

The Religious Intelligencer.

AN EVANGELICAL FAMILY NEWSPAPER, FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ—PETER.

VOL. VI.—NO. 5.

ST. JOHN, NEW BRUNSWICK.

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 4 1859.

WHOLE NO. 266

THE RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCER

An Evangelical Family Newspaper,

FOR NEW BRUNSWICK AND NOVA SCOTIA.

REV. E. McLEOD, Editor & Proprietor.

G. A. HARTLEY, Editor & Proprietor.

Published every Friday Morning.

At their office, No. 25 Gormain Street, St. John, N.B.

TERMS.

Seven Shillings and Six Pence

A YEAR IN ADVANCE.

Subscriptions received for one-third of a year.

Communications and Business Letters may be

directed to either of the Editors.

Agents and others should be particular to give

the cost of Way Office, with the County and

Province, of Subscribers, and others for

whom they may be sent, to the Editors.

Please take notice, it is not the Parish or Town

ship in which they reside, but the NAME of the

office where they wish to receive their pa-

pers, that we want.

Rome and its Inhabitants.

FRANCE, October, 1858.

Letters of Mr. Amedee Achard.—The country

about Rome.—The City Streets, Houses,

Palace.—Old and New City.—Jews' Quarter.

Uncleanliness and Indolence of the Inhabit-

ants.—Want of devotion in religious fes-

tivals.—Other remarks.—Lotteries.—Assas-

sinations.—Capuchin Monks.—Beggars, &c.

The following letter written by Mr. Amedee

ACHARD, a French Scholar, and a Roman Catho-

lic by birth and profession, and published in a

French journal, under the title of *A Month in*

Italy, disclosed a fearful state of things in the

Holy City! Rome—the City of the Pope—the

hot bed of Cardinals, Priests, Monks, and

Popish ecclesiastics of all kinds, is according to

the testimony of Romish writers themselves the

very sink of impurity and iniquity of every de-

scription. "By their fruits ye shall know them"

The French Correspondent to the *N. Y. Obser-*

ver furnishes the subjoined abridgment of Mr.

Achard's letter:—

The road from Civita Vecchia to Rome at first

runs along the sea shore. Some trees, scorched

by the south wind and by the sun, here and there

lift their heads; soon they disappear altogether;

and as far as the eye can reach, there is nothing

but a white dusty horizon, shut in on one

side by the Mediterranean, whose surface is like

a mirror of blue glass, and on the other by

endless plains intersected with dry beds of

streams.

On the way, at long intervals, you come to one

of these mean, hideous, taverns, inhabited by

wretchedness and poverty, around which crawl

little deformed ragged children. The women

wear their tattered clothing before the doors.

The men sleep. Twenty hands of beggars are

reached out with sighs and groans.

The first glance at the country about Rome is

horrible. Nothing soothes or gladdens the eye;

poverty everywhere. A burning sun devours the

landscape. No trees, nor water; in the hamlets

a haggard and gloomy population.

Rome! The four letters which compose this

word have in them something magical, fascinat-

ing the mind and moving the heart; they

awaken a crowd of memories. You look a long

time for the city without seeing it. You see

only miserable stations for changing post horses,

crooked roads, and naked plains.

You enter. There are, numberless streets,

narrow, winding, lined with poor, dingy houses,

with low doors and irregular windows. You

would call it a large village. You hear the cocks

crow, the sheep bleat, the asses bray (their pro-

vider is on the ground in a corner), the pavement

is rough and uneven.

If you examine this scene more closely, it will

not impress you any better. The streets of

Rome are a sort of labyrinth, where there is no

straight line. Every street, at the end of from

thirty to fifty steps, is stopped by a row of houses.

This row is in turn interrupted by a fragment of

the old fortifications. It looks as if a drunken

Titan had taken some hundreds of houses and

thrown them pell-mell on the ground: the empty

spaces form the streets. You might think that

this disorderly arrangement would be more pic-

turesque. But the picturesque is unknown in

Rome; everywhere the same dingy houses, the

same mean shops, the same crowds of beggars.

No city has more the appearance of decay. The

bricks of the houses are defaced, and crumbling

away; cobwebs hang over the doors; wet clothes

hang out of the windows. Some alleys are full

of manure; the pavements are strewn with straw

trod under the feet of animals.

The palaces of the Roman aristocracy appear

better, but they wear an air of sadness. No life;

no care; all seems extinct. You go through

long suites of rooms where shine the splendors

of past ages; you admire the splendid paintings,

the magnificent ceilings, marble and old mosaic

tables. But all this tells of another age. The

walls are cracked; the floors are loose; the fur-

niture decayed; nothing repaired. You do not go

a hundred steps under these immense roofs before

you already feel tired, and you sigh over the

fate of Roman princes, condemned to live in a

corner of these vast palaces.

The most interesting part of Rome, is the old

city,—the *dead city*,—that which is covered with

the dust of centuries. The temples of polythe-

ism, the circus, the amphitheatre, all that brings

back Republican Rome and Imperial Rome,

would exhaust the labor of the most patient an-

tiquarian. I have heard that there are six thou-

sand columns of antique marble in the churches

and palaces. As to statues, they seem, at first

sight, to be more numerous than the inhabitants,

and yet half of Rome is yet buried under ground.

The dead city is the only one which is great; I

would almost say, the only one which is living.

The modern city is inert: its true glory is in the

past.

A man of science and wit expressed the wish

that modern Rome might be wholly destroyed,

excepting the church of St. Peter's and some old

monuments. Next, that the ruins of the ancient

city might be dug up, studied and restored. This

would best show what Rome was in her flourish-

ing days. How many treasures of art, which would

enrich the world, still lie buried under the soil!

