

Letter from Rome.

[From the Travelling Correspondent of the *Watchman and Reflector*.]

FROM FLORENCE TO ROME—PISA: ITS CATHEDRAL, LEANING TOWER, AND BAPTISTERY—FROM PISA TO LEGHORN FROM CIVITA VECCHIA TO ROME—THE CAMPAGNA—FIRST VIEW OF ROME—FIRST DISAPPOINTMENT—THE PANTHEON.

Much might be said of Florence, but as there must be an end of letters somewhere, it may be well to pass on our journey. The way to Rome by sea leads through Pisa, where are found, in one group, four as interesting buildings as can be seen together under the sun. The Cathedral, the Baptistery, the Campo Santa, and the Leaning Tower, stand near each other, and have a connection of design. The first is a magnificent temple of worship, with an exceedingly rich and elegant interior, fairly dazzling one in its splendor; the second one is a monument of elegant art and elaborate workmanship, as consecrating the place where Christian rites are observed; the third is a mausoleum of departed greatness, adorning with the beauty of painting and sculpture, the gloom and horror of the tomb; while the last is a grand campanile, or bell tower, from which issue the voices that summon men to the house of God, or conduct them in solemn procession to the grave. The Baptistery has a font in it which was constructed for purposes of immersion, and thereby indicates what was the ancient mode of administering the rite. It is circular in form, and has a dome of most graceful proportions. Never have I heard music sound so grandly, in any place, as some of us tested its capacity by some good old orthodox hymns, the like of which, I presume, had never been heard there before. The Leaning Tower is a real curiosity, not causing a whit of disappointment to the spectator. Its deflection from the perpendicular, produced, without a doubt, by the yielding of the soil on one side, is so considerable, as almost to cause apprehension to the stranger, lest it should lay its full length along the ground; but as he looks at it, and remembers the length of time it has stood in this position, he gathers courage to ascend to the top. Reaching that spot, he has a magnificent view of the Apennines on the north, the Valley of the Arno on the east, and the plain and the Mediterranean on the west. The city lays before him on the south, while gardens, richly cultivated, spread themselves out at his feet. He thinks that centuries ago the great Galileo made this place his observatory, and that here he tried some of his most interesting experiments. The longer he stays, the deeper the interest he feels in the locality, and the more he is disposed to linger. But time flies, and he must depart. Such was our experience. For a precise description of these structures, I must refer your readers to books on the subject, of which there are many, and which will well repay a perusal.

The ride from Pisa to Leghorn by rail is short and uninteresting. So, indeed, is the latter place, so far as we could judge. It is a town of considerable commerce, being the principal seaport of Tuscany. One of the rivals of Venice, it seems to have the start of that glorious old city, though not able to boast of so many and proud monuments of historic greatness and fame. The amount of shipping at Leghorn quite reminded us of home, and the enterprise of some of our commercial ports. Here we took the steamer for Civita Vecchia, the seaport of Rome, at which place we arrived early in the morning. But if there be a place on earth where the annoyances of boatmen, porters, commissionaries, custom-house officers, coach-drivers and railroad employees reach their maximum point, that place is Civita Vecchia. Fancy the position of a man who has the baggage of six ladies, besides his own, to look after, and obliged to run the gauntlet through such an array of money-extortioners as these, and you can imagine what must be the recollections of your correspondent, as connected with this exceedingly disagreeable town. Every labor on trial has its end, however, and by a profuse expenditure of patience, perspiration, voice and money, we at last found ourselves seated in the cars, and starting for the Eternal city. For a considerable distance we rode south along the Mediterranean coast, and then turned towards the south-east. The country was low, flat and uninteresting, with only here and there a house, or any other sign of humanity. It is just about what we supposed this part of Italy might be. As we advanced, high lands on the left showed the northern limit of the Campagna, while on the right, the plain, with the "yellow Tiber" flowing through it, revealed the region of the much dreaded malaria. In our party were two Catholic ladies, who were going, for the first time, to the Mecca of their religion, with which they associated all that was good, and great, and glorious, and who seemed to watch as nervously and eagerly for the first glimpse of the dome of St. Peter's, as they would for a sight of the pinnacles and towers of the heavenly city. And, indeed, there was not one of us who did not approach Rome with quickened pulse, and look out of the cars with anxious eye. And how could it be otherwise? We were approaching the city of Romulus,—the city of the Republic, with which is associated in history a brighter galaxy of great and illustrious names than any other on earth can boast,—the city of the Emperors, whose monuments, seemingly imperishable, stand even yet,—the city which is now the seat and heart of a system whose power and vitality are felt in every part of the globe,—the city in which Paul lived, and where he met a martyr's death,—and the city whose soil has been enriched by the blood of myriads who have died for Christ and His church. If we except Jerusalem, there is no place under heaven around which so much of interest clusters, or which can so well reward the curiosity of the traveller. The name of Rome is as familiar, almost, as that of our own home,

