



PROJECT MUSE®

The Business of Reflection

Milder, Robert, Fuller, Randall

Published by The Ohio State University Press

Milder, Robert and Randall Fuller.

The Business of Reflection: Hawthorne in His Notebooks.

The Ohio State University Press, 2009.

Project MUSE.muse.jhu.edu/book/27811.



➔ For additional information about this book

<https://muse.jhu.edu/book/27811>

PART III



The French and Italian Notebooks



Arriving in Paris on January 6, 1858, Hawthorne settled into the Hôtel du Louvre. His initial journal entry describes the journey of the family and governess Ada Shepard from England to Boulogne, through Amiens, to Paris across a frigid countryside reminiscent of “the December aspect of my dear native-land. . . . My impression of France will always be, that it is an Arctic region” (CE XIV: 6).



Hôtel du Louvre, Paris, Jan^y 6th, Wednesday.

We left Amiens at ½ past one; and I can tell as little of the country between that place and Paris, as between Boulogne and Amiens. . . . At five, we reached Paris, and were suffered to take a conveyance to the Hôtel du Louvre, without any examination of the little luggage we had with us. Arriving at the Hôtel we took a suite of apartments *au troisieme*, which will cost a little more than 25 francs per day; and the waiter immediately lighted a wax candle in each separate room, thereby saddling us with four francs more. We might have dined at the table d’hôte, but preferred the restaurant connected with the hotel. It is a terrible business, feeding so many mouths, and especially children, and most especially a boy, at a French table. We had a soup, some lamb-cutlets (and a very young and diminutive lamb it

must have been,) and a chicken with truffles, ending with some ice-cream, which I little thought to have eaten in this Arctic weather. For drink, a half bottle of Burgundy. All the dishes were very delicate, and a vast change from the simple English system, with its joints, shoulders, beef-steakes and chops; but I doubt whether English cookery, for the very reason that it is so gross, is not better for man's moral and spiritual nature, than French. In the former case, you know that you are gratifying your coarsest animal needs and propensities, and are duly ashamed of it; but, in dealing with these French delicacies, you delude yourself into the idea that you are cultivating your taste while filling your belly. This last, however, it needs a good deal of perseverance to accomplish.

Hôtel du Louvre, Jan 8th, Friday.

The splendor of Paris, so far as I have seen, takes me altogether by surprise; such stately edifices, prolonging themselves in unwearying magnificence and beauty, and, ever and anon, a long vista of a street, with a column rising at the end of it, or a triumphal arch, wrought in memory of some grand event. The light stone, or stucco, wholly untarnished by smoke and soot, puts London to the blush, if a blush could be seen through its dingy face; but, indeed, London is paltry, despicable, not to be mentioned in the same day, nor compared even for the purpose of ridiculing it, with Paris. I never knew what a palace was, till I had a glimpse of the Louvre and the Tuilleries;—never had any idea of a city gratified, till I trod these stately streets. The life of the scene, too, is infinitely more picturesque than London, with its monotonous throng of smug faces and black coats; whereas, here, you see soldiers and priests; policemen in cocked hats; Zouaves, with turbans, long mantles, and bronzed, half-Moorish faces; and a great many people whom you perceive to be outside of your experience, and know them ugly to look at, and fancy them villainous. Truly, I have no sympathies towards the French people; their eyes do not win me, nor do their glances melt and mingle with mine. But they do grand and beautiful things, in the architectural way; and I am grateful for it. The Place de la Concord is the most splendid square, large enough for a nation to erect trophies of all its triumphs there; and one side of it is the Tuilleries, on the opposite side the Champ Elyssée, and on a third the Seine, adown which we saw large cakes of ice floating beneath the arches of a bridge. The Champ Elyssée, so far as I saw it, had not a grassy soil beneath its trees, but the bare earth, white and dusty. The very dust, if I saw nothing else, would assure me that I was out of England. We had time only to take this little walk, when it began to grow

dusk; and being so pitilessly cold, we hurried back to our Hôtel. Thus far, I think, what I have seen of Paris is wholly unlike what I expected, but very like an imaginary picture which I had conceived of Saint Petersburg; new, bright, magnificent, and desperately cold. A great part of this architectural splendor is due to the present Emperor, who has wrought a great change on the aspect of the city within a very few years. A traveller, if he look at the thing selfishly, ought to wish him a long reign, and arbitrary power; since he makes it his policy to illustrate his capital with palatial edifices, which are better for a stranger to look at than for his own people to pay for.

We have spent to-day chiefly in seeing, or glimpsing, at some of the galleries of the Louvre. I will not be fool enough to attempt a description; but I must confess that the vast and beautiful edifice struck me far more than the pictures, sculpture, and curiosities which it contains; the shell more than the meat inside. I never saw (nor could have seen, as none such exist elsewhere) such noble suites of rooms and halls as those through which we first passed, containing Egyptian, and, farther onward, Greek and Roman antiquities; the walls cased with variegated marbles, the ceilings glowing with beautiful pictures, the whole prolonged into infinite vistas by looking-glasses, that seemed like vacancy, and multiplied everything forever. The picture-rooms are not so splendid, and the pictures themselves did not greatly win upon me, in this one day. Many artists were employed in copying them, especially in the rooms hung with the productions of French painters; not a few of these copyists were females; most of them were young men, picturesquely moustached and bearded, but some were elderly, who, it was pitiful to think, had passed through life without so much success as now to paint pictures of their own.

Hôtel du Louvre, Jan^y 10th, Sunday.

This morning, Paris looked as bleak as London, with clouds and rain; and when we issued forth, it seemed as if a cold, sullen agony were interposed between each separate atom of our bodies. In all my experience of bad atmospheres, methinks I never knew anything so atrocious as this. England has nothing to be compared with it. We had purposed going to the Cathedral of Notre Dame to-day; but the weather and walking were too unfavorable for a distant expedition; so Mamma, Julian, and I, merely went across the street to the Louvre, while Una, who was much wearied with yesterday's rambles, staid at home in our saloon. Baby and Miss Shepard had gone together to visit Miss Macdaniel, intending to dine at a Restaurant by themselves.¹

Our principal object, to-day, was to see the pencil-drawings by eminent artists. Of these the Louvre has a very rich collection, occupying many apartments, and comprising sketches by Annibal Caracci, Claude, Raphael, Leonardo di Vinci, Michael Angelo, Rubens, Rembrandt, and almost all the other great masters, whether French, Italian, Dutch, or whatever else;² the earliest drawings of their great pictures, when they had the glory of their pristine idea directly before their mind's eye—that idea which inevitably became overlaid with their own handling of it, in the finished painting. No doubt, the painters themselves had often a happiness in these rude, off-hand sketches, which they never felt again in the same work, and which resulted in disappointment after they had done their best. To an artist, the collection must be intensely interesting; to myself, it was merely curious, and soon grew wearisome. In the same suite of apartments, there is a collection of miniatures, some of them very exquisite, and absolutely life-like, on their small scale. I observed two of Franklin, both good, and picturesque; one of them especially so, with its cloudlike white hair.³ I do not think we have produced a man so interesting to contemplate, in many points of view, as he. Most of our great men are of a character that I find it impossible to warm into life by thought, and by lavishing any amount of sympathy upon them; not so Franklin, who had a great deal of common and uncommon human-nature in him. Much of the time, while my wife was looking at the drawings, I sat observing the crowd of Sunday visitors. . . . I did not much like any of these French faces; and yet I am not sure that there is not more resemblance between them and the American physiognomy, than between the latter and the English. The women are not pretty; but in all ranks above the lowest, they have a trained expression that supplies the place of beauty.

I was wearied to death with the drawings, and began to have that dreary and desperate feeling which has often come upon me, when the sights last longer than my capacity for receiving them. . . .

By this time, poor Julian (who, with his taste for art yet undeveloped, is [*word deleted*] the companion of all our visits to sculpture and picture galleries.) . . . We returned to the Hôtel; and it being too damp and raw to go *out* to our Restaurant d'Eschelle, we took Una and Julian down with us to the Restaurant of the Hotel. In my opinion, it would require less time to cultivate one's gastronomic tastes, than taste of any other kind; and, on the whole, I am not sure that a man could do a better thing than to afford himself a little discipline in this line. It is certainly throwing away the bounties of Providence to treat them as the English do, producing, from better materials than the French have to work upon, nothing but sirloins, joints, joints, steaks, steaks, steaks, chops, chops, chops, chops! We ate a soup, in which twenty kinds of vegetables were represented, and manifested

each its own aroma; a fillet of stewed beef, which was ordered principally for Julian's benefit; and a fowl, in some form of delicate fricassée. We had a bottle of Chablis, and renewed ourselves, at the close of the banquet, with a plate of Chateaubriand ice. It was all very good, and we respected ourselves far more than if we had gorged a quantity of red roast-beef; but I am not quite sure that we were right.

Hôtel du Louvre, Jan^y 12th, Tuesday.

. . . Julian and I walked to Nôtre Dame, the rich and magnificent front of which I viewed with more attention than yesterday. . . . I must again speak of the horrible muddiness, not only of this part of the city [an old quarter behind Nôtre Dame], but of all Paris, so far as I have traversed it to-day. My ways, since I came to Europe, have often lain through nastiness; but I never before saw a pavement so universally overspread with mud-pudding, as that of Paris. It is difficult to imagine where so much filth comes from.

We dined in the Restaurant de L'Echelle; but already we are getting to be connoisseurs in French cookery, and we found nothing very admirable in the dishes of to-day. After dinner, I walked through the gardens of the Tuileries. . . . The trees in the Champs Elysées, and, I presume, in the gardens of the Tuileries, are said to need renewing, every few years. The same is true of the human race; families becoming extinct after a generation or two of residence in Paris. Nothing really thrives here; and vegetables have but an artificial life, like flowers stuck in a little mould, but never taking root. I am quite tired of Paris, and never longed for a home so much.



Leaving Paris, Hawthorne journeyed to Marseilles, which rivaled New England for its "bold, picturesque headlands" and views of the sea but exceeded anything in his "heretofore experience" for its "human nastiness, as an abode of men" (CE XIV: 43). From Marseilles he sailed to Genoa.



37, Via Porta Pinciana, Rome, Jan^y 24th, Sunday.

I went to bed immediately after my last record, and was rocked to sleep pleasantly enough by the billows of the Mediterranean; and coming on deck about sunrise, next morning, found the steamer approaching Genoa.

We saw the city lying at the foot of a range of hills, and stretching a little way up their slopes; the hills sweeping round it in the segment of a circle, and looking like an island rising abruptly out of the sea; for no connection with the mainland was visible on either side. There was snow scattered on their summits, and streaking their sides a good way down; they looked bold and barren, and brown except where the snow streaked them. The city did not impress us with much expectation of size or magnificence. Shortly after coming into the port, our whole party landed, and found ourselves at once in the midst of a crowd of cab-drivers, hotel-runners, and commissionaires, who assaulted us with a volley of French, Italian, and broken English, which beat pitilessly about our ears; for really it seemed as if all the dictionaries in the world had been torn to pieces, and blown around us by a hurricane. I never heard such a pother. We took a commissionaire, a respectable-looking man in a cloak, who said his name was Salvator Rosa; and he engaged to show us whatever was interesting in Genoa. In the first place, he took us through narrow streets (mere gullies, as it were, between lines of tall stone houses, and chill as death with the eternal shade that broods in them) to an old church, the name of which I have forgotten, and indeed its peculiar features; but I know that I found it more magnificent than anything I had before seen or imagined; its whole interior being cased in polished marble, of various kind and colors, its ceiling painted, and its chapels adorned with pictures.⁴ However, this church was dazzled out of sight by the Cathedral of San Lorenzo, to which we afterwards were conducted, the exterior front of which is covered with alternate slabs of black and white marble, which were brought, either in whole or in part, from Jerusalem. Within, there was an immense richness of precious marbles, and a pillar, if I mistake not, from Solomon's Temple, and a picture of the Virgin by Saint Luke, and others (rather more intrinsically valuable, I imagine) by old Masters, set in magnificent marble frames, within the arches of the Chapels. I used to try to imagine how splendidly the English Cathedrals must have looked in their primeval glory, before the Reformation, and before the whitewash of Cromwell's time had overlaid their marble pillars; but I never imagined anything at all approaching what my eyes now beheld; this sheen of polished variegated marble, covering every inch of the walls; this glow of brilliant frescoes all over the roof, and up within the domes; these beautiful pictures by great masters, painted for the places which they now occupied, and making an actual portion of the edifice; this wealth of silver, gold, and gems, that adorned the shrines of the saints, before which wax candles burned, and were kept burning, I suppose, from years' end to years' end; in short, there is no imagining or remembering a hundredth part of this magnificence. And even the Cathedral (though I give it up as indescribable)

was nothing in comparison with a church to which the Commissionaire afterwards led us; a church that had been built, four or five hundred years ago, by a pirate, in expiation of his sins and out of the profit of his rapine. This last edifice, in its interior, absolutely shone with burnished gold, and glowed with pictures; its walls were a quarry of precious stones, so valuable were the marbles out of which they were wrought; its columns and pillars were of inconceivable value; its pavement was a mosaic of wonderful beauty. There were four twisted pillars made out of stalactites. I am ashamed of my folly in trying even to make myself remember how much I was dazzled by this church. Perhaps the best way to form some dim conception of it, is to imagine a little casket, all inlaid, in its inside, with precious stones, so that there shall not a hair's breadth be left un-precious-stoned; and then imagine this little bit of a casket increased to the magnitude of a great church, without losing anything of the intense glory that was compressed into its original small compass, but all its pretty lustre made sublime and magnificent by the immensity. At any rate, nobody who has not seen a church like this (if there be another such) can imagine what a splendid religion it was that reared it. In the Cathedral, and in all the churches, we saw priests, and many persons kneeling at their devotions; and our *Salvator Rosa*, whenever we passed a chapel or shrine, failed not to touch the pavement with one knee, crossing himself the while; and once, when a priest was going through some form of devotion, he stopt a few moments to share in it.

He conducted us, too, to the Balbi palace, the stateliest and most magnificent residence that I had ever seen, but not more so than another which he afterwards showed us nor perhaps than many others which exist in Genoa the superb. The painted cielings in these palaces are a glorious adornment; the walls of the saloons, encrusted with various-colored marbles, give an idea of splendor which I never gained from anything else; the floors wrought in mosaic, seem too precious to tread upon. In the royal palace, many of the floors were wrought of inlaid woods, by an English artist, and looked like a magnification of some exquisite piece of Tunbridge ware; but, in all respect, this palace was inferior to others which we saw. I say nothing of the immense pictorial treasures which hung upon the walls of all the rooms through which we passed: for I soon grew so weary of admirable things that I could neither enjoy nor understand them. My receptive faculty is very limited; and when the utmost of its small capacity is full, I become perfectly miserable, and the more so, the better worth seeing are the things I am forced to reject. I do not know a greater misery; to see sights after such repletion is, to the mind, what it would be to the body to have dainties forced down the throat long after the appetite was satiated.

