince, whose revenue does not exceed two hundred thousand crowns; and that Rome produces not only the most learned men, but also the most refined politicians in the universe. To one of them talking in this strain, I replied, that instead of three hundred palaces, the number did not exceed fourscore; that I had been informed, on good authority, there were not six individuals in Rome who had so much as forty thousand crowns a year, about ten thousand pounds sterling; and that to say their princes were so rich, and their politicians so refined, was, in effect, a severe satire upon them, for not employing their wealth and their talents for the advantage of their country. I asked why their cardinals and princes did not invite and encourage industrious people to settle and cultivate the Campania of Rome, which is a desert? why they did not raise a subscription to drain the marshes in the neighbourhood of the city, and thus meliorate the air, which is rendered extremely unwholsome in the summer, by putrid exhalations from those morasses? I demanded of him, why they did not contribute their wealth, and exert their political refinements, in augmenting their forces by sea and land, for the defence of their country, introducing commerce and manufactures, and in giving some consequence to their state, which was no more than a mite in the political scale of Europe? I expressed a desire to know what became of all those sums of money, inasmuch as there was hardly any circulation of gold and silver in Rome, and the very bankers, on whom strangers have their credit, make interest to pay their tradesmen's bills with paper notes of the bank of Spirito Santo?[26] And now I am upon this subject, it may not be amiss to observe that I was strangely misled by all the books I consulted about the current coin of Italy.[27] In Tuscany, and the Ecclesiastical State, one sees nothing but zequines in gold, and pieces of two paoli, one paolo, and half a paolo, in silver. Besides these, there is a copper coin at Rome, called bajocco and mezzo bajocco. Ten bajocchi make a paolo: ten paoli make a scudo, which is an imaginary piece: two scudi make a zequine; and a French loui'dore is worth two zequines and two paoli.

LETTER XXX.

Rome has nothing to fear from the catholic powers, who respect it with a superstitious veneration as the metropolitan seat of their religion: but the popes will do well to avoid misunderstandings with the maritime protestant states, especially the English, who being masters of the Mediterranean, and in possession of Minorca,[28] have it in their power at all times, to land a body of troops within four leagues of Rome, and to take the city, without opposition. Rome is surrounded with an old wall, but altogether incapable of defence. Or if it was, the circuit of the walls is so extensive, that it would require a garrison of twenty thousand men. The only appearance of a fortification in this city, is the castle of St. Angelo, situated on the further bank of the Tyber, to which there is access by a handsome bridge: but this castle, which was formerly the *moles Adriani*, could not hold out half a day against a battery of ten pieces of cannon properly directed. It was an expedient left to the invention of the modern Romans, to convert an ancient tomb into a citadel. It could only serve as a temporary retreat for the pope in times of popular commotion, and on other sudden emergencies; as it happened in the case of pope Clement VII.[29] when the troops of the emperor took the city by assault; and this only while he resided at the Vatican, from whence there is a covered gallery continued to the castle: it can never serve this purpose again, while the pontiff lives on Monte Cavallo, which is at the other end of the city. The castle of St. Angelo, howsoever ridiculous as a fortress, appears respectable as a noble monument of antiquity, and though standing in a low situation, is one of the first objects that strike the eye of a stranger approaching Rome. On the opposite side of the river, are the wretched remains of the Mausoleum Augusti, which was still more magnificent. Part of the walls is standing, and the terraces are converted into garden-ground. In viewing these ruins, I remembered Virgil's pathetic description of Marcellus,[30] who was here intombed.

> *Quantos ille virum, magnum mavortis ad urbem.*
> *Campus aget gemitus, vel que Tyberine, videbis*
> *Funera, cum tumulum preter labere recentem.*[31]
>
> Along his banks what groans shall *Tyber* hear,

When the fresh tomb and fun'ral pomp appear!

The beautiful poem of Ovid *de Consolatione ad Liviam*, written after the ashes of Augustus and his nephew Marcellus, of Germanicus,[32] Agrippa and Drusus,[33] were deposited in this mausoleum, concludes with these lines, which are extremely tender:

Claudite jam Parcæ nimium reserata sepulchra;
Claudite, plus justo, jam domus ista patet![34]

Ah! shut these yawning tombs, ye sister Fates!
Too long unclos'd have stood those dreary gates!

What the author said of the monument, you will be tempted to say of this letter, which I shall therefore close in the old stile, assuring you that I ever am,

Yours most affectionately.

LETTER XXXI.

Nice, March 5, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

In my last I gave you my opinion freely of the modern palaces of Italy. I shall now hazard my thoughts upon the gardens of this country, which the inhabitants extol with all the hyperboles of admiration and applause. I must acknowledge however, I have not seen the famous villas at Frascati and Tivoli, which are celebrated for their gardens and water-works. I intended to visit these places; but was prevented by an unexpected change of weather, which deterred me from going to the country. On the last day of September the mountains of Palestrina were covered with snow; and the air became so cold at Rome, that I was forced to put on my winter cloaths. This objection continued, till I found it necessary to set out on my return to Florence. But I have seen the gardens of the *Poggio Imperiale*, and the *Palazzo de Pitti* at Florence, and those of the Vatican, of the pope's palace on Monte Cavallo, of the Villa Ludovisia, Medicea, and Pinciana, at Rome; so that I think I have some right to judge of the Italian taste in gardening. Among those I have mentioned, that of the Villa Pinciana is the most remarkable, and the most extensive, including a space of three miles in circuit, hard by the walls of Rome, containing a variety of situations high and low, which favour all the natural embellishments one would expect to meet with in a garden, and exhibit a diversity of noble views of the city and adjacent country.

In a fine extensive garden or park, an Englishman expects to see a number of groves and glades, intermixed with an agreeable negligence, which seems to be the effect of nature and accident. He looks for shady walks encrusted with gravel; for open lawns covered with verdure as smooth as velvet, but much more lively and agreeable; for ponds, canals, basins, cascades, and running streams of water; for clumps of trees, woods, and wildernesses, cut into delightful alleys, perfumed with honey-suckle and sweet-briar, and resounding with the mingled melody of all the singing birds of heaven: he looks for plats of flowers in different parts to refresh the sense, and please the fancy; for arbours, grottos,

hermitages, temples, and alcoves, to shelter him from the sun, and afford him means of contemplation and repose; and he expects to find the hedges, groves, and walks, and lawns kept with the utmost order and propriety. He who loves the beauties of simple nature, and the charms of neatness, will seek for them in vain amidst the groves of Italy. In the garden of the Villa Pinciana, there is a plantation of four hundred pines, which the Italians view with rapture and admiration: there is likewise a long walk of trees, extending from the garden-gate to the palace; and plenty of shade, with alleys and hedges in different parts of the ground: but the groves are neglected; the walks are laid with nothing but common mould or sand, black and dusty; the hedges are tall, thin and shabby; the trees stunted; the open ground, brown and parched, has scarce any appearance of verdure. The flat, regular alleys of evergreens are cut into fantastic figures; the flower gardens embellished with thin cyphers and flourished figures in box, while the flowers grow in rows of earthen-pots, and the ground appears as dusky as if it was covered with the cinders of a blacksmith's forge. The water, of which there is great plenty, instead of being collected in large pieces, or conveyed in little rivulets and streams to refresh the thirsty soil, or managed so as to form agreeable cascades, is squirted from fountains in different parts of the garden, through tubes little bigger than common glyster-pipes.[1] It must be owned indeed that the fountains have their merit in the way of sculpture and architecture; and that here is a great number of statues which merit attention: but they serve only to encumber the ground, and destroy that effect of rural simplicity, which our gardens are designed to produce. In a word, here we see a variety of walks and groves and fountains, a wood of four hundred pines, a paddock with a few meagre deer, a flower-garden, an aviary, a grotto, and a fish-pond; and in spite of all these particulars, it is, in my opinion, a very contemptible garden, when compared to that of Stowe in Buckinghamshire,[2] or even to those of Kensington and Richmond. The Italians understand, because they study, the excellencies of art; but they have no idea of the beauties of nature. This Villa Pinciana, which belongs to the Borghese family, would make a complete academy for painting and

sculpture, especially for the study of antient marbles; for, exclusive of the statues and busts in the garden, and the vast collection in the different apartments, almost the whole outside of the house is covered with curious pieces in basso and alto relievo. The most masterly is that of Curtius[3] on horseback, leaping into the gulph or opening of the earth, which is said to have closed on receiving this sacrifice. Among the exhibitions of art within the house, I was much struck with a Bacchus, and the death of Meleager, represented on an antient sepulchre. There is also an admirable statue of Silenus,[4] with the infant Bacchus in his arms; a most beautiful gladiator; a curious Moor of black marble, with a shirt of white alabaster; a finely proportioned bull of black marble also, standing upon a table of alabaster; a black gipsey with a head, hands, and feet of brass; and the famous hermaphrodite, which vies with that of Florence: though the most curious circumstance of this article, is the mattrass executed and placed by Bernini,[5] with such art and dexterity, that to the view, it rivals the softness of wool, and seems to retain the marks of pressure, according to the figure of the superincumbent statue. Let us likewise own, for the honour of the moderns, that the same artist has produced two fine statues, which we find among the ornaments of this villa, namely, a David with his sling in the attitude of throwing the stone at the giant Goliah; and a Daphne changing into laurel at the approach of Apollo. On the base of this figure, are the two following elegant lines, written by pope Urban VIII.[6] in his younger years.

