Chapter LXXI: Prospect Of The Ruins Of Rome In The Fifteenth Century.--Part I.

Prospect Of The Ruins Of Rome In The Fifteenth Century.--Four Causes Of Decay And Destruction.--Example Of The Coliseum.--Renovation Of The City.--Conclusion Of The Whole Work.

In the last days of Pope Eugenius the Fourth, [101] two of his servants, the learned Poggius [1] and a friend, ascended the Capitoline hill; reposed themselves among the ruins of columns and temples; and viewed from that commanding spot the wide and various prospect of desolation. [2] The place and the object gave ample scope for moralizing on the vicissitudes of fortune, which spares neither man nor the proudest of his works, which buries empires and cities in a common grave; and it was agreed, that in proportion to her former greatness, the fall of Rome was the more awful and deplorable. "Her primeval state, such as she might appear in a remote age, when Evander entertained the stranger of Troy, [3] has been delineated by the fancy of Virgil. This Tarpeian rock was then a savage and solitary thicket: in the time of the poet, it was crowned with the golden roofs of a temple; the temple is overthrown, the gold has been pillaged, the wheel of fortune has accomplished her revolution, and the sacred ground is again disfigured with thorns and brambles. The hill of the Capitol, on which we sit, was formerly the head of the Roman empire, the citadel of the earth, the terror of kings; illustrated by the footsteps of so many triumphs, enriched with the

spoils and tributes of so many nations. This spectacle of the world, how is it fallen! how changed! how defaced! The path of victory is obliterated by vines, and the benches of the senators are concealed by a dunghill. Cast your eyes on the Palatine hill, and seek among the shapeless and enormous fragments the marble theatre, the obelisks, the colossal statues, the porticos of Nero's palace: survey the other hills of the city, the vacant space is interrupted only by ruins and gardens. The forum of the Roman people, where they assembled to enact their laws and elect their magistrates, is now enclosed for the cultivation of pot-herbs, or thrown open for the reception of swine and buffaloes. The public and private edifices, that were founded for eternity, lie prostrate, naked, and broken, like the limbs of a mighty giant; and the ruin is the more visible, from the stupendous relics that have survived the injuries of time and fortune." [4]

[Footnote 101: It should be Pope Martin the Fifth. See Gibbon's own note, ch. lxv, note 51 and Hobhouse, Illustrations of Childe Harold, p. 155.--M.]

[Footnote 1: I have already (notes 50, 51, on chap. lxv.) mentioned the age, character, and writings of Poggius; and particularly noticed the date of this elegant moral lecture on the varieties of fortune.]

[Footnote 2: Consedimus in ipsis Tarpeiæ arcis ruinis, pone ingens portæ cujusdam, ut puto, templi, marmoreum limen, plurimasque passim confractas columnas, unde magnâ ex parte prospectus urbis patet, (p.

5.)]

[Footnote 3: Æneid viii. 97--369. This ancient picture, so artfully introduced, and so exquisitely finished, must have been highly interesting to an inhabitant of Rome; and our early studies allow us to sympathize in the feelings of a Roman.]

[Footnote 4: Capitolium adeo.... immutatum ut vineæ in senatorum subsellia successerint, stercorum ac purgamentorum receptaculum factum. Respice ad Palatinum montem..... vasta rudera.... cæteros colles perlustra omnia vacua ædificiis, ruinis vineisque oppleta conspicies, (Poggius, de Varietat. Fortunæ p. 21.)]

These relics are minutely described by Poggius, one of the first who raised his eyes from the monuments of legendary, to those of classic, superstition. [5] 1.Besides a bridge, an arch, a sepulchre, and the pyramid of Cestius, he could discern, of the age of the republic, a double row of vaults, in the salt-office of the Capitol, which were inscribed with the name and munificence of Catulus. 2. Eleven temples were visible in some degree, from the perfect form of the Pantheon, to the three arches and a marble column of the temple of Peace, which Vespasian erected after the civil wars and the Jewish triumph. 3. Of the number, which he rashly defines, of seven therm, or public baths, none were sufficiently entire to represent the use and distribution of the several parts: but those of Diocletian and Antoninus Caracalla still retained the titles of the founders, and astonished the curious