**37, Via Porta Pinciana, Rome, February 3^d 1858,
Wednesday.**

We have been in Rome, I believe, a fortnight to day; or rather at eleven o'clock to night; and I have seldom or never spent so wretched a time anywhere. Our impressions were very unfortunate, arriving at midnight, half-frozen, in the wintry rain, and being received into a cold and cheerless hotel, where we shivered during two or three days; meanwhile, seeking lodging, amongst the sunless, dreary alleys which are called streets in Rome. One cold, bright day after another has pierced me to the heart and cut me in twain, as with a sword, keen and sharp, and poisoned at point and edge. I did not think cold weather could have made me so very miserable; upon my word, having caught a feverish cold, I was glad of being muffled up comfortably in the fever-heat. The atmosphere certainly has a peculiar quality of malignancy. After a day or two, we settled ourselves in a suite of ten rooms, comprehending one flat, or what is called the second piano of this house.⁵ The rooms, thus far, have been very cold and uncomfortable, it being impossible to warm them by means of the deep, old-fashioned, inartificial fireplaces, unless we had the great logs of a New England forest to burn in them; so I have sat in my corner by the fireside, with more clothes on than ever I wore before, and my thickest great coat. In the middle of the day, I generally venture out for an hour or two, but have only once been warm enough even in the sunshine; and out of the sun, it is as chill as death. I understand, now, the force of that story of Alexander and Diogenes, when the latter asked the conqueror, as the only favor he could do him, to stand out of his sunshine; there being such a difference, in these Southern climes of Europe, between sun and shade.⁶ You stand within the sunshine, though on its very verge, and are comfortably warm; you make one step beyond, and are smitten as with the edge of cold steel. If my wits had not been too much congealed, and my fingers too numb, I should like to have kept a minute journal of my feelings and impressions, during the past fortnight; it would have shown up modern Rome in an aspect in which it has never yet been depicted. But I have now grown somewhat acclimated, and the first freshness of my discomfort has worn off; so that I shall never be able to express how I dislike the place, and how wretched I have been in it; and soon, I suppose, warmer weather will come, and perhaps reconcile me to Rome against my will. Cold, nastiness, evil smells, narrow lanes between tall, ugly, mean-looking, white-washed houses, sour bread, pavement, most uncomfortable to the feet, enormous prices for poor living, beggars, pick-pockets, ancient temples and broken monuments with filth at the base, and clothes hanging to dry about them, French soldiers, monks, and priests of

every degree, a shabby population smoking bad cigars—these would have been some of the points of my description.⁷ Of course there are better and truer things to be said; but old Rome does seem to lie here like a dead and mostly decayed corpse, retaining here and there a trace of the noble shape it was, but with a sort of fungous growth upon it, and no life but of the worms that creep in and out.⁸

It would be idle for me to attempt any sketches of these famous sites and edifices—Saint Peter's for example—which have been described by a thousand people, though none of them have ever given me an idea what sort of place Rome is. Saint Peter's disappointed me terribly by its want of effect, and the little justice it does to its real magnitude, externally; but the interior blazed upon me with altogether unexpected magnificence; so brilliant is it with picture, gilding, variegated and polished marbles, and all that splendor which I tried in vain to describe in the churches of Genoa. I had expected something vast and dim, like the great English Cathedrals, only more vast, and dim, and gray; but there is as much difference as between noonday and twilight. I never saw nor imagined so bright and splendid an interior as that of this immense church; but I am not sure that it would not be more grand and majestic if it were less magnificent, though I should be sorry to see the experiment tried.⁹ The Coliseum was very much what I had pre-conceived it, though I was not prepared to find it turned into a sort of Christian church, with a pulpit on the verge of the open space. Right in the center, there is a great iron cross, on which is advertized, in Italian, an indulgence of two hundred days to whoever shall kiss it. While I sat on a stone, under one of the arches, I saw two women prick their way through the mud and kiss this cross, and then go away repeating their prayers aloud. The French soldiers (who keep guard within the Coliseum, as in most other public places in Rome) have an excellent opportunity to secure the welfare of their souls.

Rome, Feb^y 7th, Sunday.

I cannot get fairly into the current of my Journal, since we arrived in Rome; and already I perceive that the nice peculiarities of Roman life are passing from my notice before I have recorded them. It is a very great pity. During this past week, I have plodded daily, for an hour or two, through the narrow, stony streets, that look worse than the worst backside lanes of any other city; indescribably ugly and disagreeable they are; so cold, so alley-like, so uncomfortably paved with little square stones, without side walks, but provided with a line of larger squares, set cornerwise to each other,

along which there is somewhat less uneasy walking. Along these lanes, or gullies, a chill wind blows; down into their depths the sun never falls; they are bestrewn with horse dung and the filth of the adjacent houses, which rise on each side to the height of five or six stories, generally plastered and white-washed and looking neither old nor new. Probably these houses have the brick and stone of old Rome in them—the Coliseum, and many another stately structure—but they themselves look like magnified hovels. Ever and anon, even in the meanest streets (though, generally speaking, one can hardly be called meaner than another) we pass a palace, extending far along the narrow way on the line with the other houses, but distinguished by its architectural windows, iron-barred on the basement story, and by its portal arch through which we have glimpses sometimes of a filthy courtyard, or perhaps an ornamented one, with trees, a colonnade, a fountain and a statue in the vista; though, more likely, it resembles the entrance to a stable, and may perhaps really be one. The lower regions of palaces come to strange uses in Rome; a cobbler or a tinker perhaps exercises his craft under the archway; a work-shop may be established in one of the apartments; and in the basement story of the Barberini palace a regiment of French cavalry seems to be quartered, while, no doubt, princes have magnificent domiciles above. Be it palace or whatever other dwelling, the inmates climb through stink and nastiness to the comforts, such as they may be, that await them above. I vainly try to get down upon paper the dreariness and ugliness, nastiness, discomfort, shabbiness, un-home-likeness, of a Roman street. . . . If an antiquary were to accompany me through the streets, no doubt he would point out ten thousand interesting objects, that I now pass over unnoticed, so general is the surface of plaster, white-wash, and shabbiness; but often I can see fragments of antiquity built into the walls, or perhaps a church that was a Roman temple, or a basement of ponderous stones, that were laid above twenty centuries ago. It is strange how our ideas of what antiquity is become altered here in Rome; the sixteenth century, in which many of the churches and fountains seem to have been built or re-edified, seems close at hand, even like our own days; a thousand years, or the days of the latter empire, is but a modern date; and scarcely interests us; and nothing is really venerable of a more recent epoch than the reign of Constantine.¹⁰ The Egyptian obelisks that stand in several of the piazzas, put even the Augustan or Republican antiquities to shame.¹¹ I remember reading in a New York newspaper an account of one of the public buildings of that city—a relic of the “olden time,” the writer called it; for it was erected in 1825! I am glad I saw the castles and Gothic churches and cathedrals of England before visiting Rome; or I never could have felt that delightful reverence for their gray and ivy-hung antiquity, after seeing these so much

older remains. But indeed, old things are not so beautiful in this dry climate and clear atmosphere as in moist England. The marble, it is true, grows black or brown, and shows its age in that manner; but it remains hard and sharp, and does not become again a part of Nature, as stone walls do in England; some dry and dusty grass sprouts along the ledges of a ruin, as in the Coliseum, but there is no green mantle of ivy kindly spreading itself over the gray dilapidation. Whatever beauty there may be in a Roman ruin is the remnant of what was beautiful originally, whereas an English ruin is more beautiful, often, in its decay than ever it was in its primal strength. If we ever build such noble structures as these Roman ones, we can have just as good ruins after two thousand years, in the United States; but we never can have a Furness Abbey or a Kenilworth. . . .¹²

I have not yet fairly begun the sight-seeing of Rome; the weather being so cold that I shiver at the thought of each new thing. I have been three or four times to Saint Peter's and always with pleasure, because there is such a delightful, summer-like warmth the moment we pass beneath the heavy, padded, leather curtains, that protect the entrances. It is almost impossible not to believe that this genial temperature is the result of furnace heat; but really it is the warmth of last summer, which will be included within those massive walls, and in that vast immensity of space, till, six months hence, this winter's chill will just have made its way thither. . . . Saint Peter's offers itself as a place of worship and religious comfort for the whole human race; and in one of the transepts I found a range of confessionals, where the penitent might tell his sins in the tongue of his own country, whether French, German, Polish, English, or what not. If I had had a murder on my conscience or any other great sin, I think I should have been inclined to kneel down there, and pour it into the safe secrecy of the confessional.¹³ What an institution that is! Man needs it so, that it seems as if God must have ordained it. This popish religion certainly does apply itself most closely and comfortably to human occasions; and I cannot but think that a great many people find their spiritual advantage in it, who would find none at all in our formless mode of worship. You cannot think it is all a farce when you see peasant, citizen, and soldier, coming into the church, each on his own hook, and kneeling for moments or for hours, directing his silent devotions to some particular shrine; too humble to approach his God directly, and therefore asking the mediation of some saint, who stands beside his infinite presence. In the church of San Paulo yesterday I saw a young man standing before a shrine, writhing and wringing his hands in an agony of grief and contrition. If he had been a protestant, I think he would have shut all that up within his heart, and let it burn there till it seared him. . . .

My wife and I went yesterday to the Pantheon,¹⁴ which stands in the central intricacy and nastiness of Roman lanes. Its portico, with ranges of vast granite columns, is greatly admired by architects, and no doubt justly. Its interior is most noble and beautiful, yet with a strange, half-heathenish aspect, which seems to be caused chiefly by a great circular opening in the center of its dome, through which comes all the light that illuminates the edifice. It is open to the sky, and, when we were there, the pavement beneath was plashy with the rain that had fallen through. All round the great circle of the Pantheon there are arches and stately altars, formerly dedicated to heathen gods and now to Saints, who step with ludicrous composure into every vacant niche in Rome, just as if it had been made for them. Up as far as the commencement of the curve of the dome, the walls are encrusted with precious marbles, which, together with the marble pillar and pilasters, must once have been most gorgeous; as also the mosaic pavement of colored marble and porphyry. I know not whether all this marble has laid over the walls, since the Pantheon became a Christian church, or whether it has remained from old Roman times, but I think the latter can hardly have been the case. The Pantheon has been Christianized more than twelve centuries; so that there has been time for its Christian decorations to grow dingy and weather-worn, especially as the waters have had free access through the circular skylight. The interior of the dome, which is now bare and stony, was formerly overlaid with bronze. The tomb of Raphael is in this church, or temple, but we did not see it, and must go again for that purpose. I think the Pantheon has impressed me more than anything else I have seen in Rome; the more for its dust and dinginess, and for that one circumstance of its gray roof open to the sky, so unlike the snugness of all our modern civilization. I must not forget, as characteristic of the spirit of modern Rome, that there are pasteboard statues, as large as life, aloft beneath the dome; so well done it is true, that they deceived me at first, in the dim cloudy light that came through the circular opening, on that rainy day. Also there are tin-hearts and other adornments of that kind hanging at the shrines of the Saints. I do not believe that the old heathen deities were ever cheated with similar sham jewellery. People were kneeling in devotion at several of the shrines. When I first came to Rome I felt embarrassed, and unwilling to pass with my heresy and unbelief, between a devotee and his saint; for they often shoot their prayers at a shrine almost quite across the church. But there seems to be no violation of etiquette in so doing. A woman begged of us in the Pantheon, and accused my wife of impiety, for not giving her an alms. Beggars are extremely numerous in Rome; and people of very decent appearance are often unexpectedly converted into beggars, as you approach them, but, in general, they take a "No" at once.

Rome, February 13th, Saturday.

Day before yesterday, we took a carriage—Mamma, Julian, Rosebud and I—and went to see the Carnival by driving up and down the Corso. Una and Miss Shepard were spectators from a window with Miss Mitchell.¹⁵ It was as ugly a day, as respects weather, as has befallen us since we came to Rome, cloudy, with an indecisive little wet, which finally settled into a rain; and people say that such is generally the weather in Carnival-time. There is very little to be said about the spectacle. Sunshine would have improved it, no doubt; but a person must have very broad sunshine within himself to be very joyous on such shallow provocation. The street, at all events, would have looked rather brilliant under a sunny sky, the balconies being hung with bright-colored draperies, which were also flung out of some of the windows. The balconies were mostly filled with ladies; some of whom sat nearly on a level with the passers by, in full dress, with deep colored Italian faces, ready to encounter whatever the chances of the Carnival might bring them. The upper balconies (and there was sometimes a third, if not a fourth tier) were occupied, I think, chiefly by foreigners, English or Americans; nor, I fancy, do the Roman ladies of rank and respectability generally display themselves at this time. At least, the festival seems to me to have sunk from the upper classes to the lower ones; and probably it is only kept alive by tradition, and the curiosity which impels foreigners to join in it.

. . . I never in my life knew a shallower joke than the Carnival at Rome; such a rainy and muddy day, too! Greenwich Fair (at the very last of which I assisted) was worth a hundred of it. . . . On comparing notes with Julian and Rosebud—indeed, with Una too—I find that they all enjoyed the Carnival much more than I did. Only the young ought to write descriptions of such scenes. My cold criticism chills the life out of it.

Rome, February 14th, Sunday.

Friday was a sunny day, the first that we had had for some time; and my wife and I went forth to see sights, as well as to make some calls that had long been due. . . .

We called into the Barberini Palace, where William Story has established himself and family for the next seven years, on the third piano, in apartments that afford a very fine look-out over Rome, and (which is more important) have the sun in them through most of the day. . . .¹⁶ [We] found him at work on a sitting statue of Cleopatra.¹⁷ William Story looks thin and worn, already a little bald and a very little gray, but quite as vivid—in

a graver way—as when I saw him last, a young man. He can yet, methinks, be scarcely thirty-seven.¹⁸ His perplexing variety of talents and accomplishments—a poet, a prose-writer, a lawyer, a painter, a sculptor—seems now to be concentrating itself into this latter vocation; and I cannot see why he should not achieve something very good. He has a beautiful statue, already finished, of Goethe's Margaret pulling a flower to pieces to discover whether Faust loves her; a very type of virginity and simplicity.¹⁹ The statue of Cleopatra, now only fourteen days advanced in the clay, is as wide a step from the little maidenly Margaret as any artist could take; it is a grand subject, and he appears to be conceiving it with depth and power, and working it out with adequate skill. He certainly is sensible of something deeper in his art than merely to make beautiful nudities and baptize them by classic names.

Rome, February 15th, Monday.

To-day has been very rainy. I went out in the forenoon, and took a sitting at Miss Lander's studio, she having done me the honor to request me to sit for my bust.²⁰ Her rooms are those formerly occupied by Canova;²¹ the one where she models being large, high, and dreary, from the want of carpet, furniture, or anything but clay and plaster. A sculptor's studio has not the picturesque charm of a painter's, where there is color, warmth, cheerfulness, and where the artist continually turns towards you the glow of some picture which is resting against the wall. Miss Lander is from my own native town, and appears to have genuine talent, and spirit and independence enough to give it fair play. She is living here quite alone, in delightful freedom, and has sculptured two or three things that may probably make her favorably known. "Virginia Dare" is certainly very beautiful.²² During the sitting, I talked a good deal with Miss Lander, being a little inclined to take a similar freedom with her moral likeness to that which she was taking with my physical one. There are very available points about her and her position; a young woman, living in almost perfect independence, thousands of miles from her New England home, going fearlessly about these mysterious streets, by night as well as by day, with no household ties, no rule or law but that within her; yet acting with quietness and simplicity, and keeping, after all, within a homely line of right. In her studio, she wears a sort of pea-jacket, buttoned across her breast, and a little foraging-cap, just covering the top of her head. She asked me not to look at the bust at the close of the sitting, and, of course, I obeyed; though I have a vague idea of a heavy-browed physiognomy, something like what I have seen in the glass,

but looking strangely in that guise of clay. Miss Lander has become strongly attached to Rome, and says that, when she dreams of home, it is merely of paying a short visit, and coming back before her trunk is unpacked. This is a strange fascination that Rome exercises upon artists; there is clay elsewhere, and marble enough, and heads to model; and ideas may be made sensible objects at home as well as here. I think it is the peculiar mode of life, and its freedom from the enthrallments of society, more than the artistic advantages which Rome offers; and then, no doubt, though the artists care little about one another's works, yet they keep one another warm by the presence of so many of them.