and no one can hear it pronounced, without connecting with it the most deeply interesting events. I hesitate not to say, that never did I approach any place with sensations such as proximity to Rome produced.

And still, as you ride from the railroad depot, outside of the walls, into the city, your romantic feelings are sorely tried, and it may be widely dissipated, by the narrow, filthy streets, the old looking houses, the uncleanly people, the numerous churches, and the black-gowned priests. You hear horrid noises, you smell disgusting odors, and you see repulsive sights. On your ride, turning this way and that, through a perfect labyrinth of streets, changing the place, but keeping all the pain of ear, and eye, &c., until you are landed at the door of your hotel. This was our experience; but a prior acquaintance with many other Italian towns measurably prepared us for what we here saw. Not a very long time elapsed after we were comfortably settled in our new quarters, before we found our feet winding their way to the Pantheon. And we needed no one to point it out to us. There it stood, just as we expected, looking just as familiar as if we had seen it a thousand times before. It stood as it has been standing nearly nineteen hundred years, amid the lapse of centuries, the fall of empires, and revolutions, and changes innumerable. Glorious old structure! It was standing when Christ was a denizen of earth, and it may be standing when he shall return to earth. Strange sensations, (now no more strange), came over us as we beheld this, the first monument of so great an antiquity that we had seen. We felt, indeed, that we were linked by it to the past, and that we could lay hold of ages that seem to us almost fabulous, in the retrospect. The Pantheon is the best preserved monument of ancient Rome, having escaped the banded hands that spoiled so many other structures of glorious fame. Its inscription, mostly distinct, indicates its origin as twenty-three years before the birth of Christ. Its portico is still beautiful, and has been pronounced perfect. Ten of the thirteen steps by which the Pantheon was originally reached are buried beneath the rubbish that has been accumulating at its base for centuries.

An edifice so antique as the Pantheon, makes a stronger impression upon the mind of an American, who lives in a country where everything is new, than upon that of a European, who is accustomed to such things. The past, even of a remote period, is connected with the present by intervening links, in the mind of a citizen of these countries; but we have only to look back a couple of centuries at the longest, to find a period anterior to most of our history. When I was in England, and saw structures whose origin date back to the twelfth, thirteenth or fourteenth century, it seemed to me that they were marvels of hoary age, especially as they looked as venerable and antique as they are; but when my eye fell upon the Pantheon, and my imagination endeavored to stretch itself over the long period of its existence, the effect was overwhelming. I felt almost as if I were in a superhuman presence. The very columns and wall seemed to borrow a sacredness from the past that commanded my emotions, and filled me with awe. And when, the next day, I entered that interesting old building, and saw it corrupted from its original design, a temple where the rites of a paganism Christianity are performed, I felt in my very soul, that it is put to a far worse use than when, if it were really so, it was made a receptacle for heathen deities. The body of the building is circular, surmounted by a dome. Around it, on the inside, are little chapels, in which are altars for popish services. The distinguishing circumstance connected with it now, is, that it is the tomb of the great painter, Raphael. Here he was buried, and here his ashes still rest. There is no imposing monument placed over him; only an inscription on the wall indicates the place. In some parts, the wall of this building are twenty-three feet thick, of solid brick and stone. The ancients built for eternity. The columns are massive, and the finish of the interior and door is of marble. An immense bronze door, regarded as an antique, graceful and beautiful, is the only entrance. The Pantheon has no windows, and is solely lighted from the roof, which is, and ever has been, open in the centre. When it storms, the rain comes down upon the floor, which, however, at that place, declines to the centre, and through holes perforated in the stone, the water runs off. Passing along by it a few evenings since, I saw the water flowing around, and covering the floor of this time-honored structure,—a circumstance which often happens when the Tiber is swollen by heavy rains, and occasioned by the city sewer connecting with it.