spectator, who, in observing their solidity and extent, the variety of marbles, the size and multitude of the columns, compared the labor and expense with the use and importance. Of the baths of Constantine, of Alexander, of Domitian, or rather of Titus, some vestige might yet be found. 4. The triumphal arches of Titus, Severus, and Constantine, were entire, both the structure and the inscriptions; a falling fragment was honored with the name of Trajan; and two arches, then extant, in the Flaminian way, have been ascribed to the baser memory of Faustina and Gallienus. [501] 5. After the wonder of the Coliseum, Poggius might have overlooked small amphitheatre of brick, most probably for the use of the prætorian camp: the theatres of Marcellus and Pompey were occupied in a great measure by public and private buildings; and in the Circus, Agonalis and Maximus, little more than the situation and the form could be investigated. 6. The columns of Trajan and Antonine were still erect; but the Egyptian obelisks were broken or buried. A people of gods and heroes, the workmanship of art, was reduced to one equestrian figure of gilt brass, and to five marble statues, of which the most conspicuous were the two horses of Phidias and Praxiteles. 7. The two mausoleums or sepulchres of Augustus and Hadrian could not totally be lost: but the former was only visible as a mound of earth; and the latter, the castle of St. Angelo, had acquired the name and appearance of a modern fortress. With the addition of some separate and nameless columns, such were the remains of the ancient city; for the marks of a more recent structure might be detected in the walls, which formed a circumference of ten miles, included three hundred and seventy-nine turrets, and opened into the country by thirteen gates.

[Footnote 5: See Poggius, p. 8--22.]

[Footnote 501: One was in the Via Nomentana; est alter præterea Gallieno principi dicatus, ut superscriptio indicat, Viâ Nomentana. Hobhouse, p. 154. Poggio likewise mentions the building which Gibbon ambiguously says be "might have overlooked."--M.]

This melancholy picture was drawn above nine hundred years after the fall of the Western empire, and even of the Gothic kingdom of Italy. A long period of distress and anarchy, in which empire, and arts, and riches had migrated from the banks of the Tyber, was incapable of restoring or adorning the city; and, as all that is human must retrograde if it do not advance, every successive age must have hastened the ruin of the works of antiquity. To measure the progress of decay, and to ascertain, at each æra, the state of each edifice, would be an endless and a useless labor; and I shall content myself with two observations, which will introduce a short inquiry into the general causes and effects. 1. Two hundred years before the eloquent complaint of Poggius, an anonymous writer composed a description of Rome. [6] His ignorance may repeat the same objects under strange and fabulous names. Yet this barbarous topographer had eyes and ears; he could observe the visible remains; he could listen to the tradition of the people; and he distinctly enumerates seven theatres, eleven baths, twelve arches, and eighteen palaces, of which many had disappeared before the time of Poggius. It is apparent, that many stately monuments of antiquity

survived till a late period, [7] and that the principles of destruction acted with vigorous and increasing energy in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. 2. The same reflection must be applied to the three last ages; and we should vainly seek the Septizonium of Severus; [8] which is celebrated by Petrarch and the antiquarians of the sixteenth century. While the Roman edifices were still entire, the first blows, however weighty and impetuous, were resisted by the solidity of the mass and the harmony of the parts; but the slightest touch would precipitate the fragments of arches and columns, that already nodded to their fall.

[Footnote 6: Liber de Mirabilibus Romæ ex Registro Nicolai Cardinalis de Arragoniâ in Bibliothecâ St. Isidori Armario IV., No. 69. This treatise, with some short but pertinent notes, has been published by Montfaucon, (Diarium Italicum, p. 283--301,) who thus delivers his own critical opinion: Scriptor xiiimi. circiter sæculi, ut ibidem notatur; antiquariæ rei imperitus et, ut ab illo ævo, nugis et anilibus fabellis refertus: sed, quia monumenta, quæ iis temporibus Romæ supererant pro modulo recenset, non parum inde lucis mutuabitur qui Romanis antiquitatibus indagandis operam navabit, (p. 283.)]

[Footnote 7: The Père Mabillon (Analecta, tom. iv. p. 502) has published an anonymous pilgrim of the ixth century, who, in his visit round the churches and holy places at Rome, touches on several buildings, especially porticos, which had disappeared before the xiiith century.]

[Footnote 8: On the Septizonium, see the Mémoires sur Pétrarque, (tom.

i. p. 325,) Donatus, (p. 338,) and Nardini, (p. 117, 414.)]

After a diligent inquiry, I can discern four principal causes of the ruin of Rome, which continued to operate in a period of more than a thousand years. I. The injuries of time and nature. II. The hostile attacks of the Barbarians and Christians. III. The use and abuse of the materials. And, IV. The domestic quarrels of the Romans.