Rome, February 17th, Wednesday.

Yesterday morning was perfectly sunny; and my wife and I went betimes to see churches, going first to the Capuchin church (I forget its individual title) close by the Piazza Barbarini.²³ It is now, I believe, the church of a convent of Capuchin monks. On entering, we found it not very large, but of good architecture, with a vaulted roof over the nave, and rows of chapels on either side, instead of aisles. The pavement seemed old and worn, and was much patched with brick tiles as well as with mediaeval tombstones; and we were startled to see—right in the middle of the pavement, and in the centre of the nave, on a bier, with three candles burning on each side, and one at the head and another at the feet—a dead monk! He was dressed, as when alive, in the brown woollen frock of his order, with the hood drawn over his head, but so as to leave his face uncovered, as well as part of his gray beard. His beads and cross hung by his side; his hands were folded over his breast; his feet were bare both of shoes and stockings, and seemed to be tied together with a black ribbon. He certainly was a dead monk, and had once been alive; though, at first, I was in some doubt whether he might not be a wax figure, so strange was it to see him displayed in such guise. Meanwhile, his brother monks were singing or chanting some deep, lugubrious strain—a *de profundis*, I believe—in the vaults under the church, where the dead man was soon to be laid, in earth brought long ago from Jerusalem, but which has been the bed, over and over again, of deceased members of the fraternity. For it is the custom of this convent, when one of its monks dies, to take the bones that have been longest buried out of the oldest grave, and remove them to a common ossuary, putting the newly deceased into the vacant bed. It is rather hard upon these poor fathers, that they cannot call even their graves their own. We walked round the church, which contains pictures and frescoes by Guido and Domenichino;²⁴ but pictures in the

side-chapels of churches are quite lost, in nine cases out of ten, by the bad light, or the no light, in which they must be seen. Much the most interesting object to me was still the dead monk, with his bare feet, those old, worn feet, that had walked to and fro over the hard pavements of Rome, and along the dreary corridors of his convent, for so many years, and now stuck forth so stiffly from beneath his frock. He had been a somewhat short and punchy personage, this poor monk, and perhaps had died of apoplexy; for his face did not look pale, but had almost, or quite, the natural flush of life, though the feet were of such a yellow, waxy hue. His gray eyebrows were very thick, and my wife had a fancy that she saw him contort them. . . . By and by, as we moved round from chapel to chapel, still with our eyes turning often to the dead monk, we saw some blood oozing from his nostrils! Perhaps his murderer—or his doctor—had just then come into the church and drawn nigh the bier; at all events, it was about as queer a thing as ever I witnessed. We soon came away and left him lying there; a sight which I shall never forget.



Hawthorne visits the sculpture gallery in the Vatican and the Roman Forum.



Rome, February 19th. Friday.

. . . After wandering to and fro, a good while, I at last found myself in a long, long gallery, on each side of which were innumerable inscriptions, in Greek and Latin, on slabs of marble, built into the walls; and classic altars and tablets were ranged along the gallery, from end to end. At the extremity was a closed iron-grating, from which I was turning back; but a French gentleman accosted me, with the information that the Custode would admit us, if I chose, and would accompany us through the sculpture department of the Vatican. I acceded, and thus took my first view of those innumerable art-treasures, passing from one object to another, at any easy pace, pausing hardly a moment anywhere, and dismissing even the Apollo, and the Laocoon, and the torso of Hercules, in the space of half a dozen breaths.²⁵ I was well enough content to do so, in order to get a general idea of the contents of the galleries, before settling down upon individual objects. Most of these world-famous sculptures presented themselves to my eye with a kind of familiarity, through the copies and casts which I had seen; but I found the originals were different than I anticipated. The

Apollo, for instance, has a face which I have never seen in any cast or copy. I must confess, however—taking such transient glimpses as I did—I was more impressed with the extent of the Vatican, and the beautiful order in which it is kept, and its great, sunny, open courts, with fountains, grass, and shrubs, and the views of Rome and the Campagna from its windows—more impressed with these, and with certain vastly capacious vases, and two great sarcophagi, than with the statuary. Thus we went round the whole, and were dismissed through the grated barrier into the gallery of inscriptions again; and after a little more wandering, I found my way out of the palace. . . .

Yesterday, I went out betimes, and strayed through some portion of ancient Rome,—to the column of Trajan, to the forum, thence along the Tarpeian way, after which I lost myself among the intricacies of the streets, and finally came out at the bridge of St. Angelo. The first observation which a stranger is led to make, in the neighborhood of Roman ruins, is, that the inhabitants seem to be strangely addicted to the washing of clothes; for all the precincts of Trajan's forum, and of the Roman forum, and wherever else an iron railing affords opportunity to hang them, were whitened with sheets and other linen and cotton, drying in the sun. It must be that washerwomen burrow among the old temples. The second observation is not quite so favorable to the cleanly character of the modern Romans; indeed, it is so very unfavorable that I hardly know how to express it. But the fact is, that, through the forum, and along the base of any ancient wall, and anywhere else, out of the commonest foot-track and road-way, you must look well to your steps, or they will be defiled with unutterable nastiness. If you tread beneath the triumphal arch of Titus or Constantine, you had better look downward than upward, whatever be the merit of the sculptures aloft; and, in my opinion, the Romans of today consider these ancient relics as existing for no other purpose than that they may turn aside to them in their necessity. They appear to have no other places of need, and to need them ten times as much as other people.²⁶ After awhile, the visitant finds himself getting accustomed to this horrible state of things, and the associations of moral sublimity and beauty seem to throw a veil over the physical meanesses to which I allude. Perhaps there is something in the mind of the people of these countries that enables them quite to dis sever small ugliness from great sublimity and beauty. They spit on the glorious pavement of St Peter's, and wherever else they like; they place mean-looking wooden confessionals beneath its sublime arches, and ornament them with cheap little colored prints of the crucifixion; they hang tin hearts and other tinsel and trumpery at the gorgeous shrines of the saints, in chapels that are encrusted with gems, or marbles almost as precious; they put pasteboard statues of Saints beneath the dome of the Pantheon; in short they let the sublime and

the ridiculous come close together, and are not in the least troubled by the proximity. It must be that their sense of the beautiful is stronger than in the Anglo Saxon mind, and that it observes only what is fit to gratify it.

Rome, February 20th, Saturday.

This morning, after breakfast, I walked across the city, making a pretty straight course to the Pantheon, and thence to the Bridge of St Angelo, and to Saint Peter's. It had been my purpose to go to the Fontana Paolina,²⁷ but finding that the distance was too great, and being weighed down with a Roman lassitude, I concluded to go into St Peter's. Here I looked at Michael Angelo's *Pieta*; a representation of the dead Christ, naked in his mother's lap.²⁸ Then I strolled round the great church, and find that it continues to grow upon me both in magnitude and beauty, by comparison with the many interiors of sacred edifices, which I have lately seen. At times, a single, casual, momentary glimpse of its magnificence gleams upon my soul, as it were, when I happen to glance at arch opening beyond arch, and I am surprised into admiration when I think least of it. I have experienced that a landscape, and the sky, unfold their deepest beauty in a similar way, not when they are gazed at of set purpose, but when the spectator looks suddenly through a peep-hole among a crowd of other thoughts. Passing near the confessionals for foreigners, to day, I saw a Spaniard, who had just come out of the one devoted to his native tongue, taking leave of his confessor, with an affectionate reverence which—as well as the benign dignity of the good Father—it was good to behold. The relation between the confessor and his penitent might, and ought to be, one of great tenderness and beauty; and the more I see of the Catholic church, the more I wonder at the exuberance with which it responds to the demands of human infirmity. If its ministers were themselves a little more than human, they might fulfill their office, and supply all that men need.

I returned home early, in order to go with my wife to the Barberini Palace, at two o'clock. . . . The entrance to the picture gallery is by the door on the right hand, affording us a sight of a beautiful spiral staircase, which goes circling upward from the very basement to the very summit of the palace with a perfectly easy ascent, yet confining its sweep within a moderate compass. We looked up through the interior of the spiral, as through a tube, from the bottom to the top. The pictures are contained in three contiguous rooms of the lower story, and are few in number, comprising barely half-a-dozen which I should care to see again, though doubtless all have

value in their way. One that attracted our attention was a picture of Christ disputing with the Doctors, by Albert Durer, in which was represented the ugliest, most evil-minded, stubborn, pragmatical, and contentious old Jew, that ever lived under the law of Moses; and he and the child Jesus were arguing not only with their tongues, but making hieroglyphics, as it were, by the motion of their hands and fingers.²⁹ It is a very queer, as well as a very remarkable picture. But we passed hastily by this, and almost all the other pictures, being eager to see the two which chiefly make the collection famous.—These are Raphael's Fornarini, and Guido's portrait of Beatrice Cenci.³⁰ These we found in the last of the three rooms; and as regards Beatrice Cenci, I might as well not try to say anything, for its spell is indefinable, and the painter has wrought it in a way more like magic than anything else I have known. It is a very youthful, girlish, perfectly beautiful face, with white drapery all around it, and quite enveloping the form. One or two locks of auburn hair stray out. The eyes are large and brown, and meet those of the spectator; and there is, I think, a little red about the eyelids, but it is very slightly indicated. The whole face is perfectly quiet; no distortion nor disturbance of any single feature; nor can I see why it should not be cheerful, nor why an imperceptible touch of the painter's brush should not suffice to brighten it into joyousness. Yet it is the very saddest picture that ever was painted, or conceived; there is an unfathomable depth and sorrow in the eyes; the sense of it comes to you by a sort of intuition. It is a sorrow that removes her out of the sphere of humanity; and yet she looks so innocent, that you feel as if it were only this sorrow, with its weight and darkness, that keeps her down upon the earth and brings within our reach at all. She is like a fallen angel, fallen, without sin. It is infinitely pitiful to meet her eyes, and feel that nothing can be done to help or comfort her; not that she appeals to you for help and comfort, but is more conscious than we can be that there is none in reserve for her. It is the most profoundly wrought picture in the world; no artist did it, or could do it again. Guido may have held the brush, but he painted better than he knew. I wish, however, it were possible for some spectator, of deep sensibility, to see the picture without knowing anything of its subject or history; for no doubt we bring all our knowledge of the Cenci tragedy to the interpretation of the picture.

Close beside Beatrice Cenci hangs the Fornarina, a brunette, with a deep, bright glow in her face, naked below the navel and well pleased to be so for the sake of your admiration—ready for any extent of nudity, for love or money,—the brazen trollope that she is. Raphael must have been capable of great sensuality, to have painted this picture of his own accord and lovingly.

Rome, February 21st, Sunday.

I went along the Via di Ripetta, and through other streets, stepping into two or three churches, one of which was the Pantheon. When I last saw it, the sun was coming through the circular opening in its dome; now the sunshine fell side-long through it, and threw a large span of light on the hollow curve; and it seemed well to have such a skyward door for good spirits to float down through, and for prayers to ascend. It is truly a noble edifice; and it is curious to see how well the Heathen temple has adapted itself to Christian and Catholic purposes, supplying more shrines and chapels than any other form of building possibly could. There are, I think, seven deep, pillared recesses around the circumference, each of which becomes a sufficiently spacious chapel; and, alternately with these chapels, there is a marble structure, like the architecture of a doorway, beneath which is the shrine of a saint; so that the whole circle of the Pantheon is filled up with the seven chapels and seven shrines. A number of persons were sitting or kneeling around; others came in while I was there, dipping their fingers in the holy water, and bending their knee as they passed the shrines and chapels, until they reached the one which, apparently, they had selected as the particular altar for their devotions. Everybody seemed so devout, and in a frame of mind so suited to the day and place, that it really made me feel a little awkward not to be able to kneel down along with them. Unlike the worshippers in our own churches, each individual here seems to do his own individual acts of worship, and I cannot but think it better so than to make a joint-stock concern of it, as we do. It is my opinion that a great deal of devout and reverential feeling is kept alive in people's hearts by the Catholic mode of worship. . . .

I reached home at about twelve, and, at one o'clock, set out again with my wife towards St Peter's, where we meant to stay till after vespers. . . . I suppose there was hardly a man or woman who had not heard mass, confessed, and said their prayers; a thing which—the prayer, I mean—it would be absurd to predicate of London, or New York, or any Protestant city. In however adulterated a guise, the Catholics do get a draught of devotion to slake the thirst of their souls, and methinks it must needs do them good, even if not quite so pure as if it came from better cisterns, or from the original fountain-head.

Arriving at St Peter's shortly after two, we walked round the whole church, looking at all the pictures and most of the monuments. . . . We passed quite round the whole circumference of the church, and paused longest before Guido's picture (its mosaic copy, rather) of the archangel Michael overcoming Lucifer.³¹ This is surely one of the most beautiful

things in the world; one of the human conceptions that are imbued most largely with the celestial. These old painters were wonderful men, and have done great things for the Church of Rome—great things, we may say, for the church of Christ and the cause of good; for the moral of this picture (the immortal youth and loveliness of virtue; and its irresistible might against evil) is as much directed to a Puritan as to a Catholic.

Rome, February 23rd, Tuesday.

Yesterday at noon, mamma and I set out for the Capitol. . . .³² [W]e went into the Museum, in an edifice on our left, entering the Piazza, and here in the vestibule we found various old statues and relics of which there remains hardly the slightest trace in my memory. Ascending the stairs, we passed through a long gallery, of the contents of which I can make no better record, and turning to our left, examined somewhat more carefully a suite of rooms running parallel with the gallery. The first of these contained busts of the Caesars and their kindred, from the epoch of the mightiest Julius downward, eighty-three, I believe, in all.³³ I had seen a bust of Julius Caesar, in the British Museum, and was surprised at its thin and withered aspect; but this head is of a very ugly old man indeed, wrinkled, puckered, shrunken, lacking breadth and substance, care-worn, grim, as if he had fought hard with life, and had suffered in the conflict; a man of schemes, and of eager effort to bring his schemes to pass. His profile is by no means good, advancing from the top of his forehead to the tip of his nose, and retreating, at about the same angle, from the latter point to the bottom of his chin, which seems to be thrust forcibly down into his shrunken neck. Not that he pokes his head forward, for it is particularly erect. The head of Augustus is very beautiful, and appears to be that of a meditative, philosophic man, saddened with the sense that it is not very much worth while to be at the summit of human greatness, after all. It is a sorrowful thing to trace the decay of civilization through this series of busts, and to observe how the artistic skill, so exquisite at first, went on declining through the dreary dynasty of the Caesars, till at length the master of the world could not get his head carved in better style than the figure-head of a ship.