Quisquis amans sequitur fugitivæ gaudia formæ,
Fronde manus implet, baccas vel carpit amaras.

Who pants for fleeting Beauty, vain pursuit!
Shall barren leaves obtain, or bitter fruit.

I ought not to forget two exquisite antique statues of Venus, the weeping slave, and the youth pulling a thorn out of his foot.

I do not pretend to give a methodical detail of the curiosities of Rome: they have been already described by different authors, who were much better qualified than I am for the task: but you shall have what observations I made on

the most remarkable objects, without method, just as they occur to my remembrance; and I protest the remarks are all my own: so that if they deserve any commendation, I claim all the merit; and if they are impertinent, I must be contented to bear all the blame.

The piazza of St. Peter's church is altogether sublime. The double colonnade on each side extending in a semi-circular sweep, the stupendous Ægyptian obelisk, the two fountains, the portico, and the admirable façade of the church, form such an assemblage of magnificent objects, as cannot fail to impress the mind with awe and admiration: but the church would have produced a still greater effect, had it been detached entirely from the buildings of the Vatican. It would then have been a master-piece of architecture, complete in all its parts, intire and perfect: whereas, at present, it is no more than a beautiful member attached to a vast undigested and irregular pile of building. As to the architecture of this famous temple, I shall say nothing; neither do I pretend to describe the internal ornaments. The great picture of Mosaic work, and that of St. Peter's bark tossed by the tempest, which appear over the gate of the church, though rude in comparison with modern pieces, are nevertheless great curiosities, when considered as the work of Giotto, who flourished in the beginning of the fourteenth century. His master was Cimabue,[7] who learned painting and architecture of the Grecian artists, who came from Constantinople, and first revived these arts in Italy. But, to return to St. Peter's, I was not at all pleased with the famous statue of the dead Christ in his mother's lap, by Michael Angelo. The figure of Christ is as much emaciated, as if he had died of a consumption: besides, there is something indelicate, not to say indecent, in the attitude and design of a man's body, stark naked, lying upon the knees of a woman.[8] Here are some good pictures, I should rather say copies of good pictures, done in Mosaic to great perfection; particularly a St. Sebastian by Domenichino,[9] and Michael the Archangel, from a painting of Guido Rheni.[10] I am extremely fond of all this artist's pieces. There is a tenderness and delicacy in his manner; and his figures are all exquisitely beautiful, though his expression is often erroneous, and his attitudes are always affected and

unnatural. In this very piece the archangel has all the air of a French dancing-master; and I have seen a Madonna by the same hand, I think it is in the Palazzo di Barberini, in which, though the figures are enchanting, the Virgin is represented holding up the drapery of the Infant, with the ridiculous affectation of a singer on the stage of our Italian opera. The Mosaic work, though brought to a wonderful degree of improvement, and admirably calculated for churches, the dampness of which is pernicious to the colours of the pallet, I will not yet compare to the productions of the pencil. The glassyness (if I may be allowed the expression) of the surface, throws, in my opinion, a false light on some parts of the picture; and when you approach it, the joinings of the pieces look like so many cracks on painted canvas. Besides, this method is extremely tedious and expensive. I went to see the artists at work, in a house that stands near the church, where I was much pleased with the ingenuity of the process; and not a little surprized at the great number of different colours and tints, which are kept in separate drawers, marked with numbers as far as seventeen thousand. For a single head done in Mosaic, they asked me fifty zequines. But to return to the church. The altar of St. Peter's choir, notwithstanding all the ornaments which have been lavished upon it, is no more than a heap of puerile finery, better adapted to an Indian pagod, than to a temple built upon the principles of the Greek architecture. The four colossal figures that support the chair, are both clumsy and disproportioned. The drapery of statues, whether in brass or stone, when thrown into large masses, appears hard and unpleasant to the eye; and for that reason the antients always imitated wet linen, which exhibiting the shape of the limbs underneath, and hanging in a multiplicity of wet folds, gives an air of lightness, softness, and ductility to the whole.

These two statues weigh 116257 pounds, and as they sustain nothing but a chair, are out of all proportion, inasmuch as the supporters ought to be suitable to the things supported. Here are four giants holding up the old wooden chair of the apostle Peter, if we may believe the book *De Identitate Cathedræ Romanæ*,[11] Of the Identity of the Roman Chair. The implements of popish superstition; such as relicks

of pretended saints, ill proportioned spires and bellfreys, and the nauseous repetition of the figure of the cross, which is in itself a very mean and disagreeable object, only fit for the prisons of condemned criminals, have contributed to introduce a vitious taste into the external architecture, as well as in the internal ornaments of our temples. All churches are built in the figure of a cross, which effectually prevents the eye from taking in the scope of the building, either without side or within; consequently robs the edifice of its proper effect. The palace of the Escurial[12] in Spain is laid out in the shape of a gridiron, because the convent was built in consequence of a vow to St. Laurence,[13] who was broiled like a barbecued pig. What pity it is, that the labours of painting should have been so much employed on the shocking subjects of the martyrology. Besides numberless pictures of the flagellation, crucifixion, and descent from the cross, we have Judith with the head of Holofernes, Herodias with the head of John the Baptist, Jael assassinating Sisera in his sleep, Peter writhing on the cross, Stephen battered with stones, Sebastian[14] stuck full of arrows, Laurence frying upon the coals, Bartholomew flaed alive,[15] and a hundred other pictures equally frightful, which can only serve to fill the mind with gloomy ideas, and encourage a spirit of religious fanaticism, which has always been attended with mischievous consequences to the community where it reigned.

The tribune of the great altar, consisting of four wreathed brass pillars, gilt, supporting a canopy, is doubtless very magnificent, if not over-charged with sculpture, fluting, foliage, festoons, and figures of boys and angels, which, with the hundred and twenty-two lamps of silver, continually burning below, serve rather to dazzle the eyes, and kindle the devotion of the ignorant vulgar, than to excite the admiration of a judicious observer.

There is nothing, I believe, in this famous structure, so worthy of applause, as the admirable symmetry and proportion of its parts. Notwithstanding all the carving, gilding, basso relievo, medallions, urns, statues, columns, and pictures with which it abounds, it does not, on the whole, appear over-crouded with ornaments. When you first enter, your eye is filled so equally and regularly, that nothing

appears stupendous; and the church seems considerably smaller than it really is. The statues of children, that support the founts of holy water when observed from the door, seem to be of the natural size; but as you draw near, you perceive they are gigantic. In the same manner, the figures of the doves, with olive branches in their beaks, which are represented on the wall, appear to be within your reach; but as you approach them, they recede to a considerable height, as if they had flown upwards to avoid being taken.

I was much disappointed at sight of the Pantheon, which, after all that has been said of it, looks like a huge cockpit, open at top. The portico which Agrippa added to the building, is undoubtedly very noble, though, in my opinion, it corresponds but ill with the simplicity of the edifice. With all my veneration for the antients, I cannot see in what the beauty of the rotunda consists. It is no more than a plain unpierced cylinder, or circular wall, with two fillets and a cornice, having a vaulted roof or cupola, open in the centre. I mean the original building, without considering the vestibule of Agrippa. Within side it has much the air of a mausoleum. It was this appearance which, in all probability, suggested the thought to Boniface IV.[16] to transport hither eight and twenty cart-loads of old rotten bones, dug from different burying-places, and then dedicate it as a church to the blessed Virgin and all the holy martyrs. I am not one of those who think it is well lighted by the hole at the top, which is about nine and twenty feet in diameter, although the author of the Grand Tour calls it but nine.[17] The same author says, there is a descent of eleven steps to go into it; that it is a hundred and forty-four feet in heighth, and as many in breadth; that it was covered with copper, which, with the brass nails of the portico, pope Urban VIII. took away, and converted into the four wreathed pillars that support the canopy of the high altar in the church of St. Peter, &c.[18] The truth is, before the time of pope Alexander VII.[19] the earth was so raised as to cover part of the temple, and there was a descent of some steps into the porch: but that pontiff ordered the ground to be pared away to the very pedestal or base of the portico, which is now even with the street, so that there is no descent whatsoever. The height is two hundred palmi, and the

breadth two hundred and eighteen; which, reckoning the palmi at nine inches, will bring the height to one hundred and fifty, and the breadth to one hundred and sixty-three feet six inches. It was not any covering of copper which pope Urban VIII. removed, but large brass beams, which supported the roof of the portico. They weighed 186392 pounds; and afforded metal enough not only for the pillars in St. Peter's church, but also for several pieces of artillery that are now in the castle of St. Angelo. What is more extraordinary, the gilding of those columns is said to have cost forty thousand golden crowns: sure money was never worse laid out. Urban VIII. likewise added two bellfrey towers to the rotunda; and I wonder he did not cover the central hole with glass, as it must be very inconvenient and disagreeable to those who go to church below, to be exposed to the rain in wet weather, which must also render it very damp and unwholesome. I visited it several times, and each time it looked more and more gloomy and sepulchral.