I. The art of man is able to construct monuments far more permanent than the narrow span of his own existence; yet these monuments, like himself, are perishable and frail; and in the boundless annals of time, his life and his labors must equally be measured as a fleeting moment. Of a simple and solid edifice, it is not easy, however, to circumscribe the duration. As the wonders of ancient days, the pyramids [9] attracted the curiosity of the ancients: a hundred generations, the leaves of autumn, have dropped [10] into the grave; and after the fall of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies, the Cæsars and caliphs, the same pyramids stand erect and unshaken above the floods of the Nile. A complex figure of various and minute parts to more accessible to injury and decay; and the silent lapse of time is often accelerated by hurricanes and earthquakes, by fires and inundations. The air and earth have doubtless been shaken; and the lofty turrets of Rome have tottered from their foundations; but the seven hills do not appear to be placed on the great cavities of the globe; nor has the city, in any age, been exposed to the convulsions of nature, which, in the climate of Antioch, Lisbon, or Lima, have crumbled in a few moments the works of ages into dust. Fire is the most

powerful agent of life and death: the rapid mischief may be kindled and propagated by the industry or negligence of mankind; and every period of the Roman annals is marked by the repetition of similar calamities. A memorable conflagration, the guilt or misfortune of Nero's reign, continued, though with unequal fury, either six or nine days. [11] Innumerable buildings, crowded in close and crooked streets, supplied perpetual fuel for the flames; and when they ceased, four only of the fourteen regions were left entire; three were totally destroyed, and seven were deformed by the relics of smoking and lacerated edifices. [12] In the full meridian of empire, the metropolis arose with fresh beauty from her ashes; yet the memory of the old deplored their irreparable losses, the arts of Greece, the trophies of victory, the monuments of primitive or fabulous antiquity. In the days of distress and anarchy, every wound is mortal, every fall irretrievable; nor can the damage be restored either by the public care of government, or the activity of private interest. Yet two causes may be alleged, which render the calamity of fire more destructive to a flourishing than a decayed city. 1. The more combustible materials of brick, timber, and metals, are first melted or consumed; but the flames may play without injury or effect on the naked walls, and massy arches, that have been despoiled of their ornaments. 2. It is among the common and plebeian habitations, that a mischievous spark is most easily blown to a conflagration; but as soon as they are devoured, the greater edifices, which have resisted or escaped, are left as so many islands in a state of solitude and safety. From her situation, Rome is exposed to the danger of frequent inundations. Without excepting the Tyber, the rivers that descend from

either side of the Apennine have a short and irregular course; a shallow stream in the summer heats; an impetuous torrent, when it is swelled in the spring or winter, by the fall of rain, and the melting of the snows. When the current is repelled from the sea by adverse winds, when the ordinary bed is inadequate to the weight of waters, they rise above the banks, and overspread, without limits or control, the plains and cities of the adjacent country. Soon after the triumph of the first Punic war, the Tyber was increased by unusual rains; and the inundation, surpassing all former measure of time and place, destroyed all the buildings that were situated below the hills of Rome. According to the variety of ground, the same mischief was produced by different means; and the edifices were either swept away by the sudden impulse, or dissolved and undermined by the long continuance, of the flood. [13] Under the reign of Augustus, the same calamity was renewed: the lawless river overturned the palaces and temples on its banks; [14] and, after the labors of the emperor in cleansing and widening the bed that was encumbered with ruins, [15] the vigilance of his successors was exercised by similar dangers and designs. The project of diverting into new channels the Tyber itself, or some of the dependent streams, was long opposed by superstition and local interests; [16] nor did the use compensate the toil and cost of the tardy and imperfect execution. The servitude of rivers is the noblest and most important victory which man has obtained over the licentiousness of nature; [17] and if such were the ravages of the Tyber under a firm and active government, what could oppose, or who can enumerate, the injuries of the city, after the fall of the Western empire? A remedy was at length produced by the evil itself: the

accumulation of rubbish and the earth, that has been washed down from the hills, is supposed to have elevated the plain of Rome, fourteen or fifteen feet, perhaps, above the ancient level; [18] and the modern city is less accessible to the attacks of the river. [19]

[Footnote 9: The age of the pyramids is remote and unknown, since Diodorus Siculus (tom. i l. i. c. 44, p. 72) is unable to decide whether they were constructed 1000, or 3400, years before the clxxxth Olympiad. Sir John Marsham's contracted scale of the Egyptian dynasties would fix them about 2000 years before Christ, (Canon. Chronicus, p. 47.)]