In the next room, there were better statues than we had yet seen, but neither do I retain any vivid recollection of these, nor yet of those in the succeeding apartment; but, in the last room of the range, we found the Dying Gladiator, of which I had already caught a glimpse, in passing by the open door.³⁴ It had made all the other treasures of the gallery tedious, in my eagerness to come to that. I was not in a very fit state to see it, for that

most miserable sense of satiety—the mind’s repletion when too much rich or delicate food has been forced upon it—had got possession of me, though I had really done little more than glance at objects. Still, I had life enough left to admire this statue, and was more impressed by it than by anything of marble that I ever saw. I do not believe that so much pathos is wrought into any other block of stone. Like all other works of the highest excellence, however, it makes great demands upon the spectator; he must make a generous gift of his sympathies to the sculptor, and help out his skill with all his heart, or else he will see little more than a skillfully wrought surface. It suggests far more than it shows. I looked long at this statue, and little at anything else, though, among other famous works, a statue of Antinous was in the same room.³⁵

I was glad when we left the Museum, which, by the by, was awfully chill, as if the multitude of statues radiated cold out of their marble substance. We might have gone to see the pictures in the Palace of the Conservators;³⁶ and my wife (whose receptivity is unlimited, and forever fresh) would willingly have done so; but I objected, and so we went towards the Forum.

Rome, February 25th, Thursday.

We went, this forenoon, to the Palazzo Borghese, which is situated on a street that runs at right angles with the Corso, and very near the latter. . . .³⁷

As to the pictures, I do not propose to say much about them. The collection is one of the most celebrated in the world, and contains between eight and nine hundred pictures, many of which are esteemed master-pieces. I think I was not in a frame for admiration, to-day, nor could achieve that free and generous surrender of myself, which I have already said is essential to the proper estimate of anything excellent. Besides, how is it possible to give one’s soul, or any considerable part of it, to a single picture, seen for the first time, among a thousand others, all of which set forth their own claims in an equally good light! Furthermore, there is an external weariness and sense of thousand-fold sameness to be overcome, before we can begin to enjoy a gallery of the old Italian masters. There is such a terrible lack of variety in their subjects. . . .³⁸ These old painters seldom treated their subjects in a homely way; they were above life, or on one side of it; and if they ever touched the heart, it was by the help of the religious sentiment, which we Protestants can not call up, to eke out our profane admiration. I can hardly think they really had the sentiments themselves; for evidently they were just as ready, or more so, to paint a lewd and naked woman, and call her Venus, as to imagine whatever is purest in womanhood, as the mother

of their Saviour. . . Raphael, and other great painters, have done wonders with sacred subjects; but the greatest wonder is, how they could ever paint them at all, and always they paint from the outside, and not from within.

I was glad, in the very last of the twelve rooms, to come upon some Dutch and Flemish pictures, very few, but very welcome; Rubens, Rembrandt, Vandyke, Paul Potter, Teniers, and other—men of flesh and blood, with warm fists, and human hearts.³⁹ As compared with them, these mighty Italian masters seem men of polished steel, not human, nor addressing themselves so much to human sympathies as to a formed intellectual taste.

Rome, March 10th, Wednesday.

On Monday, my wife, Una, Julian, and I, went to the Sculpture Gallery of the Vatican, and saw as much of the sculpture as we could in the three hours during which the public are admissible.⁴⁰ There were a few things which I really enjoyed, and a few moments during which I really seemed to see them; but it is in vain to attempt giving the impression produced by masterpieces of art, and most in vain when we see them best. They are a language in themselves; and if they could be expressed any way except by themselves, there would have been no need of expressing those particular ideas and sentiments by sculpture. I saw the Apollo Belvidere as something ethereal and godlike; only for a flitting moment, however, and as if he had alighted from heaven, or shone suddenly out of the sunlight, and then had withdrawn himself again. I felt the Laocoon, too, very powerfully, though very quietly; an immortal agony, with a strange calmness diffused through it, so that it resembles the vast rage of the sea, calm on account of its immensity, or the tumult of Niagara, which does not seem to be tumult because it keeps pouring on, forever and ever. I have not had so good a day as this (among works of art) since we came to Rome; and I impute it partly to the magnificence of the arrangements of the Vatican—its long vistas, and beautiful courts, and the aspect of immortality which marble statues acquire by being kept free from dust. Julian was very hungry, and seeing a vast porphyry vase, forty-four feet in circumference, he wished that he had it full of soup.

Rome, March 23rd, Tuesday.

Yesterday, mamma and I went to the sculpture-gallery of the Vatican. I think I enjoy these noble galleries, and their contents, and beautiful arrangement, better than anything else in the way of art; and, sometimes, I

seem to have a deep feeling of something wonderful in what I look at. The Laocoon, on this visit, impressed me not less than before; there was such a type of human beings struggling with inextricable trouble, and entangled in a complication which they can never free themselves from by their own efforts, and out of which Heaven will not help them. . . .⁴¹ I was interested in looking at the busts of the Triumvirs, Antony, Augustus, and Lepidus. The two first are men of intellect, evidently, though they do not recommend themselves to one's affections by their physiognomy; but Lepidus has the strangest common-place countenance that can be imagined, small-featured, weak, such a face as you meet anywhere in a man of no mark, but are amazed to find in one of the three foremost men of the world. I suppose that it is these weak and shallow men, when chance raises them above their proper sphere, that commit enormous crimes without any such restraint as stronger men would feel, and without any retribution in the depths of their conscience. These old Roman busts, of which there are so many in the Vatican, have often a most life like aspect, a striking individuality. One recognizes them as faithful portraits, just as certainly as if the living originals were standing beside them. The arrangement of the hair and beard, too, in many cases, is just what we see now; the fashions of two thousand years ago having come round again.

April 3rd, Saturday. Rome.

A few days ago, my wife and I visited the studio of Mr. Mozier, an American, who seems to have a good deal of vogue as a sculptor. . . .⁴²

He called to see us last night, and talked for about two hours in a very amusing and interesting style; his topics being taken from his own experience, and shrewdly treated. He spoke much of Greenough, whom he described as an excellent critic of art, but possessed of not the slightest inventive genius. . . .⁴³ From Greenough, Mr. Mozier passed to Margaret Fuller,⁴⁴ whom he knew well, she having been an inmate of his during a part of her residence in Italy. His developements about poor Margaret were very curious. He says that Ossoli's family, though technically noble, is really of no rank whatever; the elder brother, with the title of Marquis, being at this very time a working brick-layer, and the sisters walking the streets without bonnets—that is, being in the station of peasant-girls, or the female populace of Rome. Ossoli himself, to the best of his belief, was Margaret's servant, or had something to do with the care of her apartments. He was the handsomest man whom Mr. Mozier ever saw, but entirely ignorant even of his own language, scarcely able to read at all, destitute of manners; in short,

half an idiot, and without any pretensions to be a gentleman. At Margaret's request, Mr Mozier had taken him into his studio, with a view to ascertain whether he was capable of instruction in sculpture; but, after four months' labor, Ossoli produced a thing intended to be a copy of a human foot; but the "big toe" was on the wrong side. He could not possibly have had the least appreciation of Margaret; and the wonder is, what attraction she found in this boor, this hymen without the intellectual spark—she that had always shown such a cruel and bitter scorn of intellectual deficiency. As from her towards him, I do not understand what feeling there could have been, except it were purely sensual; as from him towards her, there could hardly have been even this, for she had not the charm of womanhood. But she was a woman anxious to try all things, and fill up her experience in all directions; she had a strong and coarse nature, too, which she had done her utmost to refine, with infinite pains, but which of course could only be superficially changed. The solution of the riddle lies in this direction; nor does one's conscience revolt at the idea of thus solving it; for—at least, this is my own experience—Margaret has not left, in the hearts and minds of those who knew her, any deep witness for her integrity and purity. She was a great humbug; of course with much talent, and much moral reality, or else she could not have been so great a humbug. But she had stuck herself full of borrowed qualities which she chose to provide herself with, but which had no root in her.

Mr. Mozier added, that Margaret had quite lost all power of literary production, before she left Rome, though occasionally the charm and power of her conversation would re-appear. To his certain knowledge, she had no important manuscripts with her when she sailed, (she having shown him all she had, with a view to his procuring their publication in America;) and the History of the Roman Revolution, about which there was so much lamentation, in the belief that it had been lost with her, never had existence. Thus there appears to have been a total collapse in poor Margaret, morally and intellectually; and tragic as her catastrophe was, Providence was, after all, kind in putting her, and her clownish husband, and their child, on board that fated ship. There never was such a tragedy as her whole story; the sadder and sterner, because so much of the ridiculous was mixed up with it, and because she could bear anything better than to be ridiculous. It was such an awful joke, that she should have resolved—in all sincerity, no doubt—to make herself the greatest, wisest, best woman of the age; and, to that end, she set to work on her strong, heavy, unpliant, and, in many respects, defective and evil nature, and adorned it with a mosaic of admirable qualities, such as she chose to possess; putting in here a splendid talent, and there a moral excellence, and polishing each separate piece, and

the whole together, till it seemed to shine afar and dazzle all who saw it. She took credit to herself for having been her own Redeemer, if not her own Creator; and, indeed, she was far more a work of art than any of Mr. Mozier's statues. But she was not working on an inanimate substance, like marble or clay; there was something within her that she could not possibly come at, to re-create and refine it; and, by and by, this rude old potency bestirred itself, and undid all her labor in the twinkling of an eye. On the whole, I do not know but I like her the better for it;—the better, because she proved herself a very woman, after all, and fell as the weakest of her sisters might.

To-day, my wife, Rosebud, and I, went to see Miss Hosmer; and as her studio seems to be mixed up with Gibson's, we had an opportunity of glancing at some of his beautiful works.⁴⁵ We saw a Venus and a Cupid, both of them tinted, and, side by side with them, other statues identical with these, except that the marble was left in its pure whiteness. The tint of the Venus seemed to be a very delicate, almost imperceptible, shade of yellow, I think, or buff; that of the Cupid was a more decided yellow; and the eyes and hair of both, and especially the Cupid, were colored so as to indicate life rather than imitate it. The apple in Venus's hand was brightly gilt. I must say, there was something fascinating and delectable in the warm, yet delicate tint of the beautiful nude Venus, although I should have preferred to dispense with the colouring of the eyes and hair; nor am I at all certain that I should not, in the end, like the snowy whiteness better for the whole statue. Indeed, I am almost sure I should; for this lascivious warmth of hue quite demoralizes the chastity of the marble, and makes one feel ashamed to look at the naked limbs in the company of women. There is not the least question about the eyes and hair; their effect is shocking, in proportion to the depth of tint.⁴⁶

Rome, April 15th, Thursday.

Yesterday, I went with Julian to the Forum, and descended into the excavations at the base of the Capitol, and on the site of the Basilica of Julia.⁴⁷ The essential elements of old Rome are there; columns, single, or in groupes of two or three, still erect, but battered and bruised, at some forgotten time, with infinite pains and labor; fragments of other columns lying prostrate, together with rich capitals and friezes; the bust of a colossal female statue, showing the bosom and upper part of the arms, but headless; a long, winding space of pavement, forming part of the ancient ascent to the Capitol, still as firm and solid as ever; the foundation of the Capitol itself,

wonderfully massive, built of immense square blocks of stone, doubtless nearly three thousand years old, and durable for whatever may be the lifetime of the world. . . . The level of these excavations is about fifteen feet, I should judge, below the present level along which the street passes through the forum, and only a very small part of this alien surface has been removed, though there can be no doubt that it hides immense treasures of art and monuments of history. Yet these remains do not make that impression of antiquity upon me, which Gothic ruins do. Perhaps it is because they belong to quite another system of society and epoch of time; and in view of them, we forget all that has intervened betwixt them and us, being morally unlike, and disconnected with them, and not belonging to the same train of thought; so that we look across a gulf to these Roman times, and do not realize how wide the gulf is. Yet in that intervening valley, lie Christianity, the dark ages, the feudal system, chivalry and Romance, and a deeper life of the human race than Rome brought to the verge of the gulf.⁴⁸

Rome, April 18th 1858, Sunday.

Yesterday, at noon, the whole family of us set out on a visit to the Villa Borghese and its grounds, the entrance to which is just outside of the Porta del Popolo. . . .⁴⁹

Saturday being, I believe, the only day of the week on which visitors are admitted to the Casino, there were many parties in carriages, artists on foot, gentlemen on horseback, and miscellaneous people, to all of whom the door was opened by a Custode, on ringing a bell. The whole of the basement floor of the Casino, comprising a suite of beautiful rooms, is filled with statuary. . . . Many of the specimens of Sculpture, displayed in these rooms, are fine, but none of them, I think, possess the highest merit; an Apollo is beautiful; a group of a fighting Amazon, and her enemies trampled under her horse's feet, is very impressive; a Faun, copied from that of Praxiteles, and another, who seems to be dancing, are exceedingly pleasant to look at.⁵⁰ I like these strange, sweet, playful, rustic creatures, almost entirely human as they are, yet linked so prettily, without monstrosity, to the lower tribes by the long, furry ears, or by a modest tail; indicating a strain of honest wildness in them. Their character has never, that I know of, been wrought out in literature; and something very good, funny, and philosophical, as well as poetic, might very likely be educed from them. In my mind, they connect themselves with that ugly, bearded woman, who was lately exhibited in England, and by some supposed to have been engendered betwixt a human mother and an orangoutang; but she was a wretched monster—the faun, a

natural and delightful link betwixt human and brute life, and with something of a divine character intermingled.

Rome, April 22^d, Thursday.

We have been, recently, to the studio of G. L. Brown, the American landscape painter, and were altogether surprised and delighted at his pictures. . . .⁵¹

We have likewise been to Mr. Bartholomew's studio,⁵² where we saw several pretty statues and busts, and among them an Eve, after the fall, with her wreath of fig-leaves lying across her poor nudity; pretty in some points, but with an awful volume of thighs and calves. I do not altogether see the necessity of ever sculpturing another nakedness. Man is no longer a naked animal; his clothes are as natural to him as his skin, and sculptors have no more right to undress him than to flay him. Also, we have seen again William Story's Cleopatra; a work of genuine thought and energy, representing a terribly dangerous woman, quiet enough for the moment, but very likely to spring upon you like a tigress. It is delightful to escape from this universal prettiness, which seems to be the highest conception of the herd of modern sculptors, and which they almost invariably attain. . . .

To-day, my wife and I have been at the Picture and Sculpture Galleries of the Capitol. I rather enjoyed looking at several of the pictures. . . .

We afterwards went into the Sculpture Gallery, where I looked at the faun of Praxitiles, and was sensible of a peculiar charm in it; a sylvan beauty and homeliness, friendly and wild at once. Its lengthened, but not preposterous ears, and the little tail which we infer, behind, have an exquisite effect, and make the spectator smile in his very heart. This race of fauns was the most delightful of all that antiquity imagined. It seems to me that a story, with all sorts of fun and pathos in it, might be contrived on the idea of their species having become intermingled with the human race; a family, with the faun blood in them, having prolonged itself from the classic era till our own days. The tail might have disappeared by dint of constant intermarriages with ordinary mortals; but the pretty, hairy ears should occasionally reappear in members of the family; and the moral instincts and intellectual characteristics of the faun might be most picturesquely brought out, without detriment to the human interest of the story. Fancy this combination in the person of a young lady!



Hawthorne views Raphael's The Transfiguration, considered the greatest painting of the Italian Renaissance.



Rome, April 25th, Sunday.

The Transfiguration is finished with great minuteness and detail; the weeds and blades of grass in the foreground being as distinct as if they were growing in a natural soil. A partly decayed stick of wood, with the bark, is likewise given in close imitation of nature. The reflection of one of the apostles' foot is seen in a pool of water, at the verge of the picture. One or two hands and arms seem almost to project from the canvass; there is great lifelikeness and reality, as well as higher qualities. The face of Jesus, being so high aloft, and so small in the distance, I could not well see, but am impressed with the idea that it looks too much like human flesh and blood to be in keeping with the celestial aspect of the figure, or with the probabilities of the scene, when the divinity and immortality of the Savior beamed from within him through the earthly features that ordinarily shaded him. As regards the composition of the picture, I am not convinced of the propriety of its being in two so distinctly separate parts; the upper portion not thinking of the lower, and the lower portion not being aware of the higher. It symbolizes, however, the spiritual shortsightedness of mankind, that, amid the trouble and grief of the lower picture, not a single individual, either of those who seek help or those who would willingly afford it, lifts his eyes to that region one glimpse of which would set everything right. One or two of the disciples point upward, but without really knowing what abundance of help is to be had there.