The magnificence of the Romans was not so conspicuous in their temples, as in their theatres, amphitheatres, circusses, naumachia,[20] aqueducts, triumphal arches, porticoes, basilicæ, but especially their thermæ, or bathing-places. A great number of their temples were small and inconsiderable; not one of them was comparable either for size or magnificence, to the modern church of St. Peter of the Vatican. The famous temple of Jupiter Capitolinus was neither half so long, nor half so broad: it was but two hundred feet in length, and one hundred and eighty-five in breadth; whereas the length of St. Peter's extends to six hundred and thirty-eight feet, and the breadth to above five hundred. It is very near twice as large as the temple of Jupiter Olympius in Greece, which was counted one of the seven wonders of the world. But I shall take another opportunity to explain myself further on the antiquities of this city; a subject, upon which I am disposed to be (perhaps impertinently) circumstantial. When I begin to run riot, you should check me with the freedom of a friend. The most distant hint will be sufficient to,

Dear Sir,

Yours assuredly.

LETTER XXXII.

Nice, March 10, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

The Colossæum or amphitheatre built by Flavius Vespasian, is the most stupendous work of the kind which antiquity can produce. Near one half of the external circuit still remains, consisting of four tire of arcades, adorned with columns of four orders, Doric, Ionic, Corinthian, and Composite. The height and extent of it may be guessed from the number of spectators it contained, amounting to one hundred thousand; and yet, according to Fontana's mensuration, it could not contain above thirty-four thousand persons sitting, allowing a foot and an half for each person: for the circuit of the whole building did not exceed one thousand five hundred and sixty feet. The amphitheatre at Verona is one thousand two hundred and ninety feet in circumference; and that of Nismes, one thousand and eighty. The Colossæum was built by Vespasian, who employed thirty thousand Jewish slaves in the work; but finished and dedicated by his son Titus,[1] who, on the first day of its being opened, produced fifty thousand wild beasts, which were all killed in the arena. The Romans were undoubtedly a barbarous people, who delighted in horrible spectacles. They viewed with pleasure the dead bodies of criminals dragged through the streets, or thrown down the Scalæ Gemoniæ and Tarpeian rock, for their contemplation. Their rostra[2] were generally adorned with the heads of some remarkable citizens, like Temple-Bar,[3] at London. They even bore the sight of Tully's[4] head fixed upon that very rostrum where he had so often ravished their ears with all the charms of eloquence, in pleading the cause of innocence and public virtue. They took delight in seeing their fellow-creatures torn in pieces by wild beasts, in the amphitheatre. They shouted with applause when they saw a poor dwarf or slave killed by his adversary; but their transports were altogether extravagant, when the devoted captives were obliged to fight in troops, till one side was entirely butchered by the other. Nero produced four hundred senators, and six hundred of the equestrian order, as gladiators in the public arena: even the women fought with

wild beasts, as well as with each other, and drenched the amphitheatres with their blood. Tacitus says, "*Sed fœminarum illustrium, senatorumque filiorum plures per arenam fœdati sunt.*"[5] "But many sons of senators, and even matrons of the first rank, exposed themselves in this vile exercise." The execrable custom of sacrificing captives or slaves at the tombs of their masters and great men, which is still preserved among the negroes of Africa, obtained also among the antients, Greeks as well as Romans. I could never, without horror and indignation, read that passage in the twenty-third book of the Iliad, which describes twelve valiant Trojan captives sacrificed by the inhuman Achilles at the tomb of his friend Patroclus.

Δώδεκα μεν Τρώων μεγαθυμων υἕας εσθλοὺς
Τοὺς ἅμα σοι πάντας πὺρ ἐσθὶει.[6]

Twelve gen'rous *Trojans* slaughter'd in their bloom,
With thy lov'd coarse the fire shall now consume.

Even Virgil makes his pious hero sacrifice eight *Italian* youths to the *manes* of *Pallas*.[7] It is not at all clear to me, that a people is the more brave, the more they are accustomed to bloodshed in their public entertainments. True bravery is not savage but humane. Some of this sanguinary spirit is inherited by the inhabitants of a certain island that shall be nameless—but, mum for that. You will naturally suppose that the Coliseo was ruined by the barbarians who sacked the city of Rome: in effect, they robbed it of its ornaments and valuable materials; but it was reserved for the Goths and Vandals of modern Rome, to dismantle the edifice, and reduce it to its present ruinous condition. One part of it was demolished by pope Paul II.[8] that he might employ the stones of it in building the palace of St. Mark. It was afterwards dilapidated for the same purposes, by the cardinals Riarius[9] and Farnese, which last assumed the tiara under the name of Paul III.[10] Notwithstanding these injuries, there is enough standing to convey a very sublime idea of antient magnificence.

The Circi and Naumachia, if considered as buildings and artificial basins, are admirable; but if examined as areæ intended for horse and chariot-races, and artificial seas for

exhibiting naval engagements, they seem to prove that the antient Romans were but indifferently skilled and exercised either in horsemanship or naval armaments. The inclosure of the emperor Caracalla's circus is still standing, and scarce affords breathing room for an English hunter. The Circus Maximus, by far the largest in Rome, was not so long as the Mall; and I will venture to affirm, that St. James's Park would make a much more ample and convenient scene for those diversions. I imagine an old Roman would be very much surprised to see an English race on the course at New-Market. The Circus Maximus was but three hundred yards in breadth. A good part of this was taken up by the spina,[11] or middle space, adorned with temples, statues, and two great obelisks; as well as by the euripus, or canal, made by order of Julius Cæsar, to contain crocodiles, and other aquatic animals, which were killed occasionally. This was so large, that Heliogabalus, having filled it with excellent wine, exhibited naval engagements in it, for the amusement of the people. It surrounded three sides of the square, so that the whole extent of the race did not much exceed an English mile; and when Probus[12] was at the expence of filling the plain of it with fir-trees, to form a wood for the chase of wild beasts, I question much if this forest was more extensive than the plantation in St. James's Park, on the south side of the canal: now I leave you to judge what ridicule a king of England would incur by converting this part of the park into a chace for any species of animals which are counted game in our country.

The Roman emperors seemed more disposed to elevate and surprize, than to conduct the public diversions according to the rules of reason and propriety. One would imagine, it was with this view they instituted their naumachia, or naval engagements, performed by half a dozen small gallies of a side in an artificial basin of fresh water. These gallies, I suppose, were not so large as common fishing-smacks, for they were moved by two, three, and four oars of a side, according to their different rates, biremes, triremes, and quadriremes. I know this is a knotty point not yet determined; and that some antiquarians believe the Roman gallies had different tires or decks of oars; but this is a notion

very ill supported, and quite contrary to all the figures of them that are preserved on antient coins and medals. Suetonius in the reign of Domitian,[13] speaking of these naumachia, says, "*Edidit navales pugnas, pene justarum classium, effosso, et circumducto juxta Tyberim Lacu, atque inter maximas imbres prospectavit.*"[14] "He exhibited naval engagements of almost *intire fleets*, in an artificial lake formed for the purpose hard by the *Tyber*, and viewed them in the midst of excessive rains." This artificial lake was not larger than the piece of water in Hyde-Park; and yet the historian says, it was almost large enough for real or intire fleets. How would a British sailor relish an advertisement that a mock engagement between two squadrons of men of war would be exhibited on such a day in the Serpentine river?[15] or that the ships of the line taken from the enemy would be carried in procession from Hyde-Park-Corner to Tower-wharf? Certain it is, Lucullus,[16] in one of his triumphs, had one hundred and ten ships of war (*naves longas*) carried through the streets of Rome. Nothing can give a more contemptible idea of their naval power, than this testimony of their historians, who declare that their seamen or mariners were formed by exercising small row-boats in an inclosed pool of fresh water. Had they not the sea within a few miles of them, and the river Tyber running through their capital! even this would have been much more proper for exercising their watermen, than a pond of still-water, not much larger than a cold-bath. I do believe, in my conscience, that half a dozen English frigates would have been able to defeat both the contending fleets at the famous battle of Actium, which has been so much celebrated in the annals of antiquity, as an event that decided the fate of empire.

It would employ me a whole month to describe the thermæ or baths, the vast ruins of which are still to be seen within the walls of Rome, like the remains of so many separate citadels. The thermæ Dioclesianæ might be termed an august academy for the use and instruction of the Roman people. The pinacotheca of this building was a complete musæum of all the curiosities of art and nature; and there were public schools for all the sciences. If I may judge by my eye, however, the thermæ Antonianæ built by Caracalla,

were still more extensive and magnificent; they contained cells sufficient for two thousand three hundred persons to bathe at one time, without being seen by one another. They were adorned with all the charms of painting, architecture, and sculpture. The pipes for conveying the water were of silver. Many of the lavacra[17] were of precious marble, illuminated by lamps of chrystal. Among the statues, were found the famous Toro, and Hercole Farnese.