The first thing which a visitor, intending to stop a little time here, has to do, is, to secure apartments. Hotel life is somewhat expensive, and there are scarcely any boarding-houses. Furnished rooms in abundance are to be had by the month, and a servant to take care of them, while food ready for the table is procured from restaurants, according to the pleasure of tenants. One can fancy it to be no trifling matter, to secure apartments in a healthy location, and with a good deal of sun, in a city regarded as unhealthy, and with streets so narrow, and buildings so high that the sun shines only upon the top of things. And withal, if it be raining every day, the task is by no means a pleasant one. There are no sidewalks to the streets, saving the Corso, and there they are too narrow for more than one to walk comfortably on them. And at this season of the year, when there is ordinarily considerable rain, the streets are exceedingly disagreeable, especially to pedestrians. Ladies cannot walk any distance under such such circumstances. Carriages, however, are abundant, and very cheap, partially compensating for other inconveniences.

Correspondence.

For the Christian Messenger.

Revivals.

DEAR EDITOR,

Having been deeply exercised in my mind, for some time past, as you already know by "inquiries" heretofore made, in reference to the state of religion in our Churches and the means used in bringing sinners to a belief of the "truth, or a supposed belief of it or the way and the circumstances under which they are received into the Churches.—I trust I have been prayerfully waiting for the time when the minds of Christians should be aroused to this important question I have pursued with great satisfaction what has appeared in the *Messenger* of late on the subject. And, as I have in my possession a Missionary Magazine containing a letter, bearing date, January 20th, 1832, from the Rev. D. Griffin, President of Williams College Marata, addressed to the Rev. Dr. Sprague of Albany, giving an account of some of the early American revivals, more particularly a series in which he was permitted to take part, in connection with the College and surrounding vicinity. I am anxious that a part of his letter should appear in our *Messenger*.

After giving an account of these revivals, he says:—"The means employed in them have been but two—the clear presentation of divine truth and prayer, nothing to work upon the passions but sober, solemn truth presented as far as possible, in its most interesting attitude, and closely applied to the conscience. The meetings have been still and orderly; with no signs of emotion in the hearers than the solemn look and the silent tear. We have been anxiously studious to guard against delusive hopes and to expose the wanderings of a deceitful heart, forbearing all encouragement except what the converts themselves could derive from Christ and the promises, knowing that any reliance on our opinion was drawing from us and not from the Saviour. We have not accustomed them to the bold and unqualified language that such an one is converted, but have used a dialect calculated to keep alive a sense of the danger of deception. For a similar reason we have kept them back from a profession for about three months—sinners have been constantly urged to immediate repentance and every excuse has been taken away. At the same time we have not denied or concealed their dependence, for the sake of convincing them of their obligation. On the contrary, we have esteemed it vital to urge that dependence in order to drive them from all reliance on their own strength, and to make them die to every hope for themselves. All that you can possibly gain by flattering their dependence, is to extort a confession of their obligation; for as the matter of fact, they will not submit until they are made willing in the day of God's power. And if you can fasten upon them their obligation, without that falsehood which robs God of his glory, pray let it be done. This we have found it possible to do. We have shown them that their obligations rest on their faculties and are as complete and reasonable as though the thing required was merely to walk across the floor; that their faculties constitute a natural ability, that is, a full power to love and serve God IF their hearts were well disposed, leaving nothing in the way but a bad heart, for which they are wholly to blame if there is any blame in the universe; that sin can rest no where but in the heart, and that if you drive it beyond the heart you drive it out of existence; that they alone create the necessity for God to conquer them, and to decide whether he will conquer them or not; that it is an everlasting blot on creation that God has to speak a second time to induce creatures to love him, much more that he has to constrain them by his conquering powers and yet after all his provisions and invitations,—after he has sent his Son and his Spirit to save them,—they will break their way to perdition if his almighty power do not prevent; that by their own fatal obstinacy they are cast entirely upon his will, that they are wholly in his hands,—that if he frown they die; if he smile they live forever. This is the grandest of all means to press them out of themselves, to cast them dead and helpless upon God, to make them die that they may be made alive. Conceal their dependence in order to make them feel their obligation! The maddest purpose that ever was conceived, unless the thing required is to be done in their own strength. And then why do you pray for the Spirit? "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." But in this greatest of all his works he is chiefly jealous for his honour. He will not have your prayers for a revival, if, when you go out from his pre-