Rome, April 30th, Friday.

I went yesterday to the Sculpture Gallery of the Capitol, and looked pretty thoroughly through the busts of the Illustrious Men, and less particularly at those of the Emperors and their relatives. I likewise took particular note of the Faun of Praxitiles; because the idea keeps recurring to me of writing a little Romance about it, and for that reason I shall endeavor to set down a somewhat minutely itemized detail of the statue and its surroundings. The faun is the image of a young man, leaning with one arm upon the trunk or stump of a tree; he has a pipe, or some such instrument of

music, in the hand which rests upon the tree, and the other, I think, hangs carelessly by his side.⁵³ His only garment falls half way down his back, but leaves his whole front, and all the rest of his person, exposed, displaying a very beautiful form, but clad in more flesh, with more full and rounded outlines, and less developement of muscle, than the old sculptors were wont to assign to masculine beauty. The figure is not fat, but neither has it the attribute of slender grace. The face has a character corresponding with that of the form; beautiful and most agreeable features, but rounded, especially about the throat and chin; a nose almost straight, yet very curving inward, a voluptuous mouth, that seems almost (not quite) to smile outright;—in short, the whole person conveys the idea of an amiable and sensual nature, easy, mirthful, apt for jollity, yet not incapable of being touched by pathos. The faun has no principle, nor could comprehend it, yet is true and honest by virtue of his simplicity; very capable, too, of affection. He might be refined through his feelings, so that the coarser, animal part of his nature would be thrown into the back ground, though liable to assert itself at any time. Praxitiles has only expressed this animal nature by one (or rather two) definite signs—the two ears—which go up in a little peak, not likely to be discovered on slight inspection, and, I suppose, are covered with fine, downy fur. A tail is probably hidden under his garment. Only a sculptor of the finest imagination, most delicate taste, and sweetest feeling could have dreamed of representing a Faun in this guise; and if you brood over it long enough, all the pleasantness of sylvan life, and all the genial and happy characteristics of the brute creation, seemed to be mixed in him with humanity—trees, grass, flowers, cattle, deer, and unsophisticated man.

Rome, May 1st, Saturday.

This morning, I wandered, for the thousandth time, through some of the narrow intricacies of Rome, stepping here and there into a church. I do not know the name of the first one; nor had it anything remarkable here; though, till I came to Rome, I was not aware that any such churches existed. . . . Two or three persons are kneeling at separate shrines; there are several wooden confessionals placed against the walls, at one of which kneels a lady, confessing to a priest who sits within; the tapers are lighted at the high altar, and at one of the shrines; an attendant is scrubbing the marble pavement with a broom and water—a process, I should think, seldom practiced in most of the Roman churches. By and by, the lady finishes her confession, kisses the priest's hand, and sits down in one of the chairs which are set about the floor; while the priest (in a black robe, with a short,

loose, white jacket over his shoulders) disappears by a side-door out of the church. I, likewise, finding nothing attractive in the pictures, take my departure. But, really, to good Catholics, it must be a blessed convenience—this facility of finding a cool, quiet, silent, beautiful place of worship in even the hottest and most bustling street, into which they may step, leaving the fret and trouble of the world at the threshold, purifying themselves with a touch of holy water as they enter, and kneeling down to hold communion with some saint, their awful friend; or perhaps confessing all their sins to a priest, laying the whole dark burthen at the foot of the cross, and coming forth in the freshness and elasticity of innocence. It is for Protestants to inquire whether some of these inestimable advantages are not compatible with a purified faith, and do not indeed belong to Christianity, making part of the blessings it was meant to bring. It would be a good time to suggest and institute some of them, now that the American public seems to be stirred by a Revival, hitherto unexampled in extent. Protestantism needs a new Apostle to convert it into something positive.⁵⁴

After leaving this church, I soon saw before me the great, dark, pillars forming the portico of the Pantheon. I went in, and was impressed anew with the large, free space of the interior, wholly unencumbered from side to side of the vast circle; and, above, that great eye continually gazing straight upward to the seventh heaven. The world has nothing else like the Pantheon. It is very grand; so grand, that the paste-board statues, between the rotunda and the commencement of the dome, do not in the least disturb the effect, any more than the tin crowns and hearts and the faded artificial flowers, and all manner of trumpery gewgaws, hanging at some of the shrines. . . .

In the Pantheon, it was pleasant, looking up to the circular opening, to see the clouds flitting across it; sometimes covering it quite over, then permitting a glimpse of sky, then showing all the circle of sunny blue. Then would come the ragged edge of a cloud, brightened throughout with sunshine; all, whether sun or shadow, passing and changing quickly, not that the divine smile was not always the same, but continually variable through the medium of earthly influences. The great slanting beam of sunshine was visible all the way down to the pavement, falling upon motes of dust or a thin smoke of incense, imperceptible in the shadow. Insects were playing to-and-fro in the beam, high up toward the opening. There is a wonderful charm in the naturalness of all this; and it is natural enough to fancy a swarm of cherubs coming down through the opening, and sporting in the broad sunbeam, to gladden the faith of worshippers on the pavement beneath; or angels, bearing prayers upward, or bringing down responses to them, visible with dim brightness as they pass through that pathway of

heaven's radiance, even the many hues of their wings discernible by a trusting eye; though, as they pass into the shadow, they vanish as the motes do. So the sunbeam would represent those rays of divine intelligence which enable us to see wonders, and to know that they are natural things.

Rome, May 16th, Sunday.

My wife and I went yesterday to the Sistine Chapel, it being my first visit. It is a room of noble proportions, lofty and long, though divided in the midst by a screen or partition of white marble, which rises high enough to break the effect of spacious unity. . . .

There can be no doubt that, while these frescoes remained in their perfection, there was nothing else in the world to be compared with the magnificent and solemn beauty of this chapel. Enough of ruined splendour still remains to convince the spectator of all that has departed; but methinks I have seen hardly anything else so forlorn and depressing as it is now; all dusky and dim, even the very lights having passed into shadows, and the shadows into utter blackness; so that it needs a sunshiny day, under this bright Italian sky, to make the designs perceptible at all. As we sat in the chapel, there were clouds flitting across the sky; when the clouds came, the pictures vanished; when the sunshine broke forth, the figures sadly glimmered into something like visibility—the Almighty bestirring himself in Chaos, the noble shape of Adam, the beautiful Eve; and, beneath, where the roof curves, the mighty figures of Sybils and Prophets, looking as if they were necessarily so gigantic, because the thought within them was so massive. In the Last Judgment, the scene of the greater part of the picture lies in the upper sky, the blue of which glows through betwixt the groups of naked figures; and above sits Jesus, not looking in the least like the Savior of the world, but with uplifted arm denouncing eternal misery on those whom he came to save. I fear I am myself among the wicked, for I found myself inevitably taking their part, and asking for at least a little pity, some few regrets, and not such a stern denunciatory spirit on the part of Him who had thought us worth dying for. Around him stand grim Saints, and, far beneath, people are getting up sleepily out of their graves, not well knowing what is about to happen; many of them, however, finding themselves clutched by demons before they are half-awake. It would be a very terrible picture to one who should really see Jesus, the Savior, in that inexorable Judge; but it seems to me very undesirable that he should ever be represented in that aspect, when it is so essential to our religion to believe him infinitely kinder and better towards us than we deserve. At the Last Day, I

presume—that is, in all future days, when we see ourselves as we are—man's only inexorable Judge will be himself, and the punishment of his sins will be the perception of them.



Hawthorne prepares to leave Rome during the long summer, the season of malaria.



Rome, May 23^d, Sunday.

This evening, Una and I took a farewell walk in the Pincian gardens, to see the sunset, and found the hill crowded with people, promenading, and listening to the music of the French band.⁵⁵ It was the feast of Whitsunday, which probably brought a greater throng than usual abroad. When the sun was down, we descended into the Piazza del Popolo, and thence into the Via di Ripetta, and emerged through a gate to the shore of the Tiber, along which there is a pleasant walk beneath a grove of trees. We traversed it once, and back again, looking at the rapid river, which still kept its mud-puddly aspect even in the clear twilight and beneath the brightening moon. The great bell of Saint Peter's tolled with a deep boom, a grand and solemn sound; the moon gleamed through the branches of the trees above us; and Una spoke with somewhat alarming fervor of her love for Rome and regret at leaving it. We shall have done the poor child no good office in bringing her here, if the rest of her life is to be a dream of this 'city of the soul,' and an unsatisfied yearning to come back.⁵⁶ On the other hand, nothing elevating and refining can be really injurious; and so I hope she will always be the better for Rome, even if her life should be spent where there are no pictures, no statues, nothing but the dryness and meagreness of a New England village.

Foligno, May 26th, Wednesday.

At six o'clock this morning, we packed ourselves into our vettura, my wife and I occupying the coupé (or whatever the seat in front is called,) and drove out of the city-gate of Terni. . . . Our way lay now through the vale of Terni, as I believe it is called, where we saw somewhat of the fertility of Italy; vines trained on poles, or twining round mulberry and other trees,

ranged regularly like orchards; groves of olives, and fields of grain. . . . The road soon began to wind among the hills, which rose steep and lofty from the scanty level space that lay between; they continually thrust themselves across the passage, and appeared as if determined to shut us completely in; a great hill would put its foot right before us, but, at the last moment, would grudgingly withdraw it, and allow us room enough to creep by. Adown their sides we discerned the dry beds of mountain torrents, which had lived too fierce a life to let it be a long one. On here and there a hill-side or a promontory, we saw a ruined castle or a convent, looking down from its commanding height upon the road, which very likely some robber-knight had formerly infested with his banditti, retreating with his booty to the security of such strongholds. We came, once in a while, to wretched villages, where there was no token of prosperity or comfort, but perhaps may have been more than we could appreciate; for the Italians do not seem to have any of that sort of pride which we find in New England villages, where every man, according to his taste and means, endeavors to make his homestead an ornament to the place. We miss nothing in Italy more than the neat door-steps and pleasant porches and thresholds, and delightful lawns or grass-plats, which hospitably invite the imagination into a sweet domestic interior. Everything—however sunny and luxuriant may be the scene around—is especially dreary and disheartening in the immediate vicinity of an Italian home.⁵⁷

Perugia, May 28th, Friday.

As I said last night, we left Foligno betimes in the morning, which was bleak, chill, and very threatening; there being very little blue sky anywhere, and the clouds lying heavily on some of the mountain ridges. . . .

By and by we reached Assisi, which is magnificently situated for pictorial purposes; with a gray castle above it, and a gray wall around it; itself on a mountain, and looking over the great plain which we had been traversing, and through which lay our onward way. . . .

. . . The aspect of everything was awfully old; a thousand years would be but a middle age for one of those houses, built so massively, with great stones, and solid arches, that I do not see how they ever are to tumble down, or to be less fit for human habitation than they are now. The streets crept between them, and beneath arched passages, and up and down steps of stone or ancient brick; for it would be altogether impossible for a carriage to ascend above the Great Piazza, though possibly a donkey or a charman's mule might find foothold. The city seems like a sort of stony growth out

of the hill-side, or a fossilized city, so old and strange it is, without enough life and juiciness in it to be susceptible of decay.⁵⁸ An earthquake is the only chance of its ever being ruined, beyond its present ruin. Nothing is more strange than to think that this now dead city—dead, as regards the purposes for which men live, now-a-days—was, centuries ago, the seat, and birth-place almost, of art, the only art in which the beautiful part of the human mind then developed itself. How came that flower to grow among these wild mountains?⁵⁹ I do not conceive, however, that the people of Assisi were ever much more enlightened, or cultivated on the side of art, than they are at present. The ecclesiastics were then the only patrons; and the flower grew here, because there was a great ecclesiastical garden in which it was sheltered and fostered. But it is very curious to think of Assisi, a school of art within, and mountains and wilderness without.

Perugia,⁶⁰ May 29th, Saturday.

This morning, at about 9 o'clock, my wife and I, with Julian and Rosebud, went out and visited the church of the Dominicans, where we saw some quaint pictures by Fra Angelico with a good deal of religious sincerity in them;⁶¹ also, a picture of Saint Columba by Perugino, which unquestionably is very good. . . .

It was market day, and the principal piazza, with the neighboring streets, was crowded with people, and blocked up with petty dealers and their merchandize; baskets of vegetables, donkeys and mules with panniers, stalls, some of which had books for sale, chiefly paper-covered little volumes in Italian, and a few in French, as Paul de Kock's novels, for example; also, ink and writing materials.⁶² Cheap jewelry and cutlery made a considerable show; shoes, hats, and caps; and I know not what else. The scene was livelier than any I have seen in Rome, the people appearing more vivacious, in this mountain air, than the populace of the eternal city, and the whole piazza babbling with a multitudinous voice. I noticed to-day, more than yesterday, the curious and picturesque architecture of the principal streets, especially that of the grand piazza; the great Gothic arch of the door of the vast edifice in which the Exchange is situated, elaborately wreathed around with one sculptured semi-circle within another; an open gallery running along the same edifice, on the second story, looking out on the piazza through arched and stone-mullioned windows.⁶³ The quaint old front, too, of the Cathedral-church of San Lorenzo (it is the same which we visited yesterday and which I called the church of San Luigi)⁶⁴ is in keeping with the Gothic aspect of the piazza; as is likewise a large and beautiful fountain,

consisting of a great marble basin, carved all round with angels, I believe. Within a short distance, there is a bronze statue of Pope Julius III, in his pontificals; one of the best statues, I think, that I ever saw in a public square.⁶⁵ He seems to have life and observation in him, and impresses the spectator as if he might rise up from his chair, should any public exigency demand it, and encourage or restrain the people by the dignity and awe of his presence. I wish I could in any way catch and confine within words my idea of the venerableness and stateliness, the air of long-past time subsisting into the present, which remains upon my mind with the recollection of these mediæval antiquities of Perugia. When I am absolutely looking at them, I do not feel it so much as when remembering them; for there is, of course, a good deal of the modern and common-place that obtrudes into the actual scene. The people themselves are not very picturesque; though there are some figures with cloaks (even in this summer weather) and broad-brimmed, slouching hats that a painter might make something of.



Hawthorne settles in Florence in the late spring of 1858; he will spend the warm months there before returning to Rome in the fall.



Florence, June 2^d, 1858.

... Our afternoon's drive was through scenery less striking than some which we had traversed, but still picturesque and beautiful; we saw deep vallies and ravines, with streams at the bottom; long, wooded hill-sides, rising far and high, and dotted with white dwellings, well towards the summits. By and by, we had a distant glimpse of Florence, showing its great dome and some of its towers out of a side-long valley, as it were between two great waves of the tumultuous sea of hills; while, far beyond, rose out of the distance the blue peaks of three or four of the Appenines, just on the remote horizon.⁶⁶—There being a haziness in the atmosphere, however, Florence was little more distinct to us than the Celestial City was to Christian and Hopeful, when they spied at it from the Delectable Mountains.⁶⁷ Keeping stedfastly onward, we ascended a winding road, and passed a grand villa, standing very high, and surrounded with extensive grounds. . . .