Bathing was certainly necessary to health and cleanliness in a hot country like Italy, especially before the use of linen was known: but these purposes would have been much better answered by plunging into the Tyber, than by using the warm bath in the thermæ, which became altogether a point of luxury borrowed from the effeminate Asiatics, and tended to debilitate the fibres already too much relaxed by the heat of the climate. True it is, they had baths of cool water for the summer: but in general they used it milk-warm, and often perfumed: they likewise indulged in vapour-baths, in order to enjoy a pleasing relaxation, which they likewise improved with odoriferous ointments. The thermæ consisted of a great variety of parts and conveniences; the natationes, or swimming places; the portici, where people amused themselves in walking, conversing, and disputing together, as Cicero says, *In porticibus deambulantes disputabant*;[18] the basilicæ, where the bathers assembled, before they entered, and after they came out of the bath; the atria, or ample courts, adorned with noble colonnades of Numidian marble and oriental granite; the ephibia, where the young men inured themselves to wrestling and other exercises; the frigidaria, or places kept cool by a constant draught of air, promoted by the disposition and number of the windows; the calidaria, where the water was warmed for the baths; the platanones, or delightful groves of sycamore; the stadia, for the performances of the athletæ; the exedræ, or resting-places, provided with seats for those that were weary; the palestræ, where every one chose that exercise which pleased him best; the gymnasia, where poets, orators, and philosophers recited their works, and harangued for diversion; the eleotesia, where the fragrant oils and ointments were kept for the use of the bathers; and the conisteria, where the wrestlers were smeared with sand

before they engaged. Of the thermæ in Rome, some were mercenary, and some opened gratis. Marcus Agrippa, when he was edile,[19] opened one hundred and seventy private baths, for the use of the people. In the public baths, where money was taken, each person paid a quadrans, about the value of our halfpenny, as Juvenal observes,

"*Cædere Sylvano porcum, quadrante lavari.*"[20]

"The victim pig to god *Sylvanus* slay,
And for the public bath a farthing pay."

But after the hour of bathing was past, it sometimes cost a great deal more, according to Martial,

"*Balnea post decimam, lasso centumque petuntur*
Quadrantes——"[21]

"The bathing hour is past; the waiter tir'd;
An hundred farthings now will be requir'd."

Though there was no distinction in the places, between the first patrician and the lowest plebeian, yet the nobility used their own silver and gold plate, for washing, eating, and drinking in the bath, together with towels of the finest linen. They likewise made use of the instrument called strigil, which was a kind of flesh-brush; a custom to which Persius alludes in this line,

"*I puer, et strigiles Crispini ad balnea defer.*"[22]

"Here boy, this brush to *Crispin's* bagnio bear."

The common people contented themselves with sponges. The bathing time was from noon till the evening, when the Romans ate their principal meal. Notice was given by a bell, or some such instrument, when the baths were opened, as we learn from Juvenal,

"*Redde Pilam, sonat Æs thermarum, ludere pergis?*
Virgine vis sola lotus abire domum."[23]

"Leave off; the bath bell rings—what, still play on?
Perhaps the maid in private rubs you down."

There were separate places for the two sexes; and indeed there were baths opened for the use of women only, at the expence of Agrippina, the mother of Nero, and some other

matrons of the first quality. The use of bathing was become so habitual to the constitutions of the Romans, that Galen, in his book *De Sanitate tuenda*,[24] mentions a certain philosopher, who, if he intermitted but one day in his bathing, was certainly attacked with a fever. In order to preserve decorum in the baths, a set of laws and regulations were published, and the thermæ were put under the inspection of a censor, who was generally one of the first senators in Rome. Agrippa left his gardens and baths, which stood near the Pantheon, to the Roman people: among the statues that adorned them was that of a youth naked, as going into the bath, so elegantly formed by the hand of Lysippus, that Tiberius,[25] being struck with the beauty of it, ordered it to be transferred into his own palace: but the populace raised such a clamour against him, that he was fain to have it reconveyed to its former place. These noble baths were restored by Adrian, as we read in Spartian;[26] but at present no part of them remains.

With respect to the present state of the old aqueducts, I can give you very little satisfaction. I only saw the ruins of that which conveyed the acqua Claudia, near the Porta Maggiore, and the Piazza of the Lateran. You know there were fourteen of those antient aqueducts, some of which brought water to Rome from the distance of forty miles. The channels of them were large enough to admit a man armed on horseback; and therefore when Rome was besieged by the Goths, who had cut off the water, Belisarius[27] fortified them with works to prevent the enemy from entering the city by those conveyances. After that period, I suppose the antient aqueducts continued dry, and were suffered to run to ruins. Without all doubt, the Romans were greatly obliged to those benefactors, who raised such stupendous works for the benefit, as well as the embellishment of their city: but it might have been supplied with the same water through pipes at one hundredth part of the expence; and in that case the enemy would not have found it such an easy matter to cut it off. Those popes who have provided the modern city so plentifully with excellent water, are much to be commended for the care and expence they have bestowed in restoring the streams called acqua Virgine, acqua Felice, and acqua Paolina, which afford such abundance of water as would plentifully supply a much

larger city than modern Rome.

It is no wonder that M. Agrippa, the son-in-law, friend, and favourite of Augustus, should at the same time have been the idol of the people, considering how surprisingly he exerted himself for the emolument, convenience, and pleasure of his fellow-citizens. It was he who first conducted this acqua Virgine to Rome: he formed seven hundred reservoirs in the city; erected one hundred and five fountains; one hundred and thirty *castella*, or conduits, which works he adorned with three hundred statues, and four hundred pillars of marble, in the space of one year. He also brought into Rome, the acqua Julia, and restored the aqueduct of the acqua Marzia, which had fallen to decay. I have already observed the great number of baths which he opened for the people, and the magnificent thermæ, with spacious gardens, which he bequeathed to them as a legacy. But these benefactions, great and munificent as they seem to be, were not the most important services he performed for the city of Rome. The common-sewers were first made by order of Tarquinius Priscus, not so much with a view to cleanliness, as by way of subterranean drains to the *Velabrum*,[28] and in order to carry off the stagnant water, which remained in the lower parts, after heavy rains. The different branches of these channels united at the Forum, from whence by the Cloaca Maxima, their contents were conveyed into the Tyber. This great cloaca was the work of Tarquinius Superbus. Other sewers were added by Marcus Cato, and Valerius Flaccus,[29] the censors. All these drains having been choaked up and ruinous, were cleared and restored by Marcus Agrippa, who likewise undermined the whole city with canals of the same kind, for carrying off the filth; he strengthened and enlarged the Cloaca Maxima, so as to make it capable of receiving a large cart loaded with hay; and directed seven streams of water into these subterranean passages, in order to keep them always clean and open. If, notwithstanding all these conveniences, Vespasian was put to great expence in removing the ordure from the public streets, we have certainly a right to conclude that the antient Romans were not more cleanly than the modern Italians.

After the mausolea of Augustus, and Adrian, which I have

already mentioned, the most remarkable antient sepulchres at Rome, are those of Caius Cestius, and Cecilia Metella.[30] The first, which stands by the Porta di S. Paolo, is a beautiful pyramid, one hundred and twenty feet high, still preserved intire, having a vaulted chamber within-side, adorned with some ancient painting, which is now almost effaced. The building is of brick, but cased with marble. This Caius Cestius had been consul, was very rich, and acted as one of the seven *Epulones*, who superintended the feasts of the gods, called *Lectisternia*,[31] and *Pervigilia*.[32] He bequeathed his whole fortune to his friend M. Agrippa, who was so generous as to give it up to the relations of the testator. The monument of Cecilia Metella, commonly called *Capo di Bove*, is without the walls on the Via Appia. This lady was daughter of Metellus Creticus, and wife to Crassus, who erected this noble monument to her memory. It consisted of two orders, or stories, the first of which was a square of hewn stone: the second was a circular tower, having a cornice, adorned with ox heads in basso relievo, a circumstance from which it takes the name of *Capo di Bove*. The ox was supposed to be a most grateful sacrifice to the gods. Pliny, speaking of bulls and oxen, says,

"*Hinc victimæ optimæ et laudatissima deorum placatio.*"[33]

"They were counted the best victims and most agreeable to appease the anger of the gods."

This tower was surmounted by a noble cupola or dome, enriched with all the ornaments of architecture. The door of the building was of brass; and within-side the ashes of Cecilia were deposited in a fluted marble urn, of curious workmanship, which is still kept in the Palazzo Farnese. At present the surface of the ground is raised so much as to cover the first order of the edifice: what we see is no more than the round tower, without the dome and its ornaments; and the following inscription still remains near the top, facing the Via Appia.

CÆCILIÆ
Q. CRETICI F.
METELLÆ
CRASSI.

LETTER XXXII.

To Cæcilia Metella daughter of Q. Creticus wife of Crassus.

Now we are talking of sepulchral inscriptions, I shall conclude this letter with the copy of a very singular will, made by Favonius Jocundus, who died in Portugal, by which will the precise situation of the famous temple of Sylvanus is ascertained.