The Pope not being able to bear the ex-

pense of such an enterprise, it should be con-

fided to a large financial company. Rome would

become an immense museum, kept by an acad-

emy of antiquaries, and the whole city, with its

monuments, would be placed under the protec-

tion of civilized nations. This plan will be called

extravagant; it is, doubtless, impracticable;

but it shows how far ancient Rome is superior

to modern Rome.

I had the curiosity to visit the Jews' quarter,

called the *Ghetto*. What filth! what degrada-

tion inflicted upon this unhappy people! Rags

everywhere,—in the windows, in the shops, in

the halls, in the midst of the streets. A small

part of this miserable merchandise serves to

clothe the people; the remainder falls into the

hands of ugly old women. Half naked children

cry in the corner; others ask alms, rolling in

the dirt. You would say that the whole *Ghetto*

was a heap of filth. I believe that a drop of

water was never used to cleanse the inhabitants

or their dwellings.

Filthiness is general at Rome, with few ex-

ceptions. If the Romans are not all as degra-

ded as the Jews, they are nearly so. You will

find nowhere the watchful care, the activity, the

refinement which characterizes the civilization

of other nations.

The inhabitants of Rome are indolent, igno-

rant, and sluggish. What do you wish? What

is the use? are common expressions. The labourer

might, by working, earn some centimes more;

but what is the use? The present might make the soil

produce more abundant harvests, by attending

to it more earnestly and intelligently; but what

is the use? The merchant might sell more, if he

was more active and had more foresight; but what

is the use? The back-maker, the inn-keeper might

find more customers, and increase their fortunes;

but what is the use! If you are surprised at this

indifference, consider that at Rome every-

thing is motionless, because all, body and soul, is

under the yoke of spiritual and temporal despot-

ism. What would interest this population? The

Romans feel that they are strangers to all that is

going on around them. As they can do nothing,

they desire nothing; they live day after day, in

a stupid indifference. Even in the public places

there is no tumult, no shouts, nor laughter. To

amend their condition would require an effort,

too much for this debased people.

Silence is one of the characteristics of Rome.

There are only bells to make a noise. The reason

of this silence is to be found in the public

indolence. Commerce and manufactures are

unknown. No one is eager to obtain any ob-

ject; no one feels the spur of rivalry or pleasure.

These habits of silence and indolence, contracted

in childhood, give the countenance a singularly

grave expression. The Roman people have

also some Spanish traits. Men and women have

a slow gait, compressed mouth and a reserved

air. Cheerfulness is very rare among them. I

saw only some children laugh, and their mothers

were astonished at it.

I attended the processions at the festival of

the Holy Sacrament. The multitude crowded the

public ways. Bells and martial music re-

sounded on every side. The balconies were

hung with tapestries. French and Swiss regi-

ments, and pontifical dragons had on their

most beautiful uniforms. Gold crosses and ban-

ners were displayed. The pope appeared in the

train, borne by the officers of his household, and

surrounded by a triple row of cardinals, bishops,

monks and priests. But if I am allowed to say it,

I did not feel the emotion that I expected;

the pomp of this spectacle did not strike me as

grand, nor imposing. And observe, this was not

my impression only; all foreigners who attend

the religious festivals of Rome feel disappointed

and sad.

Devoutness and reverence are not wanting in

these ceremonies. At the moment of the bless-

ing of the Holy Sacrament, when the pope offici-

ated at the altar, I saw thousands of spectators,

and among them priests and canons, leave the

church without any decorum!

The cardinals also astonished me with the ex-

hibition of their splendour. Every time they pass

through the city, they are borne in a scarlet

coach, with horses richly caparisoned, and are

always accompanied by two or three great

lackeys, laced from head to foot. What would

the ancient martyrs say if they should return to

the world and see their successors clothed in

purple, and like princes? I do not hesitate to

say that the effect produced by this luxury is

bad.

A Frenchman is not less astonished to live in a

city where refuge may be taken in churches,

monasteries, chapels; where a criminal has only

to lay-hold of the robe of a monk, to be safe from

the police, and where persons, placed in their

early years in the founding hospital, are never

condemned, for their father might be one of the

judges.

A strange familiarity, which would seem mon-

strous to us, pervades all classes of inhabitants

at Rome. I saw a cardinal take, without hesi-

tation, a pinch of snuff from the box of his ser-

vant. I saw before a fish stall, where fish were

fried in the open air, a soldier, a shepherd, a priest,

a capuchin monk, a nurse, a maid-servant, a mule

driver, and two or three gentlemen in black, tak-

ing their food together in the street, and discuss-

ing the quality of it in a familiar way. What

gentleman would venture to do this on the

boulevards in Paris?

The Romans have a passion for the lottery.

They deprive themselves of food, in order to try

the chances of fortune. The wheel turns, and the

money is lost; but the next day, their sav-

ings are again brought to the lottery, and the

laborer, always deceived, is always counting on

the highest prize. Morals are injured by these

habits; families impoverished; but the govern-

ment encourages the fever of the lottery among

the people, for obvious reasons.

A Roman does not trouble himself about the

public opinion; he does what he pleases, dresses

as he likes, comba his hair on the door-step, lies

down and sleeps in the street, and provided he

has a confession ticket in his pocket, cares for

nothing. The confession ticket is of great im-

portance at Rome. Among the higher ranks it

is a matter of policy; in the lower ranks it is a

superstition.

Obligatory confession does not prevent thefts,

and murders. Stabbings with the knife are fre-

quent in the pontifical city. Last year there

were 282 murders at Rome, or attempts to mur-

der. The knife is used without much fear; the

police pay little attention to it; they generally

come too late; and if an investigation is made,

it is very difficult to find witnesses; for if a man,

by his deposition, causes another to be con-