From this point, we descended, and drove along an ugly, dusty avenue, with a high brick wall on one side or both, till we reached the gate of Florence, into which we were admitted with as little trouble as Custom-

House officers, soldiers, and policemen, can possibly give. . . . As we hoped that the Casa del Bello had been taken for us, we drove thither in the first place, but found that the bargain had not been concluded. As the house and studio of Mr. Powers were just on the opposite side of the street, I went thither, but found him too much engaged to see me at the moment; so I returned to the vettura, and we told Gaetano to carry us to a Hotel.⁶⁸ He established us at the Albergo della Fontana, a good and comfortable house, and, as it proved, very moderate in its charges. Mr. Powers called in the evening—a plain, homely personage, characterized by strong simplicity and warm kindness, with an impending brow, and large, light eyes, which kindle as he speaks. He is gray and slightly bald, but does not seem elderly, nor past his prime. I accept him at once as an honest and trust-worthy man, and shall not vary from this judgment. Through his good offices, the next day, we engaged the Casa del Bello at a rent of fifty dollars a month; and I shall take another opportunity (my fingers and head being tired now) to write about the house, and Mr. Powers, and what appertains to him, and about the beautiful city of Florence. At present, I shall only further say, that this journey from Rome has been one of the brightest and most uncareful interludes of my life; we have all enjoyed it exceedingly; and I am happy that our younger companions have it to look back upon.

Florence June 4th, Friday.

At our visit to Powers's studio, on Tuesday, we saw a marble copy of the fisher-boy, holding a shell to his ear, and of the bust of Proserpina, and two or three other ideal busts; besides casts of most of the ideal statues and portrait-busts which he has executed.⁶⁹ He talks very freely about his works, and is no exception to the rule that an artist is not apt to speak in a very laudatory style of a brother-artist. . . .

. . . [Powers] appears to consider himself neglected by his country—by the Government of it, at least—and talks with indignation of the by-ways and political intrigue which he thinks, win the rewards which ought to be bestowed exclusively on merit. . . . Not that Powers is made sour or bitter by these wrongs, as he considers them; he talks of them with the frankness of his disposition, when the topic comes in his way, and seems to be pleasant, kindly, and sunny when he has done with it. His long absence from our country has made him think worse of us than we deserve; and it is an effect of which I myself am sensible, in my shorter exile,—the most piercing shriek, the wildest yell, and all the ugly sounds of popular turmoil, inseparable from the life of a republic, being a million times more audible

than the peaceful hum of prosperity and content, which is going on all the while. He talks of going home, but says that he has been talking of it every year since he first came to Italy; and between his pleasant life of congenial labor here, and his idea of moral deterioration in America, I think it doubtful whether he ever crosses the sea again. Like most twenty-year exiles, he has lost his native country without finding another; but then it is as well to recognize the truth, that an individual country is by no means essential to one's comfort. . . .

When we had sufficiently looked at the sculpture, Powers proposed that we should now go across the street and see the Casa del Bello. . . . The Casa del Bello is a palace of three pianos, the topmost of which is occupied by an English lady, and an Italian count, her husband; the two lower pianos are to let, and we looked at both. The upper one would have suited us well enough, and might have been had for forty dollars a month; but the lower has a terrace, with a rustic summer-house over it, and is connected with a garden, where there are arbors, and a willow-tree, and a little wilderness of shrubbery and roses, with a fountain in its midst. It has likewise an immense suite of rooms around the four sides of a small court, spacious, lofty, with frescoed cieling and rich paper hangings, and abundantly furnished with arm-chairs, sofas, marble-tables, and great looking-glasses. Not that these last are a great temptation; but, in our wandering life, I wished to be perfectly comfortable myself, and to make my family so, for just this summer; and so I have taken the lower piano, the price being only fifty dollars per month. Certainly, this is something like the Paradise of cheapness which we were told of, and which we vainly sought in Rome. . . . The weather is delightful; too warm to walk, but perfectly fit to do nothing in, in the coolness of these great rooms. Every day I shall write a little, perhaps—and probably take a brief nap, somewhere between breakfast and tea—but go to see pictures and statues occasionally, and so assuage and mollify myself a little, after that uncongenial life of the Consulate, and before going back to my own hard and dusty New-England.

Florence, June 5th, Saturday.

For two or three mornings, after breakfast, I have rambled a little about the city, till the shade grows narrow beneath the walls of the houses, and the heat makes it uncomfortable to be in motion. . . . Florence at first struck me as having the aspect of a very new city, in comparison with Rome; but on closer acquaintance, I find that many of the buildings are antique and massive, though still the clear atmosphere, the bright sunshine, the light

cheerful hues of the stucco, and—as much as anything else perhaps—the vivacious character of the human life in the streets, take away the sense of its being an ancient city. The streets are delightful to walk in, after so many penitential pilgrimages as I have made over those little square, uneven blocks of the Roman pavement, which wear out the boots and torment the soul. I absolutely walk on the smooth flags of Florence for the mere pleasure of walking, and live in its atmosphere for the mere pleasure of living, and, warm as the weather is getting to be, I never feel that inclination to sink down in a heap and never stir again, which was my dull torment and misery as long as I staid in Rome. I hardly think there can be a place in the world where life is more delicious for its own simple sake than here.

Florence, June 8th, Tuesday.

I went this morning to the Uffizzi Gallery. . . .⁷⁰

I at first travelled slowly through the whole extent of this long, long gallery, which occupies the whole length of the palace on both sides of the court, and is full of sculpture and pictures. The latter, being opposite to the light, are not seen to the best advantage; but it is the most perfect collection, in a chronological series, that I have seen, comprehending specimens of all the masters since painting began to be an art. Here are Giotto, and Cimabue, and Botticelli, and Fra Angelico, and Phillippo Lippi, and a hundred others, who have haunted me in churches and galleries ever since I came to Italy, and who ought to interest me a great deal more than they do.⁷¹ Occasionally, to-day, I was sensible of a certain degree of emotion in looking at an old picture; as, for example, by a large, dark, ugly picture of Christ bearing the cross, and sinking beneath it, where, somehow or other, a sense of his agony, and the fearful wrong that mankind did to its Redeemer, and the scorn of his enemies and sorrow of those that loved him, came knocking at my heart, and partly got entrance.⁷² Once more, I deem it a pity that Protestantism should have entirely laid aside this mode of appealing to the religious sentiment.

I chiefly paid attention to the sculpture, and was interested in a long series of busts of the Emperors, and the members of their families, and of some of the great men of Rome. . . . Generally, these wicked old fellows, and their wicked wives and daughters, are not so hideous as we might expect. . . . The bust of Nero might almost be called handsome here, though bearing his likeness unmistakably. I wish some competent person would undertake to analyze and develop his character, and how and by what necessity—with all his elegant tastes, his love of the beautiful, his artist

nature—he grew to be such a monster. Nero has never yet had justice done him, nor have any of the wicked Emperors; not that I suppose them to have been any less monstrous than history represents them; but there must surely have been something in their position and circumstances to render the terrible moral disease, which seized upon them so generally, almost inevitable. A wise and profound man, tender and reverent of the human soul, and capable of appreciating it in its height and depth, has a great field here for the exercise of his powers. It has struck me, in reading the history of the Italian republics, that many of the tyrants, who sprung up after the destruction of their liberties, resembled the worst of the Roman emperors. This subject of Nero and his brethren has often perplexed me with vain desires to come at the truth.⁷³

There were many beautiful specimens of antique, ideal sculpture, all along the gallery; Apollos, Bacchuses, Venuses, Mercuries, Fauns, with the general character of all of which I was familiar enough to recognize them at a glance. The mystery and wonder of the gallery, however—the Venus de Medici—I could nowhere see, and indeed was almost afraid to see it: for I somewhat apprehended the extinction of another of those lights that shine along a man's pathway, and go out in a snuff the instant he comes within eye-shot. My European experience has blown out a great many such. I was pretty well contented, therefore, not to find the famous statue, in the whole of my long journey from end to end of the gallery, which terminates on the opposite side of the court from that where it commences. . . .

I could not quite believe that I was not to find the Venus de Medici;⁷⁴ and still, as I passed from one room to another, my breath rose and fell a little, with the half-hope, half-fear, that she might stand before me. Really, I did not know that I cared so much about Venus, or any possible woman of marble. At last—when I had come from among the Dutchmen, I believe, and was looking at some works of Italian artists, chiefly Florentines—I caught a glimpse of her, through the door of the next room. It is the best room of the whole series, octagonal in shape, and hung with red damask; and the light comes down from a row of windows passing quite round, beneath an octagonal dome. The Venus stands somewhat aside from the centre of the room, and is surrounded by an iron-railing, a pace or two from her pedestal in front, and less behind. I think she might safely be left to the reverence her womanhood would win, without any other protection. She is very beautiful; very satisfactory; and has a fresh and new charm about her, unreached by any cast or copy that I have seen. The hue of the marble is just so much mellowed by time as to do for her all that Gibson tries, or ought, to try, to do for his statues by color; softening her, warming her almost imperceptibly, making her an inmate of the heart as well as a spiritual existence. I

felt a kind of tenderness for her; an affection, not as if she were one woman, but all womankind in one. Her modest attitude—which, before I saw her, I had not liked, deeming that it might be an artificial shame—is partly what unmakes her as the heathen goddess, and softens her into woman. There is a slight degree of alarm too, in her face; not that she really thinks anybody is looking at her, yet the idea has flitted through her mind and startled her a little. Her face is so beautiful and intellectual, that it is not dazzled out of sight by her body. Methinks this was a triumph for the sculptor to achieve. I may as well stop here. It is of no use to throw heaps of words upon her; for they all fall away and leave her standing in chaste and naked grace, as untouched as when I began.

. . . On the wall of the room, and to be taken in at the same glance, is a painted Venus by Titian, reclining on a couch, naked and lustful.⁷⁵

Florence, June 9th, Wednesday.

Mamma, Miss Shepard and I, went last evening, at eight o'clock, to see the Brownings;⁷⁶ and after some search and inquiry, we found the Casa Guidi, which is a palace in a street not very far from our own. . . . [Browning] came into the ante-room to greet us; as did his little boy, Robert, whom they nickname Penny for fondness. This latter cognomen is a diminutive of Apennine, bestowed upon him at his first advent into the world, because he was so very small; there being a statue in Florence nicknamed Apennine, because it is so huge.⁷⁷ I never saw such a boy as this before; so slender, fragile, and spritelike, not as if he were actually in ill-health, but as if he had little or nothing to do with human flesh and blood. His face is very pretty and most intelligent, and exceedingly like his mother's, whose constitutional lack of stamina I suppose he inherits. He is nine years old, and seems at once less childlike and less manly than would befit that age. I should not quite like to be the father of such a boy; and should fear to stake so much interest and affection on him as he cannot fail to inspire. I wonder what is to become of him;—whether he will ever grow to be a man;—whether it is desirable that he should. His parents ought to turn their whole attention to making him gross and earthly, and giving him a thicker scabbard to sheathe his spirit in. He was born in Florence, and prides himself on being a Florentine, and is indeed as un-English a production as if he were native in another planet.

Mrs. Browning met us at the door of the drawing-room and greeted us most kindly; a pale little woman, scarcely embodied at all; at any rate, only substantial enough to put forth her slender fingers to be grasped and

to speak with a shrill, yet sweet, tenuity of voice. Really, I do not see how Mr. Browning can suppose that he has an earthly wife, any more than an earthly child; both are of the elfin-breed, and will flit away from him, some day when he least thinks of it. She is a good and kind fairy, however, and sweetly disposed towards the human race, although only remotely akin to it. It is wonderful to see how small she is; how diminutive, and peaked, as it were, her face, without being ugly; how pale her cheek; how bright and dark her eyes. There is not such another figure in this world; and her black ringlets cluster down into her neck and make her face look the whiter by their sable profusion. I could not form any judgment about her age; it may range any where within the limits of human life, or elfin-life. When I met her in London, at Mr. Milnes's breakfast-table, she did not impress me so strangely; for the morning light is more prosaic than the dim illumination of their great, tapestried drawing room; and besides, sitting next to her, she did not then have occasion to raise her voice in speaking, and I was not sensible what a slender pipe she has. It is as if a grasshopper should speak. It is marvelous to me how so extraordinary, so acute, so sensitive a creature, can impress us, as she does, with the certainty of her benevolence. It seems to me there were a million chances to one that she would have been a miracle of acidity and bitterness.

Florence, June 11th Friday.

I paid another visit to the Uffizzi gallery, this morning, and found that the Venus is one of the things, the charm of which does not diminish on better acquaintance. The world has not grown weary of her in all these ages; and mortal man may look on her with new delight from infancy to old age, and keep the memory of her, I should imagine, as one of the treasures of spiritual existence hereafter. Surely, it makes one more ready to believe in the high destinies of the human race, to think that this beautiful form is but Nature's plan for all womankind, and that the nearer the actual woman approaches to it, the more natural she is. I do not, and cannot, think of her as a senseless image, but as a being that lives to gladden the world, incapable of decay and death; as young and fair to day as she was three thousand years ago, and still to be young and fair, as long as a beautiful thought shall require physical embodiment. I wonder how any sculptor has had the impertinence to aim at any other presentation of female beauty. I mean no disrespect to Gibson, or Powers, or a hundred other men who people the world with nudities, all of which are abortive as compared with her; but I think the world would be all the richer if their Venuses, their

Greek Slaves, their Eves, were burnt into quick-lime, leaving us only this statue as our image of the beautiful. I observed to day (what my wife had already remarked) that the eyes of the statue are slightly hollowed out, in a peculiar way, so as to give them a look of depth and intelligence. She is a miracle. The sculptor must have wrought religiously, and have felt that something far beyond his own skill was working through his hand. I mean to leave off speaking of the Venus hereafter, in utter despair of saying what I wish; especially as the contemplation of the statue will refine and elevate my taste, and make it continually more difficult to express my sense of its excellence, as the perception of it grows upon me. If, at any time, I become less sensible of it, it will be my deterioration, not any defect in the statue.

Florence, June 13th, Sunday.

Wife and I called at the Powers', yesterday morning, to leave Rosebud there for an hour or two's play with the children; and it being not yet quite time for the Pitti Palace, we stepped into the studio. Soon, Mr. Powers made his appearance, in his dressing-gown and slippers, and sculptor's cap, smoking a cigar, which by the by was none of the best. He was very cordial and pleasant, as I have always found him, and began immediately to be communicative about his own works or on any other subject that came up. There were two casts of the Venus de Medici in the studio, which he said were valuable in a commercial point of view, being genuine casts from the mould taken from the statue. He then gave us a quite unexpected but most interesting lecture on the Venus, demonstrating it as he proceeded by reference to the points which he criticized. The figure, he seemed to allow, was admirable, though I rather think he hardly classes it so high as his own Greek Slave or Eve; but the face, he began with saying, was that of an idiot. Then, leaning on the pedestal of the cast, he continued—"It is rather a bold thing to say, isn't it, that the sculptor of the Venus de Medici did not know what he was about?" Truly, it appeared to me so; but Powers went on remorselessly, and showed, in the first place, that the eye was not like any eye that Nature ever made; and, indeed, being examined closely, and abstracted from the rest of the face, it has a very queer look—less like a human eye than a half-worn buttonhole. Then he attacked the ear, which he affirmed, and demonstrated, was placed a great deal too low on the head, thereby giving an artificial and monstrous height to the portion of the head above it. The forehead met with no better treatment in his hands, and as to the mouth, it was altogether wrong, as well in its general make, as in such niceties as the junction of the skin of the lips to the common skin around them. In a

word, the poor face was battered all to pieces and utterly demolished; nor was it possible to doubt or question that it fell by its own demerits—all that could be urged in its defense (and even *that* I did not urge) being that this very face had affected me, only the day before, with a sense of higher beauty and intelligence than I had ever till then received from sculpture, and that its expression seemed to accord with that of the whole figure, as if it were the sweetest note of the same music. There must be something in this; the sculptor disregarded technicalities and the imitation of actual nature, the better to produce the effect which he really does produce, in somewhat the same way as a painter works his magical illusions by touches that have no relation to the truth, if looked at from the wrong point of view. But Powers considers it certain that the old sculptor had bestowed all his care on the study of the human figure, and really did not know how to make a face. I myself used to think that the face was a much less important thing with the Greeks, among whom the entire beauty of the form was familiarly seen, than with ourselves, who allow no other nudity.