"*Jocundi.*

Ego Gallus Favonius Jocundus P. Favoni F. qui bello contra Viriatum succubui, Jocundum et Prudentem filios, e me et Quintia Fabia conjuge mea ortos, et Bonorum Jocundi Patris mei, et eorum, quæ mihi ipsi acquisivi hæredes relinquo; hac tamen conditione, ut ab urbe Romana huc veniant, et ossa hic mea, intra quinquennium exportent, et via latina condant in sepulchro, jussu meo condito, et mea voluntate; in quo velim neminem mecum, neque servum, neque libertum inseri; et velim ossa quorumcumque sepulchro statim meo eruantur, et jura Romanorum serventur, in sepulchris ritu majorum retinendis, juxta voluntatem testatoris; et si secus fecerint, nisi legittimæ oriantur causæ, velim ea omnia, quæ filijs meis relinquo, pro reparando templo dei Sylvani, quod sub Viminali monte est, *attribui; manesque mei a Pont. Max.; a flaminibus dialibus, qui in capitolio sunt, opem implorent, ad liberorum meorum impietatem ulciscendam; teneanturque sacerdotes dei Silvani, me in urbem referre, et sepulchro me meo condere. Volo quoque vernas qui domi meæ sunt, omnes a prætore urbano liberos, cum matribus dimitti, singulisque libram argenti puri, et vestem unam dari. In Lusitania. In agro VIII. Cal Quintilis, bello Viriatino.*"

"I *Gallus Favonius Jocundus*, son of P. *Favonius*, dying in the war against *Viriatus*,[34] declare my sons *Jocundus* and *Prudens* by my wife *Quintia Fabia*, joint heirs of all my estate, real and personal; on condition, however, that they come hither within the term of five years from the date of this my last will, and transport my remains to *Rome*, to be deposited in my sepulchre built in the *via latîna* by my own order and direction: and it is my will that neither slave nor freedman shall be interred with me in the said tomb; that if any such there be, they shall be removed; and the Roman Law obeyed, in preserving after the antient form, the sepulchre according to the will of the testator. If they act otherwise without just cause, it is my will that the whole estate which I now

bequeathe to my children, shall be applied to the reparation of the temple of the god *Sylvanus*, *at the foot of mount Viminalis*; and that my *manes** shall implore the assistance of the *Pontifex Maximus*, and the *Flaminis-diales* in the capitol, to avenge the impiety of my children, and the priests of *Sylvanus* shall engage to bring my remains to *Rome* and see them decently deposited in my own sepulchre. It is also my will that all my domestic slaves shall be declared free by the city *prætor*, and dismissed with their mothers, after having received each, a suit of cloaths, and a pound weight of pure silver, from my heirs and executors.

At my farm in *Lusitania*
July 25. during the *Viriatin* war."

My paper scarce affords room to assure you that I am ever,

Dear Sir,

Your faithful, &c.

* The *manes* were an order of gods supposed to take cognizance of such injuries.

LETTER XXXIII.

Nice, March 30, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

You must not imagine I saw one half of the valuable pictures and statues of Rome; there is such a vast number of both in this capital, that I might have spent a whole year in taking even a transient view of them; and, after all, some of them would have been overlooked. The most celebrated pieces, however, I have seen; and therefore my curiosity is satisfied. Perhaps, if I had the nice discernment and delicate sensibility of a true connoisseur, this superficial glimpse would have served only to whet my appetite, and to detain me the whole winter at Rome. In my progress through the Vatican, I was much pleased with the School of Athens, by Raphael, a piece which hath suffered from the dampness of the air. The four boys attending to the demonstration of a mathematician are admirably varied in the expression. Mr. Webb's criticism on this artist is certainly just. He was perhaps the best ethic painter that ever the world produced. No man ever expressed the sentiments so happily, in visage, attitude, and gesture: but he seems to have had too much phlegm to strike off the grand passions, or reach the sublime parts of painting.[1] He has the serenity of Virgil, but wants the fire of Homer. There is nothing in his Parnassus which struck me, but the ludicrous impropriety of Apollo's playing upon a fiddle, for the entertainment of the nine muses.*

The Last Judgment, by Buonaroti, in the chapel of Sixtus IV.[2] produced to my eye the same sort of confusion that perplexes my ear at a grand concert, consisting of a great variety of instruments: or rather, when a number of people are talking all at once. I was pleased with the strength of expression, exhibited in single figures, and separate groupes: but, the whole together is a mere mob, without subordination, keeping, or repose. A painter ought to avoid all subjects that require a multiplicity of groupes and figures; because it is

* Upon better information, I must retract this censure; in as much as I find there was really a musical instrument among the antients of this figure, as appears by a small statue in bronze to be still seen in the Florentine collection.

not in the power of that art to unite a great number in one point of view, so as to maintain that dependence which they ought to have upon one another. Michael Angelo, with all his skill in anatomy, his correctness of design, his grand composition, his fire, and force of expression, seems to have had very little idea of grace. One would imagine he had chosen his kings, heroes, cardinals, and prelates, from among the *facchini*[3] of Rome; that he really drew his Jesus on the Cross, from the agonies of some vulgar assassin expiring on the wheel; and that the originals of his Bambini, with their mothers, were literally found in a stable. In the Sala Regia, from whence the Sistian chapel is detached, we see, among other exploits of catholic heroes, a representation of the massacre of the protestants in Paris, Thoulouse, and other parts of France, on the eve of St. Bartholomew,[4] thus described in the *Descrizione di Roma*,[5] "Nella prima pittura, esprime Georgio Vasari l'istoria del Coligni, grand'amiraglio di Francia, che come capo de ribelli, e degl'Ugonotti, fu ucciso; e nell'altra vicina, la strage fatta in Parigi, e nel regno, de ribelli, e degl'Ugonotti." "In the first picture, George Vasari represents the history of Coligni,[6] high admiral of France, who was slain as head of the rebels and hugonots; and in another near it, the slaughter that was made of the rebels and hugonots in Paris and other parts of the kingdom." Thus the court of Rome hath employed their artists to celebrate and perpetuate, as a meritorious action, the most perfidious, cruel, and infamous massacre, that ever disgraced the annals of any nation.

I need not mention the two equestrian statues of Constantine the Great, and Charlemagne, which stand at opposite ends of the great portico of St. Peter's church; because there is nothing in them which particularly engaged my attention. The sleeping Cleopatra, as you enter the court of the Belvedere, in the Vatican, is much admired; but I was better pleased with the Apollo, which I take to be the most beautiful statue that ever was formed.[7] The Nile, which lies in the open court, surmounted with the little children, has infinite merit; but is much damaged, and altogether neglected. Whether it is the same described in Pliny, as having been placed by Vespasian in the Temple of Peace, I do not know.[8] The

sixteen children playing about it, denoted the swelling of the Nile, which never rose above sixteen cubits. As for the famous groupe of Laocoon, it surpassed my expectation. It was not without reason that Buonaroti called it a portentous work; and Pliny has done it no more than justice in saying it is the most excellent piece that ever was cut in marble; and yet the famous Fulvius Ursini[9] is of opinion that this is not the same statue which Pliny described. His reasons, mentioned by Montfaucon, are these. The statues described by Pliny were of one stone; but these are not. Antonioli, the antiquary, has in his possession, pieces of Laocoon's snakes, which were found in the ground, where the baths of Titus actually stood, agreeable to Pliny, who says these statues were placed in the buildings of Titus.[10] Be that as it may, the work which we now see does honour to antiquity. As you have seen innumerable copies and casts of it, in marble, plaister, copper, lead, drawings, and prints, and read the description of it in Keyslar,[11] and twenty other books of travels, I shall say nothing more on the subject; but that neither they nor I, nor any other person, could say too much in its praise. It is not of one piece indeed. In that particular Pliny himself might be mistaken. "*Opus omnibus et picturæ, et statuariæ artis præponendum. Ex uno lapide eum et liberos draconumque mirabiles nexus de consilii sententia fecere summi artifices.*"[12] "A work preferable to all the other efforts of painting and statuary. The most excellent artists joined their talents in making the father and his sons, together with the admirable twinings of the serpents, of one block." Buonaroti discovered the joinings, though they were so artfully concealed as to be before invisible. This amazing groupe is the work of three Rhodian sculptors, called Agesander, Polydore, and Athenodorus,[13] and was found in the thermæ of Titus Vespasian, still supposing it to be the true antique. As for the *torso*, or mutilated trunk of a statue, which is called the School of Michael Angelo, I had not time to consider it attentively; nor taste enough to perceive its beauties at first sight. The famous horses on Monte Cavallo, before the pope's palace, which are said to have been made in emulation, by Phidias[14] and Praxiteles, I have seen, and likewise those in the front of the Capitol, with the statues of Castor and

Pollux; but what pleased me infinitely more than all of them together, is the equestrian statue of Corinthian brass, standing in the middle of this Piazza (I mean at the Capitol) said to represent the emperor Marcus Aurelius. Others suppose it was intended for Lucius Verus;[15] a third set of antiquaries contend for Lucius Septimius Severus; and a fourth, for Constantine, because it stood in the Piazza of the Lateran palace, built by that emperor, from whence pope Paul III. caused it to be removed to the Capitol.[16] I considered the trophy of Marius as a very curious piece of sculpture, and admired the two sphinges at the bottom of the stairs leading to this Piazza, as the only good specimens of design, I had ever seen from Ægypt: for the two idols of that country, which stand in the ground-floor of the Musæum of the Capitol, and indeed all the Ægyptian statues in the Camera Ægyptiaca of this very building, are such monstruous misrepresentations of nature, that they never could have obtained a place among the statues of Rome, except as curiosities of foreign superstition, or on account of the materials, as they are generally of basaltes, porphyry, or oriental granite.