[Footnote 10: See the speech of Glaucus in the Iliad, (Z. 146.) This natural but melancholy image is peculiar to Homer.]

[Footnote 11: The learning and criticism of M. des Vignoles (Histoire Critique de la République des Lettres, tom. viii. p. 47--118, ix. p. 172--187) dates the fire of Rome from A.D. 64, July 19, and the subsequent persecution of the Christians from November 15 of the same year.]

[Footnote 12: Quippe in regiones quatuordecim Roma dividitur, quarum quatuor integræ manebant, tres solo tenus dejectæ: septem reliquis pauca testorum vestigia supererant, lacera et semiusta. Among the old relics that were irreparably lost, Tacitus enumerates the temple of the moon of Servius Tullius; the fane and altar consecrated by Evander præsenti Herculi; the temple of Jupiter Stator, a vow of Romulus; the palace of

Numa; the temple of Vesta cum Penatibus populi Romani. He then deplores the opes tot victoriis quæsitæ et Græcarum artium decora.... multa quæ seniores meminerant, quæ reparari nequibant, (Annal. xv. 40, 41.)]

[Footnote 13: A. U. C. 507, repentina subversio ipsius Romæ prævenit triumphum Romanorum.... diversæ ignium aquarumque clades pene absumsere urbem Nam Tiberis insolitis auctus imbribus et ultra opinionem, vel diuturnitate vel maguitudine redundans, omnia Romæ ædificia in plano posita delevit. Diversæ qualitates locorum ad unam convenere perniciem: quoniam et quæ segnior inundatio tenuit madefacta dissolvit, et quæ cursus torrentis invenit impulsa dejecit, (Orosius, Hist. l. iv. c. 11, p. 244, edit. Havercamp.) Yet we may observe, that it is the plan and study of the Christian apologist to magnify the calamities of the Pagan world.]

[Footnote 14:

Vidimus flavum Tiberim, retortis
Littore Etrusco violenter undis,
Ire dejectum monumenta Regis
Templaque Vestæ. (Horat. Carm. I. 2.)

If the palace of Numa and temple of Vesta were thrown down in Horace's time, what was consumed of those buildings by Nero's fire could hardly deserve the epithets of vetustissima or incorrupta.]

[Footnote 15: Ad coercendas inundationes alveum Tiberis laxavit, ac repurgavit, completum olim ruderibus, et ædificiorum prolapsionibus coarctatum, (Suetonius in Augusto, c. 30.)]

[Footnote 16: Tacitus (Annal. i. 79) reports the petitions of the different towns of Italy to the senate against the measure; and we may applaud the progress of reason. On a similar occasion, local interests would undoubtedly be consulted: but an English House of Commons would reject with contempt the arguments of superstition, "that nature had assigned to the rivers their proper course," &c.]

[Footnote 17: See the Epoques de la Nature of the eloquent and philosophic Buffon. His picture of Guyana, in South America, is that of a new and savage land, in which the waters are abandoned to themselves without being regulated by human industry, (p. 212, 561, quarto edition.)]

[Footnote 18: In his travels in Italy, Mr. Addison (his works, vol. ii. p. 98, Baskerville's edition) has observed this curious and unquestionable fact.]

[Footnote 19: Yet in modern times, the Tyber has sometimes damaged the city, and in the years 1530, 1557, 1598, the annals of Muratori record three mischievous and memorable inundations, (tom. xiv. p. 268, 429, tom. xv. p. 99, &c.) * Note: The level of the Tyber was at one time supposed to be considerably raised: recent investigations seem to be

conclusive against this supposition. See a brief, but satisfactory statement of the question in Bunsen and Platner, Roms Beschreibung. vol. i. p. 29.--M.]

II. The crowd of writers of every nation, who impute the destruction of the Roman monuments to the Goths and the Christians, have neglected to inquire how far they were animated by a hostile principle, and how far they possessed the means and the leisure to satiate their enmity. In the preceding volumes of this History, I have described the triumph of barbarism and religion; and I can only resume, in a few words, their real or imaginary connection with the ruin of ancient Rome. Our fancy may create, or adopt, a pleasing romance, that the Goths and Vandals sallied from Scandinavia, ardent to avenge the flight of Odin; [20] to break the chains, and to chastise the oppressors, of mankind; that they wished to burn the records of classic literature, and to found their national architecture on the broken members of the Tuscan and Corinthian orders. But in simple truth, the northern conquerors were neither sufficiently savage, nor sufficiently refined, to entertain such aspiring ideas of destruction and revenge. The shepherds of Scythia and Germany had been educated in the armies of the empire, whose discipline they acquired, and whose weakness they invaded: with the familiar use of the Latin tongue, they had learned to reverence the name and titles of Rome; and, though incapable of emulating, they were more inclined to admire, than to abolish, the arts and studies of a brighter period. In the transient possession of a rich and unresisting capital, the soldiers of Alaric and Genseric were stimulated by the passions of a victorious