After annihilating this poor visage, Powers showed us his two busts of Proserpine and Psyche, and continued his lecture by showing the truth to nature with which these are modelled. I freely acknowledge the fact; there is no sort of comparison to be made between the beauty, intelligence, feeling, and accuracy of representation, in these two faces, and in that of the Venus de Medici. A light—the light of a soul proper to each individual character—seems to shine from the interior of the marble and beam forth from the features, chiefly from their eyes. Still insisting upon the eye, and hitting the poor Venus another, and another, and still another blow on that unhappy feature, Mr. Powers, turned up, and turned inward, and turned outward, his own Titanic orb (the biggest by far that ever I saw in mortal head) and made us see and confess that there was nothing right in the Venus, and everything right in Psyche and Proserpine. To say the truth, their marble eyes have life, and, placing yourself in the proper position towards them, you can meet their glances, and feel theirs mingle with your own. Powers is a great man, and also a tender and delicate one, massive and rude of surface as he looks; and it is rather absurd to feel how he impresses his auditor, for the time being, with his own evident idea that nobody else is worthy to touch marble.

Florence, June 15th, Tuesday.

Yesterday, my wife and I went to the Uffizzi gallery; and of course I took the opportunity to look again at the Venus de Medici, after Powers' attack

upon her face. Some of the defects he attributed to her I could not see in the statue; for instance, the ear appeared to be in accordance with his own rule; the lowest part of it being about in a straight line with the upper lip. The eyes must be given up, as not, when closely viewed, having the shape, the curve outwards, the formation of the lids, that eyes ought to have; but still, at a proper distance, they seemed to have intelligence in them, beneath the shadow cast by the brow. I cannot help thinking that the sculptor intentionally made every feature what it is, and calculated them all with a view to the desired effect. Whatever rules may be transgressed, it is a noble and beautiful face; more so, perhaps, than if all rules had been obeyed. I wish Powers would do his best to fit the Venus de Medici's figure (which he does not deny to be admirable) with a face which he would deem equally admirable, and in accordance with the sentiment of the form.

We looked pretty thoroughly through the gallery, and I saw many pictures that impressed me; but, among such a multitude, with only one poor mind to take note of them, the stamp of each new impression helps to obliterate a former one. I am sensible, however, that a process is going on—and has been, ever since I came to Italy—that puts me in a state to see pictures with less toil, and more pleasure, and makes me more fastidious, yet more sensible of beauty where I saw none before. It is the sign, I presume, of a taste still very defective, that I take singular pleasure in the elaborate imitations of Van Mieris, Gerard Duow, and other old Dutch wizards who painted such brass-pots that you can see your face in them, and such earthen jugs that they will surely hold water; and who spent weeks and months in turning a foot or two of canvass into a perfect, microscopic illusion of some homely scene.⁷⁸ For my part, I wish Raphael had painted the Transfiguration in this style, at the same time preserving his breadth and grandeur of design; nor do I believe that there is any real impediment to the combination of the two styles, except that no possible span of human life would suffice to cover a quarter part of the canvas of the Transfiguration with such touches as Gerard Duow's. But one feels the vast scope of this wonderful art, when we think of two excellences so far apart as that of this last painter and Raphael. I pause a good while, too, before the Dutch paintings of fruit and flowers, where tulips and roses acquire an immortal bloom; and grapes have kept the freshest juice in them for two or three hundred years. Often, in these pictures, there is a bird's nest, every straw perfectly represented, and the stray feather, or the down that the mother-bird plucked from her bosom, with the three or four small, speckled eggs, that seem as if they might be yet warm. These petty miracles have their use in assuring us that painters really can do something that takes hold of us in our most matter of fact moods; whereas, the merits of the grander

style of art may be beyond our ordinary appreciation, and leave us in doubt (nine times out of ten that we look at them) whether we have not befooled ourselves with a false admiration. Until we learn to appreciate the cherubs and angels that Raphael scatters through the blessed air, in a picture of the Nativity, it is not amiss to look at a Dutch fly settling on a peach, or a humble-bee burying himself in a flower.

Florence, June 21st, Monday.

This morning, my wife and I went to the Pitti Palace. . . .

It was useless to try to see the pictures; all the artists, engaged in copying, laid aside their brushes; and we all looked out of the windows into the square before the palace, where a mighty wind sprang up, and quickly raised a prodigious cloud of dust. It hid the opposite side of the street, and was carried in a great dusky whirl higher than the roofs of the houses, higher than the tip top of the Pitti Palace itself. The thunder muttered and grumbled; the lightning emitted now and then a flash; and a few raindrops pattered against the windows; but, for a long time, the shower held off. At last, it came down in a stream, and lightened the air to such a degree that we could see some of the pictures, especially those of Rubens, and the illuminated parts of Salvator Rosa's,⁷⁹ and best of all, Titian's Magdelene, the one with the golden hair clustering round her naked body. The golden hair, indeed, seemed to throw out a glory of its own. This Magdelene is very coarse and sensual, with only an impudent assumption of penitence and religious sentiment, scarcely so deep as the eyelids; but it is a splendid picture, nevertheless, with those naked, lifelike arms, and the hands that press the rich locks about her, and so carefully let those two voluptuous breasts be seen. She a penitent! She would shake off all pretence to it, as easily as she would shake aside that clustering hair and offer her nude front to the next comer. Titian must have been a very good-for-nothing old man.

Villa Montauto, September 1st, Wednesday.

Few things journalizable have happened during the past month, because Florence and the neighborhood have lost their novelty; and, furthermore, I usually spend the whole day at home, having been engaged in planning and sketching out a Romance. I have now done with this for the present, and mean to employ the rest of the time we stay here chiefly in re-visiting the galleries, and seeing what remains to be seen of Florence.

Last Saturday, I went with my wife to take tea at Miss Blagden's, who has a weekly reception on that evening. We found Mr. Powers there; and, by and by, Mr. Boot and Mr. Trollope came in.⁸⁰ Miss Shepard has lately been exercising her faculties as a spiritual-writing medium; and the conversation turning on that subject, Mr. Powers related some things that he had witnessed through the agency of Mr. Hume, who had held a session or two at his house. . . .⁸¹

Powers seems to put full faith in the verity of spiritual communications, while acknowledging the difficulty of identifying spirits as being what they pretend. He is a Swedenborgian,⁸² and so far prepared to put faith in many of these phenomena. As for Hume, Powers gives a decided opinion that he is a knave, but thinks him so organized, nevertheless, as to be a particularly good medium for spiritual communications. Spirits, I suppose, like earthly people, have to use such instruments as will answer their purposes; but rather than receive a message from a dead friend through the organism of a rogue and a charlatan, methinks I would choose to wait till we met. But what most astonishes me most is, the indifference with which I listen to these marvels. They throw old ghost stories quite into the shade; they bring the whole world of spirits down amongst us, visibly and audibly; they are absolutely proved to be sober facts by evidence that would satisfy us of any other alleged realities; and yet I cannot free my mind to interest itself in them. They are facts to my understanding (which, it might have been anticipated, would have been the last to acknowledge them,) but they seem not to be facts to my intuitions and deeper perceptions. My inner soul does not in the least admit them. So idle and empty do I feel these stories to be, that I hesitated long whether or no to give up a few pages of this not very important journal, to the record of them.

Villa Montauto Sept 25th, Saturday.

Una and I walked to town, yesterday morning, and went to the Uffizzi gallery. It is not a pleasant thought that we are so soon to give up this gallery, with little prospect (none, or hardly any, on my part) of ever seeing it again. . . . Perhaps it is the picturesque variety of the Uffizzi—the combination of painting, sculpture, gems, and bronzes—that makes the charm. The Tribune, too, is the richest room in all the world; a heart, that draws all hearts to it. The Dutch pictures, moreover, give a homely, human interest to the Uffizzi; and I really think that the frequency of Andrea del Sarto's productions, at the Pitti Palace—looking so very like master-pieces, yet lacking the soul of art and nature—have much to do with the weariness

that comes from better acquaintance with the latter gallery.⁸³ The splendor of the gilded and frescoed saloons is perhaps another bore; but, after all, my memory will often tread them, as long as I live. What shall we do in America!

Villa Montauto, Sept 28th, Tuesday.

I went to the Pitti Palace, yesterday, and with Una and Julian to the Uffizzi gallery to-day, paying them probably my last visits, yet cherishing an unreasonable doubt whether I may not see them again. At all events, I have seen them enough for the present, even what is best of them; and at the same time with a sad reluctance to bid them farewell forever, I experience an utter weariness of Raphael's old canvass, and of the time-yellowed marble of the Venus de Medici. When their material embodiment presents itself outermost, and we perceive them only by the grosser sense, missing their ethereal spirit, there is nothing so heavily burthensome as masterpieces of painting and sculpture. I threw my farewell glance at the Venus de Medici, to-day, with strange insensibility.

Aquila Nera, October 11th, Monday.

Leaving the Cathedral, I took a walk out of the city, by I know not which gate, but I think it may have been the one called San Viene. A road turned immediately to the left, as I emerged from the city, and soon proved to be a rustic lane, leading past several villas and farm-houses, and running into another road that issued from the Porta Romana, as I suppose it to be. It was a very pleasant walk, with vineyards and olive-orchards on each side, and now-and-then glimpses of the towers, and sombre, heaped-up palaces of Siena, and now a rustic seclusion again; for the hills rise and fall, like the swell and subsidence of the sea after a gale; so that Siena may be quite hidden within a quarter of a mile of its wall, or may be visible, I doubt not, twenty miles away. It is a fine old town, with every promise of health and vigour in its atmosphere; and really, if I could take root anywhere, I know not but it could as well be here as in another place. It would only be a kind of despair, however, that would ever make me dream of finding a home in Italy; a sense that I had lost my country through absence or incongruity, and that earth, at any rate, is not an abiding-place. I wonder that we Americans love our country at all, it having no limits and no oneness; and when you try to make it a matter of the heart, everything falls away except one's

native State;—neither can you seize hold of that, unless you tear it out of the Union, bleeding and quivering. Yet unquestionably we do stand by our national flag as stoutly as any people in the world; and I myself have felt the heart-throb at sight of it, as sensibly as other men.⁸⁴



Hawthorne returns to Rome in October 1858.



68, Piazza Poli (Rome,) Oct^r. 17th, Sunday.

It really seemed like coming up out of the earth into the midst of the town, when we found ourselves so unexpectedly in the upper town of Bolsena. . . .⁸⁵ Filth was everywhere; in the Piazza, in nooks and corners, strewing the streets (miserable lanes, rather) from side to side, defiling the platform before the Castle; the filth of every day and of accumulated ages. I wonder whether the ancient Romans were as dirty a people as we everywhere find those who have succeeded them; for there seems to be something in the places that have been inhabited by Romans, or made famous in their history, and in the monuments of every kind that they have raised, that puts people in mind of their earthly necessities, and incites them to defile therewith whatever temple, column, ruined palace, or triumphal arch may be nearest at hand. I think it must be an hereditary trait, probably weakened, and robbed of a little of its dirty horror, by the influence of milder ages; and I am much afraid that Caesar trod narrower and filthier ways, in his path to power than those of modern Rome, or even of this hideous town of Bolsena. . . .

I did not mean to write such an ugly description as the above; but it is well, once for all, to have attempted conveying an idea of what disgusts the traveller, more or less, in all these Italian towns. . . . The whole town made me think how undesirable it is to build human habitations out of permanent materials, and with a view to their being occupied by future generations. All towns should be made capable of purification by fire, or of decay with half-a-century or so; else they become the hereditary haunt of vermin and noisomeness, and, besides, stand apart from the possibility of such improvement as is introduced into other of man's contrivances and accommodations. It is a very pretty thing, in some respects, to imagine our posterity living under the same floors as ourselves; but when people insist on building age-long habitations, they incur (or their posterity do) a

misfortune analogous to that of the Sibyl who asked for immortality. They build immortal houses, but cannot keep them from growing old, musty, unwholesome, dreary, full of death-scents, ghosts, murder-stains; in short, houses such as one sees everywhere in Italy, be they hovels or palaces.⁸⁶

68, Piazza Poli, Oct^r 21st, Thursday.

We have the snugest little set of apartments in Rome, seven rooms, including an anti-chamber; and though the stairs are exceedingly narrow, there is really a carpet on them—a civilized comfort, of which the proudest palaces in the Eternal city cannot boast. The stairs are very steep, however; and I should not wonder if some of us broke our noses down them. Narrowness of space within doors strikes us all rather ludicrously, yet not unpleasantly, after being accustomed to the naked, brick-paved wastes and deserts of the Montauto Villa. It is well to be thus put in training for the over-snugness of our cottage in Concord. Our windows here look out on a small, and rather quiet piazza, with an immense palace on the left hand, and a smaller, yet statelier one, on the right; and just round a corner of the street leading out of our piazza is the Fountain of Trevi, of which I can hear the plash in the evening, when other sounds are hushed.

Piazza Poli, Nov^r 2nd, Tuesday.

The weather, lately, would have suited one's ideal of an English November, except that there have been no fogs; but of ugly, hopeless clouds, chill, shivery winds, drizzle, and now and then pouring rain—much more than enough. An English coal-fire, if we could see its honest glow within-doors, would compensate for all the unamiableness of the outside atmosphere; but we might ask for the sunshine of the New Jerusalem, with as much hope of getting it. It is extremely spirit-crushing, this remorseless grey, with its icy heart; and the more to depress the whole family, Una has taken what seems to be the Roman fever by sitting down to sketch in the Coliseum. It is not a severe attack, yet attended with fits of exceeding discomfort, occasional comatoseness, and even delirium to the extent of making the poor child talk in rhythmical measure like a tragic heroine—as if the fever lifted her feet off the earth. This fever is seldom dangerous, but is liable to recur on slight occasion hereafter.⁸⁷

68, Piazza di Poli, March 7th, Monday.

Last week, we were in full Carnival; and, the weather being splendid, the merriment was far more free and riotous than as I remember it, the preceding year.⁸⁸ Going out in the morning, tokens of the festival were seen in baskets of flowers, for sale at the street-corners, or borne about on people's heads, while bushels upon bushels of confetti were displayed, looking just like veritable sugar-plums; so that a stranger might have thought that the whole commerce and business of stern old Rome lay in flowers and sweets.