At the farther end of the court of this Musæum, fronting the entrance, is a handsome fountain, with the statue of a river-god reclining on his urn; this is no other than the famous Marforio, so called from its having been found in Martis Foro. It is remarkable only as being the conveyance of the answers to the satires which are found pasted upon Pasquin, another mutilated statue, standing at the corner of a street.[17]

The marble coffin, supposed to have contained the ashes of Alexander Severus,[18] which we find in one of these apartments, is a curious antique, valuable for its sculpture in basso relievo, especially for the figures on the cover, representing that emperor and his mother Julia Mammea.

I was sorry I had not time to consider the antient plan of Rome, disposed in six classes, on the stair-case of this Musæum, which was brought hither from a temple that stood in the Forum Boarium, now called Campo Vaccino.

It would be ridiculous in me to enter into a detail of the vast collection of marbles, basso relievos, inscriptions, urns, busts, and statues, which are placed in the upper apartments

of this edifice. I saw them but once, and then I was struck with the following particulars. A bacchanalian drunk; a Jupiter and Leda, at least equal to that in the gallery at Florence; an old *præsica*, or hired mourner, very much resembling those wrinkled hags still employed in Ireland, and in the Highlands of Scotland, to sing the *coronach*[19] at funerals, in praise of the deceased; the famous Antinous, an elegant figure, which Poussin[20] studied as the canon or rule of symmetry; the two fauns; and above all the *mirmillone*, or dying gladiator; the attitude of the body, the expression of the countenance, the elegance of the limbs, and the swelling of the muscles, in this statue, are universally admired; but the execution of the back is incredibly delicate. The course of the muscles called *longissimi dorsi*, are so naturally marked and tenderly executed, that the marble actually emulates the softness of flesh; and you may count all the spines of the vertebræ, raising up the skin as in the living body; yet this statue, with all its merit, seems inferior to the celebrated dying gladiator of Ctesilas, as described by Pliny,[21] who says the expression of it was such, as appears altogether incredible. In the court, on the opposite side of the Capitol, there is an admirable statue of a lion devouring a horse, which was found by the gate of Ostia, near the pyramid of Caius Cestius; and here on the left hand, under a colonnade, is what they call the Columna Rostrata, erected in honour of Caius Duilius,[22] who first triumphed over the Carthaginians by sea. But this is a modern pillar, with the old inscription, which is so defaced as not to be legible. Among the pictures in the gallery and saloon above, what pleased me most was the Bacchus and Ariadne of Guido Rheni; and the wolf suckling Romulus and Remus, by Rubens. The court of the Palazzo Farnese is surrounded with antique statues, among which the most celebrated are, the Flora, with a most delicate drapery; the gladiator, with a dead boy over his shoulder; the Hercules, with the spoils of the Nemean lion; but that which the connoisseurs justly esteem above all the rest is the Hercules, by Glycon,[23] which you know as well as I do, by the great reputation it has acquired. This admirable statue having been found without the legs, these were supplied by Gulielmo de la Porta[24] so happily, that when afterwards the original limbs

were discovered, Michael Angelo preferred those of the modern artist, both in grace and proportion; and they have been retained accordingly. In a little house, or shed, behind the court, is preserved the wonderful groupe of Dirce, commonly called the Toro Farnese, which was brought hither from the thermæ Caracallæ. There is such spirit, ferocity, and indignant resistance expressed in the bull, to whose horns Dirce is tied by the hair, that I have never seen any thing like it, either upon canvass, or in stone. The statues of the two brothers endeavouring to throw him into the sea are beautiful figures, finely contrasted; and the rope, which one of them holds in a sort of loose coil, is so surprisingly chizzelled, that one can hardly believe it is of stone. As for Dirce herself, she seems to be but a subaltern character; but there is a dog upon his hind legs barking at the bull, which is much admired. This amazing groupe was cut out of one stone, by Appollonius and Tauriscus,[25] two sculptors of Rhodes; and is mentioned by Pliny in the thirty-sixth book of his Natural History.[26] All the precious monuments of art, which have come down to us from antiquity, are the productions of Greek artists. The Romans had taste enough to admire the arts of Greece, as plainly appears by the great collections they made of their statues and pictures, as well as by adopting their architecture and musick: but I do not remember to have read of any Roman who made a great figure either as a painter or a statuary. It is not enough to say those professions were not honourable in Rome, because painting, sculpture, and musick, even rhetoric, physic, and philosophy, were practised and taught by slaves. The arts were always honoured and revered at Rome, even when the professors of them happened to be slaves by the accidents and iniquity of fortune. The business of painting and statuary was so profitable, that in a free republic, like that of Rome, they must have been greedily embraced by a great number of individuals: but, in all probability, the Roman soil produced no extraordinary genius for those arts. Like the English of this day, they made a figure in poetry, history, and ethics; but the excellence of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music, they never could attain. In the Palazzo Picchini, I saw three beautiful figures, the celebrated statues of Meleager, the

boar, and dog; together with a wolf, of excellent workmanship. The celebrated statue of Moses, by Michael Angelo, in the church of St. Peter in Vincula, I beheld with pleasure; as well as that of Christ, by the same hand, in the church of S. Maria sopra Minerva. The right foot, covered with bronze, gilt, is much kissed by the devotees. I suppose it is looked upon as a specific[27] for the tooth-ache; for, I saw a cavalier, in years, and an old woman successively rub their gums upon it, with the appearance of the most painful perseverance.

You need not doubt but that I went to the church of St. Peter in Montorio, to view the celebrated transfiguration, by Raphael, which, if it was mine, I would cut in two parts. The three figures in the air attract the eye so strongly, that little or no attention is payed to those below on the mountain. I apprehend that the nature of the subject does not admit of that keeping and dependence, which ought to be maintained in the disposition of the lights and shadows in a picture. The groupes seem to be intirely independent of each other. The extraordinary merit of this piece, I imagine, consists, not only in the expression of divinity on the face of Christ; but also in the surprising lightness of the figure, that hovers like a beautiful exhalation in the air.[28] In the church of St. Luke, I was not at all struck by the picture of that saint, drawing the portrait of the Virgin Mary, although it is admired as one of the best pieces of Raphael. Indeed it made so little impression upon me, that I do not even remember the disposition of the figures. The altar-piece, by Andrea Sacchi,[29] in the church of St. Romauldus, would have more merit, if the figure of the saint himself had more consequence, and was represented in a stronger light. In the Palazzo Borghese, I chiefly admired the following pieces: a Venus with two nymphs; and another with Cupid, both by Titian: an excellent Roman Piety, by Leonardo da Vinci; and the celebrated Muse, by Dominechino, which is a fine, jolly, buxom figure. At the palace of Colonna Connestabile, I was charmed with the Herodias, by Guido Rheni; a young Christ; and a Madonna, by Raphael; and four landschapes, two by Claude Lorraine,[30] and the other two, by Salvator Rosa.[31] In the *palazetto*, or summer-house belonging to the Palazzo Rospigliosi, I had the satisfaction of contemplating the Aurora of Guido, the

colours of which still remain in high perfection, notwithstanding the common report that the piece is spoiled by the dampness of the apartment. The print of this picture, by Freij,[32] with all its merit, conveys but an imperfect idea of the beauty of the original. In the Palazzo Barberini, there is a great collection of marbles and pictures: among the first, I was attracted by a beautiful statue of Venus; a sleeping faun, of curious workmanship; a charming Bacchus, lying on an antient sculpture, and the famous Narcissus. Of the pictures, what gave me most pleasure was the Magdalen of Guido, infinitely superior to that by Le Brun[33] in the church of the Carmelites at Paris; the Virgin, by Titian; a Madonna, by Raphael, but not comparable to that which is in the Palazzo de Pitti, at Florence; and the death of Germanicus, by Poussin, which I take to be one of the best pieces in this great collection. In the Palazzo Falconeri, there is a beautiful St. Cecilia, by Guercino;[34] a holy family, by Raphael; and a fine expressive figure of St. Peter weeping, by Dominechino. In the Palazzo Altieri, I admired a picture, by Carlo Maratti,[35] representing a saint calling down lightning from heaven to destroy blasphemers. It was the figure of the saint I admired, merely as a portrait. The execution of the other parts was tame enough: perhaps they were purposely kept down, in order to preserve the importance of the principal figure. I imagine Salvator Rosa would have made a different disposition on the same subject: that amidst the darkness of a tempest, he would have illuminated the blasphemer with the flash of lightning by which he was destroyed: this would have thrown a dismal gleam upon his countenance, distorted by the horror of his situation as well as by the effects of the fire; and rendered the whole scene dreadfully picturesque. In the same palace, I saw the famous holy family, by Corregio, which he left unfinished, and no other artist would undertake to supply; for what reason I know not. Here too is a judgment of Paris, by Titian, which is reckoned a very valuable piece. In the Palazzo Odescalchi, there is a holy family, by Buonaroti, and another by Raphael, both counted excellent, though in very different stiles, extremely characteristic of those two great rival artists.

If I was silly enough to make a parade, I might mention

some hundreds more of marbles and pictures, which I really saw at Rome; and even eke out that number with a huge list of those I did not see: but, whatever vanity I may have, it has not taken this turn; and I assure you, upon my word and honour, I have described nothing but what actually fell under my own observation. As for my critical remarks, I am afraid you will think them too superficial and capricious to belong to any other person but

Your humble servant.

LETTER XXXIV.

Nice, April 2, 1765.