sence, you tell sinners that he has nothing to do in the business but to convict,—that the God which regenerates us is Light. If there is any truth sweeter than all the rest, it is this, that we are absolutely, totally, and eternally dependant on his sanctifying grace and that he will have all the glory;—if any view of God is more supporting and encouraging than all the rest, it is that which the Christian takes when he feelingly says,—"My soul wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him." Take any thing else away, but take not away my God. This is the last truth that I will give up till I yield my reason and my immortal hopes. If there is any truth in defence of which I would go on a crusade,—or, better still, in support of which I would go to the stake,—it is this. If you see revivals carried by human devices merely there is more cause to mourn than to rejoice.

I do not object to all measures to arrest attention, to move moderately the imagination and passions, and to put the whole man into action towards God and his revealed truth. I am no advocate for addressing men as intellectual statues. But there is always some danger in working on this part of the human constitution by other means than truth set in its most affecting light, and pressed home upon the conscience, and at no period of existence is the danger so great as at the crisis referred to. The imagination and passions are useful handmaids, but when they assume dominion, they make a religion of bad proportions if not altogether delusive. This the history of religious enthusiasm shows on every page."

Nictaux, April 6th, 1860.

R.

For the Christian Messenger.

Death—the entrance to Life.

"O talk to me of Heaven!
I love to hear about my home above."

I have just witnessed a death-bed scene,—and never from my memory will the hallowed sight be obliterated. He, on whom the icy hand of death was laid, was a boy of twelve or thirteen summers. He knew Jesus as his Saviour; had felt the joys of pardoned sin. What wonder, then, that he whispered "I'm going home to Heaven." And the tired spirit longed "to depart and be with Christ, which is far better."

O yes! how much better it does appear to our finite minds, when, tired of sin, we can view Heaven and its glories very near; having the Spirit's witness that we are the children of God, and that for us Christ has purchased these possessions.

Toil on ye wearied saints a little longer; a few more years at most will end this pilgrimage. Even this year you may die. Happy possibility! many hearts would repeat,—not that they are tired of the service of Christ on earth; ah! no. But the nearer we get to that dear Savior, the more lovely does he appear; and we know it is only as "through a glass, darkly," we behold him. What will it be when we see him face to face?

O would he more of heaven bestow,
And let the vessel break,
And let the ransomed spirit go
To grasp the God it seeks.

We cannot be satisfied until we awake in Christ's likeness. Just to think that this year we may be freed from sin;—for nothing that defileth will enter the temple above.

Then, if it is possible and even probable that this year we may die, should we not improve the time, so that God's name may be glorified? We are not our own, but are bought with a price." Jesus is our Master.—"Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye do well, for so I am." He only leaves us here because he has a work to perform in us, and a work to be performed by us. We should ask of Him, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Perishing multitudes are around you. Do they all know God as their Saviour? If so, hear the call from heathen lands,—"Come over and help us." The harvest is plenteous, but the laborers are few. And why are they few?

Are there not millions of professing Christians in the world? "Awake, awake! put on thy strength O sons and daughters of Zion. For the night of death approacheth when no man can work. When we contemplate the termination of our course with joy, let us remember those who are not prepared "to meet their God," and to whom that God,—who, through the atonement of Jesus, is to us love,—but to them will be a consuming fire. To such an one,

"How shocking must thy summons be, O death!
In that dread moment, how the frantic soul
Raves round the walls of her clay tenement:
Runs to each avenue, and shrieks for help;
But shrieks in vain! How wistfully she looks
On all she's leaving,—now no longer hers!
A little longer, yet a little longer,
O might she stay, to wash away her stains,
And fit her for her passage! Mournful sight!
Her very eyes weep blood, and every groan she heaves
Is big with sorrow. But the foe,
Like a staunch murderer, steady to his purpose,
Pursues her close through every lane of life,
Nor misses once the track; but presses on,
Till pressed at last to the tremendous verge,
And once she sinks to everlasting ruin.
O Lord give us more love for the never-dying soul."

M. B.