I (as well as the rest of the family) have followed up the Carnival pretty faithfully, and enjoyed it as well, or rather better, than could have been expected; principally in the street, as a mere looker-on (which does not let one into the mystery of the fun) and twice from a balcony, whence I threw confetti, and partly understood why the young people like it so much. Certainly, there cannot well be a more picturesque spectacle in human life, than that stately, palatial avenue of the Corso (the more picturesque because so narrow) all hung with carpets, Gobelin tapestry, scarlet cloths with gilded fringes, flaunting from balconies and windows, and the whole palace-heights alive with faces; and all the capacity of the street thronged with the most fantastic figures that either the fancies of folks alive at this day are able to contrive, or that live traditionally from year to year, for centuries back. To be sure, looking critically at the scene, the spectator rather wonders that the masquing scene should not be more rich and various, when there has been so long a time (the immemorial existence of the Carnival) to prepare it, and crowd it with shapes of gaiety and humor. There are not many things worth remembering;—an infinite number of clowns and parti-colored harlequins; a host of white dominos; a multitude of masks, set to an eternal grin, or with monstrous noses, or made in the guise of monkeys, bears, dogs, or whatever beast the wearer chooses to be akin to; a great many men in petticoats, and almost as many girls and women, no doubt, in breeches; figures, too, with huge, bulbous heads; and all manner of such easy monstrosities and exaggerations. It is strange how the whole humor of the thing, and the separate humor of each individual character, vanishes, the moment I try to grasp one and describe it; and yet there really was fun in the spectacle as it flitted by. For instance, in a large open carriage, a company of young men in flesh-colored tights and chemises, representing a party of girls surprised in the midst of dressing themselves, while an old nurse, in the midst of them, expressed ludicrous horror at their predicament; then the embarrassment

of gentlemen, who, while quietly looking at the scene, are surrounded by groups of masques, grinning at them, squeaking in their ears, hugging them, dancing round them, till they snatch the opportunity to escape into some doorway; or, when a poor man in a black coat and cylinder hat is whitened all over with a half-bushel of confetti and lime dust, the mock sympathy with which his case is investigated by a company of masquers, who poke their stupid, pasteboard faces close to his, still with an unchangeable grin; or when a gigantic female figure singles out some shy, harmless personage, and makes appeals to his heart, presenting him with a boquet, avowing her passionate love in dumb-show; and a hundred other nonsensicalities, among which the rudest and simplest are not the least effective. A resounding thump on the back with a harlequin's sword, or a rattling blow with a bladder, half-full of dry peas or corn, answers a very good purpose. There was a good absurdity, one day, in a figure with a crinoline petticoat, riding on an ass, and almost filling the Corso with the circumference of Crinoline, from side to side. Some figures are dressed in old fashioned garbs, perhaps of the last century, or, even more ridiculous, of thirty years ago, or in the stately Elizabethan (as we should call them) trunk-hose, tunics, and cloaks of three centuries since.

Piazza di Poli, March 8th, Tuesday.

I went with Una to Mrs. Motley's balcony,⁸⁹ in the Corso, and saw the Carnival from it, yesterday afternoon; but the spectacle is strangely like a dream, in respect to the difficulty of retaining it in the mind and solidifying it into a description. I enjoyed it a good deal, and assisted in it so far as to pelt all the people in cylinder hats with handfuls of confetti. . . . There is no rudeness, except the authorized pelting with confetti, or blows of harlequin-swords, which, moreover, are within a law of their own; but nobody takes rough hold of another, or meddles with his masque, or does him any sort of unmannerly violence. At first sight, you would think that the whole world had gone mad; but, at the end, you wonder how people can let loose all their mirthful propensities without unchaining their mischievous ones. It could not be so in America, or in England; in either of those countries, the whole street would go mad in earnest, and come to blows and bloodshed, were the population to let themselves loose to the extent which we see here. All this restraint is self-imposed, and quite apart from that exercised by the presence of the soldiery, who stack their arms in the Piazza del Popolo, and in the Piazza Colonna, and at every other place of vantage in the vicinity of the Corso, and would rain bullets as plentifully as confetti, in case of an outbreak.

Piazza Poli, March 18th Friday.

Una and I went to the Sculpture-gallery of the Capitol, yesterday, and saw, among other things, the Venus in her secret cabinet. This was my second view of her; the other time, I greatly admired her; now, she made no very favorable impression. There are twenty Venuses whom I like as well, or better; and there is one view of the lower part of her back which seems to me exceedingly unbeautiful. On the whole, she is a heavy, clumsy, unintellectual, and common-place figure; at all events, not in good looks today. Marble beauties seem to suffer the same occasional eclipse that flesh and blood ones do.

We looked at the Faun, at the Dying Gladiator, and what other famous sculptures are to be seen there; but nothing had a glory round it, perhaps because a sirocco was blowing. These sculpture halls of the Capitol have always had a dreary and depressing effect on me, very different from those of the Vatican; I know not why, except that the rooms of the former have a dingy, shabby, and neglected look, and that the statues are dusty, and all the arrangements less magnificent than the Vatican's. The corroded and discolored surfaces of the statues take away from the impression of immortal youth, and turn Apollo himself into an old stone; unless at rare intervals, when he appears transfigured by a light gleaming from within. I used to admire the Dying Gladiator exceedingly; but, in my later views of him, I find myself getting weary and annoyed that he should be such a length of time leaning on his arm, in the very act of death. If he is so terribly hurt, why does he not sink down and die, without further ado? Flitting moments—imminent emergencies—imperceptible intervals between two breaths—ought not to be encrusted with the eternal repose of marble; there should be a moral stand-still in any sculptural subject, since there must needs be a physical one. It is like flinging a piece of marble up into the air, and, by some enchantment, or trick, making it stick there; you feel as if it ought to come down, and are dissatisfied that it does not obey the natural law. In painting, though it is equally motionless as sculpture, there does not appear to be this objection to representing brief snatches of time; perhaps because a story can be told more broadly in picture, and so the momentary circumstance can be buttressed about with other things that give it an epoch.

Piazza Poli, March 23rd, Wednesday.

I am wearing away listlessly these last precious days of my abode in Rome. Una's illness is disheartening; and by confining my wife, it takes

away the energy and enterprise that were the spring of all our enterprises. I am weary of Rome, without having seen and known it as I ought; and I shall be glad to get away from it, though no doubt there will be many yearnings to return hereafter, and many regrets that I did not make better use of the opportunities within my grasp. Still, I have been in Rome long enough to be imbued with its atmosphere, and this is the essential condition of knowing a place; for such knowledge does not consist in having seen every particular object it contains. At any rate, in the state of mind in which I now stand towards Rome, there is very little advantage to be gained by staying here longer.

... I believe I go oftener to the Bank than anywhere else, and read Galignani and the American newspapers;⁹⁰ thence I stroll listlessly to the Pincian, or to the Medici Gardens. I see a good deal of General Pierce, and we talk over his presidential life, which, I now really think, he has no latent desire nor purpose to renew.⁹¹ Yet he seems to have enjoyed it while it lasted; and certainly he was in his element, as an administrative man, not far-seeing, not possessed of vast stores of political wisdom in advance of his occasions, but endowed with a miraculous intuition of what ought to be done, just at the time for action.

Piazza Poli, April 14th, Thursday.

Yesterday afternoon, I drove with Mr. & Mrs. Story & Mr. Wilde to see a statue of Venus, which has just been discovered, outside of the Porta Portese, on the other side of the Tiber.⁹² A little distance beyond the gate, we came to the entrance of a vineyard, with a wheel-track through the midst of it; and following this, we soon came to a hill side in which an excavation had been made, with the purpose of building a grotto for keeping and storing wine. They had dug down into what seemed to be an ancient bathroom, or some structure of that kind; the excavation being square and cellar-like, and built round with old subterranean walls of brick and stone. Within this hollow space the statue had been found, and it was now standing against one of the walls, covered with a coarse cloth or canvas bag. This being removed, there appeared a headless marble figure, earth-stained, of course, and with a slightly corroded surface, but wonderfully delicate and beautiful; the shape, size, and attitude, apparently, of the Venus de Medici, but, as we all thought, more beautiful than that. It is supposed to be the original from which the Venus de Medici was copied. Both arms were broken off (at the elbow, I think) but the greater part of both, and nearly the whole of one hand, had been found; and these being adjusted

to the figure, they took the well known position before the bosom and the middle, as if the poor fragmentary woman retained her instinct of modesty to the last. There were the marks on the bosom and thigh, where the fingers had touched; whereas, in the Venus de Medici, if I remember rightly, the fingers are sculptured quite free of the person. The man who showed the statue now lifted from a corner a round block of marble, which had been lying there among other fragments; and this he placed upon the shattered neck of the Venus; and behold it was her head and face, perfect all but the nose! Even in spite of this mutilation, it seemed immediately to light up and vivify the entire figure; and whatever I may heretofore have written about the countenance of the Venus de Medici, I hereby record my belief that that head has been wrongfully foisted upon the statue; at all events, it is unspeakably inferior to this newly discovered one. . . .

The proprietor of the vineyard stood by; a man with the most purple face and hugest and reddest nose that I ever beheld in my life. It must have taken innumerable hogsheads of his thin vintages to empurple his face in this manner. He chuckled much over the statue, and, I suppose, counts upon making his fortune by it. He is now awaiting a bid from the Papal government, which, I believe, has the right of pre-emption whenever any relics of ancient art are discovered. If the statue could but be smuggled out of Italy, it might command almost any price. There is not, I think, any name of a sculptor on the pedestal, as on that of the Venus de Medici. A dolphin, or some other fish, is sculptured on the pillar, or whatever it be, against which she leans. The statue is of Greek marble. She was first found about eight days ago, but has been open for inspection only a day or two; and already the visitors come in throngs, and the beggars gather about the entrance of the vineyard. A wine-shop, too, seems to have been opened on the premises for the accommodation of this great concourse; and we saw a row of German artists sitting at a long table, in the open air, each with his tumbler of thin wine and something to eat, before him; for the Germans refresh nature ten times to another person's once.

How the whole world might be peopled with antique beauty, if the Romans would but dig!

Piazza di Poli, April 19th, Tuesday.

Gen^l Pierce leaves Rome this morning for Venice, by way of Ancona, and taking the steamer thence to Trieste. I had hoped to make the journey along with him; but Una's terrible illness has made it necessary for us to continue here another month, and we are thankful that this seems now to

be the extent of our misfortune.⁹³ Never having had any trouble, before, that pierced into my very vitals, I did not know what comfort there might be in the manly sympathy of a friend; but Pierce has undergone so great a sorrow of his own, and has so large and kindly a heart, and is so tender and so strong, that he really did us good, and I shall always love him the better for the recollection of these dark days. Thank God, the thing we dreaded did not come to pass.

Pierce is wonderfully little changed; indeed, now that he has won and enjoyed (if there were any enjoyment in it) the highest success that public life could give him, he seems more like what he was in his early youth than at any subsequent period. He is evidently happier than I have ever known him since our college days; satisfied with what he has been, and with the position in the country that remains to him, after filling such an office. Amid all his former successes, (early as they came, and great as they were,) I always perceived that something gnawed within him, and kept him forever restless and miserable; nothing that he won was worth the winning, except as a step gained towards the summit. I cannot tell how early he began to look towards the Presidency; but I believe he would have died a miserable man without it. And yet, what infinite chances there seemed to be against his attaining it! When I look at it in one way, it strikes me as absolutely miraculous; in another, it came like an event that I had all along expected. It was due to his wonderful tact, which is of so subtle a character that he himself is but partially sensible of it.

Well; I have found in him, here in Rome, the whole of my early friend, and even better than I used to know him; a heart as true and affectionate; a mind much widened and deepened by his experience of life. We hold just the same relation to one another as of yore; and we have passed all the turning-off places, and may hope to go on together, still the same dear friends, as long as we live. I do not love him one whit the less for having been President, nor for having done me the greatest good in his power; a fact that speaks eloquently in his favour, and perhaps says a little for myself. If he had been merely a benefactor, perhaps I might not have borne it so well; but each did his best for the other, as friend for friend.⁹⁴

Piazza di Poli, May 15th, 1859, Sunday.

Yesterday afternoon, my wife, Julian, & I, went to the Barberini picture-gallery, to take a farewell look at the Beatrice Cenci, which I have twice visited before. I attempted a description of it at my first visit, more than a year ago; but the picture is quite indescribable, inconceivable, and unaccountable in its effect; for if you attempt to analyze it, you can never

succeed in getting at the secret of its fascination. Its peculiar expression eludes a straightforward glance, and can only be caught by side glimpses, or when the eye falls upon it casually, as it were, and without thinking to discover anything; as if the picture had a life and consciousness of its own, and were resolved not to betray its secret of grief or guilt, though it wears the full expression of it when it imagines itself unseen. I think no other such magical effect can ever have been wrought by pencil. I looked close into its eyes, with a determination to see all that there was in them, and could see nothing that might not have been in any young girl's eyes; and yet, a moment afterwards, there was the expression (seen aside, and vanishing in a moment) of a being un-humanized by some terrible fate, and gazing at me out of a remote and inaccessible region, where she was frightened to be alone, but where no sympathy could reach her. The mouth is beyond measure touching; the lips apart, looking as innocent as a baby's after it has been crying. The picture can never be copied. . . . I hated to leave the picture, and yet was glad when I had taken my last glimpse, because it so perplexed and troubled me not to be able to get hold of its secret.

Thence we went to the church of the Capuchins, and saw Guido's Archangel. . . . The expression is of heavenly severity, and a degree of pain, trouble, or disgust, at being brought in contact with sin, even for the purpose of quelling and punishing it. There is something finical in the copy, what I do not find in the original; the sandaled feet are here those of an angel; in the mosaic, they are those of a celestial coxcomb, treading daintily, as if he were afraid they would be soiled by the touch of Lucifer.⁹⁵

Hotel des Colonies (Marseilles) May 29th, Saturday.

Wednesday was the day fixed for our departure from Rome, and after breakfast, I walked to the Pincian, and saw the garden and the city, and the Borghese Grounds, and St Peter's, in an earlier sunlight than ever before. Methought they never looked so beautiful; nor the sky so bright and blue. I saw Soracte on the horizon,⁹⁶ and I looked at everything as if for the last time; nor do I wish ever to see any of these objects again, though no place ever took so strong a hold of my being, as Rome, nor ever seemed so close to me, and so strangely familiar. I seem to know it better than my birth place, and to have known it longer; and though I have been very miserable there, and languid with the effects of the atmosphere, and disgusted with a thousand things in daily life, still I cannot say I hate it—perhaps might fairly own a love for it. But (life being too short for such questionable and troublesome enjoyments) I desire never to set eyes on it again.

Hotel d'Europe (Avignon) June 1st, Wednesday.

I remember nothing very special to put down about Marseilles; though it was really like passing from death into life, to find ourselves in busy, cheerful, effervescing France, after living so long between asleep and awake in sluggish Italy.

Hotel Wheeler, (Havre) June 22^d, Wednesday.

We arrived at this Hotel, last evening, from Paris; and find ourselves on the border of the Petit Quay Notre Dame, with steamers and boats right under our window, and all sorts of dock business going on briskly. . . . But I flag terribly; scenes and things make but dim reflections in my inward mirror; and if ever I have a thought, the words do not come aptly to clothe it. I may as well give up all attempts at journalizing.

So I shall say nothing of our journey across France from Geneva; nor of our five days' stay in Paris; nor of our journey thence to Havre. We came thither principally to accompany Miss Shepard, whom I put on board the Steamer Vanderbilt for New York, last evening, and who sails this morning. Tonight, we ourselves shall take our departure in a steamer for Southampton, whence we shall go to London;—thence, in a week or two, to Liverpool;—thence to Boston and Concord, there to enjoy (if enjoyment it prove) a little rest, and sense that we are at home.