DEAR SIR,

I have nothing to communicate touching the library of the Vatican, which, with respect to the apartments and their ornaments, is undoubtedly magnificent. The number of books it contains does not exceed forty thousand volumes, which are all concealed from the view, and locked up in presses: as for the manuscripts, I saw none but such as are commonly presented to strangers of our nation; some very old copies of Virgil and Terence; two or three Missals, curiously illuminated; the book De Septem Sacramentis written in Latin by Henry VIII. against Luther;[1] and some of that prince's love letters to Anne Boleyn. I likewise visited the Libreria Casanatense, belonging to the convent of the church called S. Maria Sopra Minerva. I had a recommendation to the principal librarian, a Dominican friar, who received me very politely, and regaled me with a sight of several curious MSS. of the classics.

Having satisfied my curiosity at Rome, I prepared for my departure, and as the road between Radicofani and Montefiascone is very stony and disagreeable, I asked the banker Barazzi,[2] if there was not a better way of returning to Florence, expressing a desire at the same time to see the cascade of Terni. He assured me that the road by Terni was forty miles shorter than the other, much more safe and easy, and accommodated with exceeding good auberges. Had I taken the trouble to cast my eyes upon the map, I must have seen, that the road by Terni, instead of being forty miles shorter, was much longer than the other: but this was not the only mistake of Signiore Barazzi. Great part of this way lies over steep mountains, or along the side of precipices, which render travelling in a carriage exceeding tedious, dreadful, and dangerous; and as for the public houses, they are in all respects the most execrable that ever I entered. I will venture to say that a common prisoner in the Marshalsea or King's-Bench[3] is more cleanly and commodiously lodged than we were in many places on this road. The houses are abominably nasty, and generally destitute of provision: when

eatables were found, we were almost poisoned by their cookery: their beds were without curtains or bedstead, and their windows without glass; and for this sort of entertainment we payed as much as if we had been genteelly lodged, and sumptuously treated. I repeat it again; of all the people I ever knew, the Italians are the most villainously rapacious. The first day, having passed Civita Castellana, a small town standing on the top of a hill, we put up at what was called an excellent inn, where cardinals, prelates, and princes, often lodged. Being meagre day, there was nothing but bread, eggs, and anchovies, in the house. I went to bed without supper, and lay in a pallet, where I was half devoured by vermin. Next day, our road, in some places, lay along precipices, which over-hang the Nera or Nar, celebrated in antiquity for its white foam, and the sulphureous quality of its waters.

Sulfureâ Nar albus aquâ, fontesque Velini.[4]
Sulphureous *Nar*, and the *Velinian* streams.

It is a small, but rapid stream, which runs not far from hence, into the Tyber. Passing Utricoli, near the ruins of the ancient Ocriculum, and the romantic town of Narni, situated on the top of a mountain, in the neighbourhood of which is still seen standing one arch of the stupendous bridge built by Augustus Cæsar, we arrived at Terni, and hiring a couple of chaises before dinner, went to see the famous Cascata delle Marmore, which is at the distance of three miles. We ascended a steep mountain by a narrow road formed for a considerable way along the brink of a precipice, at the bottom of which brawls the furious river Nera, after having received the Velino. This last is the stream which, running from the Lago delle Marmore, forms the cascade by falling over a precipice about one hundred and sixty feet high. Such a body of water rushing down the mountain; the smoak, vapour, and thick white mist which it raises; the double rainbow which these particles continually exhibit while the sun shines; the deafening sound of the cataract; the vicinity of a great number of other stupendous rocks and precipices, with the dashing, boiling, and foaming of the two rivers below, produce

altogether an object of tremendous sublimity: yet great part of its effect is lost, for want of a proper point of view, from which it might be contemplated. The cascade would appear much more astonishing, were it not in some measure eclipsed by the superior height of the neighbouring mountains. You have not a front perspective; but are obliged to view it obliquely on one side, standing upon the brink of a precipice, which cannot be approached without horror. This station might be rendered much more accessible, and altogether secure, for the expence of four or five zequines; and a small tax might be levied for the purpose from travellers by the aubergiste at Terni, who lets his calasses for half a zequine a piece to those that are curious to see this phænomenon. Besides the two postilions whom I payed for this excursion, at the rate of one stage in posting, there was a fellow who posted himself behind one of the chaises, by way of going to point out the different views of the cascade; and his demand amounted to four or five pauls. To give you an idea of the extortion of those villainous publicans, I must tell you that for a dinner and supper, which even hunger could not tempt us to eat, and a night's lodging in three truckle beds, I paid eighty pauls, amounting to forty shillings sterling. You ask me why I submitted to such imposition? I will tell you—I have more than once in my travels made a formal complaint of the exorbitancy of a publican, to the magistrate of the place; but I never received any satisfaction, and have lost abundance of time. Had I proceeded to manual correction, I should have alarmed and terrified the women: had I peremptorily refused to pay the sum total, the landlord, who was the post-master, would not have supplied me with horses to proceed on my journey. I tried the experiment at Muy in France, where I put myself into a violent passion, had abundance of trouble, was detained till it was almost night, and after all found myself obliged to submit, furnishing at the same time matter of infinite triumph to the mob, which had surrounded the coach, and interested themselves warmly in favour of their townsman. If some young patriot, in good health and spirits, would take the trouble as often as he is imposed upon by the road in travelling, to have recourse to the fountain-head, and prefer a regular complaint to the

comptroller of the posts, either in France or Italy, he would have ample satisfaction, and do great service to the community. Terni is an agreeable town, pretty well built, and situated in a pleasant valley, between two branches of the river Nera, whence it was called by the antients, Interamna. Here is an agreeable piazza, where stands a church that was of old a heathen temple.[5] There are some valuable paintings in the church. The people are said to be very civil, and provisions to be extremely cheap. It was the birth-place of the emperor Tacitus,[6] as well as of the historian of the same name.[7] In our journey from hence to Spoleto, we passed over a high mountain, called from its height, Somma, where it was necessary to have two additional horses to the carriage, and the road winds along a precipice, which is equally dangerous and dreadful. We passed through part of Spoleto, the capital of Umbria, which is a pretty large city. Of this, however, I can give no other account from my own observation, but that I saw at a distance the famous Gothic aqueduct of brick: this is mentioned by Addison as a structure, which, for the height of its arches, is not equalled by any thing in Europe.[8] The road from hence to Foligno, where we lay, is kept in good order, and lies through a delightful plain, laid out into beautiful inclosures, abounding with wine, oil, corn, and cattle, and watered by the pastoral streams of the famous river Clitumnus,[9] which takes its rise in three or four separate rivulets issuing from a rock near the highway. On the right-hand, we saw several towns situated on rising grounds, and among the rest, that of Assisio, famous for the birth of St. Francis,[10] whose body, being here deposited, occasions a great concourse of pilgrims. We met a Roman princess going thither with a grand retinue, in consequence of a vow she had made for the re-establishment of her health. Foligno, the Fulginium of the antients, is a small town, not unpleasant, lying in the midst of mulberry plantations, vineyards, and corn-fields, and built on both sides of the little river Topino. In choosing our beds at the inn, I perceived one chamber locked, and desired it might be opened; upon which the cameriere declared with some reluctance, *"Bisogna dire a su' eccellenza; poco fa, che una bestia e morta in questa camera, e non e ancora lustrata."* "Your excellency must know that a

filthy beast died lately in that chamber, and it is not yet purified and put in order." When I enquired what beast it was, he replied, *"Un' eretico Inglese,"* "An English heretick."[11] I suppose he would not have made so free with our country and religion, if he had not taken us for German catholics, as we afterwards learned from Mr. R——y.[12] Next day, we crossed the Tyber, over a handsome bridge, and in mounting the steep hill upon which the city of Perugia stands, our horses being exhausted, were dragged backwards by the weight of the carriage to the very edge of a precipice, where, happily for us, a man passing that way, placed a large stone behind one of the wheels, which stopped their motion, otherwise we should have been all dashed in pieces. We had another ugly hill to ascend within the city, which was more difficult and dangerous than the other: but the postilions and the other beasts made such efforts, that we mounted without the least stop, to the summit, where we found ourselves in a large piazza, where the horses are always changed. There being no relays at the post, we were obliged to stay the whole day and night at Perugia, which is a considerable city, built upon the acclivity of a hill, adorned with some elegant fountains, and several handsome churches, containing some valuable pictures by Guido, Raphael, and his master Pietro Perugino, who was a native of this place. The next stage is on the banks of the lake, which was the Thrasimene of the antients, a beautiful piece of water, above thirty miles in circumference, having three islands, abounding with excellent fish: upon a peninsula of it, there is a town and castle. It was in this neighbourhood where the consul Flaminius was totally defeated with great slaughter by Hannibal.[13] From Perugia to Florence, the posts are all double, and the road is so bad that we never could travel above eight and twenty miles a day. We were often obliged to quit the carriage, and walk up steep mountains; and the way in general was so unequal and stony, that we were jolted even to the danger of our lives. I never felt any sort of exercise or fatigue so intolerable; and I did not fail to bestow an hundred benedictions per diem upon the banker Barazzi, by whose advice we had taken this road; yet there was no remedy but patience. If the coach had not been incredibly strong, it must

have been shattered to pieces. The fifth night we passed at a place called Camoccia, a miserable cabaret, where we were fain to cook our own supper, and lay in a musty chamber, which had never known a fire, and indeed had no fire-place, and where we ran the risque of being devoured by rats. Next day one of the irons of the coach gave way at Arezzo, where we were detained two hours before it could be accommodated. I might have taken this opportunity to view the remains of the antient Etruscan amphitheatre, and the temple of Hercules, described by the cavalier Lorenzo Guazzesi,[14] as standing in the neighbourhood of this place: but the blacksmith assured me his work would be finished in a few minutes; and as I had nothing so much at heart as the speedy accomplishment of this disagreeable journey, I chose to suppress my curiosity, rather than be the occasion of a moment's delay. But all the nights we had hitherto passed were comfortable in comparison to this, which we suffered at a small village, the name of which I do not remember. The house was dismal and dirty beyond all description; the bed-cloaths filthy enough to turn the stomach of a muleteer; and the victuals cooked in such a manner, that even a Hottentot could not have beheld them without loathing. We had sheets of our own, which were spread upon a mattrass, and here I took my repose wrapped in a great-coat, if that could be called repose which was interrupted by the innumerable stings of vermin. In the morning, I was seized with a dangerous fit of the hooping-cough, which terrified my wife, alarmed my people, and brought the whole community into the house. I had undergone just such another at Paris, about a year before. This forenoon, one of our coach wheels flew off in the neighbourhood of Ancisa, a small town, where we were detained above two hours by this accident; a delay which was productive of much disappointment, danger, vexation, and fatigue. There being no horses at the last post, we were obliged to wait until those which brought us thither were sufficiently refreshed to proceed. Understanding that all the gates of Florence are shut at six, except two that are kept open for the accommodation of travellers; and that to reach the nearest of these gates, it was necessary to pass the river Arno in a ferry-boat, which could not transport the carriage;

I determined to send my servant before with a light chaise to enter the nearest gate before it was shut, and provide a coach to come and take us up at the side of the river, where we should be obliged to pass in the boat: for I could not bear the thoughts of lying another night in a common cabaret. Here, however, another difficulty occurred. There was but one chaise, and a dragoon officer, in the imperial troops, insisted upon his having bespoke it for himself and his servant. A long dispute ensued, which had like to have produced a quarrel: but, at length, I accommodated matters, by telling the officer that he should have a place in it gratis, and his servant might ride a-horseback. He accepted the offer without hesitation; but, in the mean time, we set out in the coach before them, and having proceeded about a couple of miles, the road was so deep from a heavy rain, and the beasts were so fatigued, that they could not proceed. The postilions scourging the poor animals with great barbarity, they made an effort, and pulled the coach to the brink of a precipice, or rather a kind of hollow-way, which might be about seven or eight feet lower than the road. Here my wife and I leaped out, and stood under the rain up to the ancles in mud; while the postilions still exercising their whips, one of the fore-horses fairly tumbled down the descent, and hung by the neck, so that he was almost strangled before he could be disengaged from the traces, by the assistance of some foot travellers that happened to pass. While we remained in this dilemma, the chaise, with the officer and my servant, coming up, we exchanged places; my wife and I proceeded in the chaise, and left them with Miss C——[15] and Mr. R——, to follow in the coach. The road from hence to Florence is nothing but a succession of steep mountains, paved and conducted in such a manner, that one would imagine the design had been to render it impracticable by any sort of wheel-carriage. Notwithstanding all our endeavours, I found it would be impossible to enter Florence before the gates were shut. I flattered and threatened the driver by turns: but the fellow, who had been remarkably civil at first, grew sullen and impertinent. He told me I must not think of reaching Florence: that the boat would not take the carriage on board; and that from the other side, I must walk five miles before I should reach the

gate that was open: but he would carry me to an excellent osteria, where I should be entertained and lodged like a prince. I was now convinced that he had lingered on purpose to serve this inn-keeper; and I took it for granted that what he told me of the distance between the ferry and the gate was a lie. It was eight o'clock when we arrived at his inn. I alighted with my wife to view the chambers, desiring he would not put up his horses. Finding it was a villainous house, we came forth, and, by this time, the horses were put up. I asked the fellow how he durst presume to contradict my orders, and commanded him to put them to the chaise. He asked in his turn if I was mad? If I thought I and the lady had strength and courage enough to walk five miles in the dark, through a road which we did not know, and which was broke up by a continued rain of two days? I told him he was an impertinent rascal, and as he still hesitated, I collared him with one hand, and shook my cane over his head with the other. It was the only weapon I had, either offensive or defensive; for I had left my sword, and musquetoon in the coach. At length the fellow obeyed, though with great reluctance, cracking many severe jokes upon us in the mean time, and being joined in his raillery by the inn-keeper, who had all the external marks of a ruffian. The house stood in a solitary situation, and not a soul appeared but these two miscreants, so that they might have murdered us without fear of detection. "You do not like the apartments? (said one) to be sure they were not fitted up for persons of your rank and quality!" "You will be glad of a worse chamber, (continued the other) before you get to bed." "If you walk to Florence to night, you will sleep so sound, that the fleas will not disturb you." "Take care you do not take up your night's lodging in the middle of the road, or in the ditch of the city-wall." I fired inwardly at these sarcasms, to which, however, I made no reply; and my wife was almost dead with fear. In the road from hence to the boat, we met with an ill-looking fellow, who offered his service to conduct us into the city, and such was our situation, that I was fain to accept his proposal, especially as we had two small boxes in the chaise by accident, containing some caps and laces belonging to my wife. I still hoped the postilion had exaggerated in the distance between the boat and the city gate, and

was confirmed in this opinion by the ferryman, who said we had not above half a league to walk. Behold us then in this expedition; myself wrapped up in a very heavy great-coat, and my cane in my hand. I did not imagine I could have walked a couple of miles in this equipage, had my life been depending; my wife a delicate creature, who had scarce ever walked a mile in her life; and the ragamuffin before us with our boxes under his arm. The night was dark and wet; the road slippery and dirty; not a soul was seen, nor a sound was heard: all was silent, dreary, and horrible. I laid my account with a violent fit of illness from the cold I should infallibly catch, if I escaped assassination, the fears of which were the more troublesome as I had no weapon to defend our lives. While I laboured under the weight of my great-coat, which made the streams of sweat flow down my face and shoulders, I was plunged in the mud, up to the mid-leg at every step; and at the same time obliged to support my wife, who wept in silence, half dead with terror and fatigue. To crown our vexation, our conductor walked so fast, that he was often out of sight, and I imagined he had run away with the boxes. All I could do, on these occasions, was to hollow as loud as I could, and swear horribly that I would blow his brains out. I did not know but these oaths and menaces might keep other rogues in awe. In this manner did we travel three long miles, making almost an intire circuit of the city-wall, without seeing the face of a human creature, and at length reached the gate, where we were examined by the guard, and allowed to pass, after they had told us it was a long mile from thence to the house of Vanini, where we proposed to lodge. No matter, being now fairly within the city, I plucked up my spirits, and performed the rest of the journey with such ease, that I am persuaded, I could have walked at the same pace all night long, without being very much fatigued. It was near ten at night, when we entered the auberge in such a draggled and miserable condition, that Mrs. Vanini almost fainted at sight of us, on the supposition that we had met with some terrible disaster, and that the rest of the company were killed. My wife and I were immediately accommodated with dry stockings and shoes, a warm apartment, and a good supper, which I ate with great satisfaction, arising not only from our having happily survived the adventure, but also from a

conviction that my strength and constitution were wonderfully repaired: not but that I still expected a severe cold, attended with a terrible fit of the asthma: but in this I was luckily disappointed. I now for the first time drank to the health of my physician Barazzi, fully persuaded that the hardships and violent exercise I underwent by following his advice, had greatly contributed to the re-establishment of my health. In this particular, I imitate the gratitude of Tavernier, who was radically cured of the gout by a Turkish aga in Ægypt, who gave him the bastinado, because he would not look at the head of the bashaw of Cairo, which the aga carried in a bag, to be presented to the grand signior at Constantinople.[16]

I did not expect to see the rest of our company that night, as I never doubted but they would stay with the coach at the inn on the other side of the Arno: but at mid-night we were joined by Miss C—— and Mr. R——, who had left the carriage at the inn, under the auspices of the captain and my servant, and followed our foot-steps by walking from the ferry-boat to Florence, conducted by one of the boatmen. Mr. R—— seemed to be much ruffled and chagrined; but, as he did not think proper to explain the cause, he had no right to expect that I should give him satisfaction for some insult he had received from my servant. They had been exposed to a variety of disagreeable adventures from the impracticability of the road. The coach had been several times in the most imminent hazard of being lost with all our baggage; and at one place, it was necessary to hire a dozen of oxen, and as many men, to disengage it from the holes into which it had run. It was in the confusion of these adventures, that the captain and his valet, Mr. R—— and my servant, had like to have gone all by the ears together. The peace was with difficulty preserved by the interposition of Miss C——, who suffered incredibly from cold and wet, terror, vexation, and fatigue: yet happily no bad consequence ensued. The coach and baggage were brought safely into Florence next morning, when all of us found ourselves well refreshed, and in good spirits. I am afraid this is not the case with you, who must by this time be quite jaded with this long epistle, which shall therefore be closed without further ceremony by,

Yours always.