army; amidst the wanton indulgence of lust or cruelty, portable wealth was the object of their search; nor could they derive either pride or pleasure from the unprofitable reflection, that they had battered to the ground the works of the consuls and Cæsars. Their moments were indeed precious; the Goths evacuated Rome on the sixth, [21] the Vandals on the fifteenth, day: [22] and, though it be far more difficult to build than to destroy, their hasty assault would have made a slight impression on the solid piles of antiquity. We may remember, that both Alaric and Genseric affected to spare the buildings of the city; that they subsisted in strength and beauty under the auspicious government of Theodoric; [23] and that the momentary resentment of Totila [24] was disarmed by his own temper and the advice of his friends and enemies. From these innocent Barbarians, the reproach may be transferred to the Catholics of Rome. The statues, altars, and houses, of the dæmons, were an abomination in their eyes; and in the absolute command of the city, they might labor with zeal and perseverance to erase the idolatry of their ancestors. The demolition of the temples in the East [25] affords to them an example of conduct, and to us an argument of belief; and it is probable that a portion of guilt or merit may be imputed with justice to the Roman proselytes. Yet their abhorrence was confined to the monuments of heathen superstition; and the civil structures that were dedicated to the business or pleasure of society might be preserved without injury or scandal. The change of religion was accomplished, not by a popular tumult, but by the decrees of the emperors, of the senate, and of time. Of the Christian hierarchy, the bishops of Rome were commonly the most prudent and least fanatic; nor can any positive charge

be opposed to the meritorious act of saving or converting the majestic structure of the Pantheon. [26] [261]

[Footnote 20: I take this opportunity of declaring, that in the course of twelve years, I have forgotten, or renounced, the flight of Odin from Azoph to Sweden, which I never very seriously believed, (vol. i. p. 283.) The Goths are apparently Germans: but all beyond Cæsar and Tacitus is darkness or fable, in the antiquities of Germany.]

[Footnote 21: History of the Decline, &c., vol. iii. p. 291.]

[Footnote 22:----------vol. iii. p. 464.]

[Footnote 23:----------vol. iv. p. 23--25.]

[Footnote 24:----------vol. iv. p. 258.]

[Footnote 25:----------vol. iii. c. xxviii. p. 139--148.]

[Footnote 26: Eodem tempore petiit a Phocate principe templum, quod appellatur Pantheon, in quo fecit ecclesiam Sanctæ Mariæ semper Virginis, et omnium martyrum; in quâ ecclesiæ princeps multa bona obtulit, (Anastasius vel potius Liber Pontificalis in Bonifacio IV., in Muratori, Script. Rerum Italicarum, tom. iii. P. i. p. 135.) According to the anonymous writer in Montfaucon, the Pantheon had been vowed by Agrippa to Cybele and Neptune, and was dedicated by Boniface IV., on the

calends of November, to the Virgin, quæ est mater omnium sanctorum, (p. 297, 298.)]

[Footnote 261: The popes, under the dominion of the emperor and of the exarchs, according to Feas's just observation, did not possess the power of disposing of the buildings and monuments of the city according to their own will. Bunsen and Platner, vol. i. p. 241.--M.]

III. The value of any object that supplies the wants or pleasures of mankind is compounded of its substance and its form, of the materials and the manufacture. Its price must depend on the number of persons by whom it may be acquired and used; on the extent of the market; and consequently on the ease or difficulty of remote exportation, according to the nature of the commodity, its local situation, and the temporary circumstances of the world. The Barbarian conquerors of Rome usurped in a moment the toil and treasure of successive ages; but, except the luxuries of immediate consumption, they must view without desire all that could not be removed from the city in the Gothic wagons or the fleet of the Vandals. [27] Gold and silver were the first objects of their avarice; as in every country, and in the smallest compass, they represent the most ample command of the industry and possessions of mankind. A vase or a statue of those precious metals might tempt the vanity of some Barbarian chief; but the grosser multitude, regardless of the form, was tenacious only of the substance; and the melted ingots might be readily divided and stamped into the current coin of the empire. The less active or less fortunate robbers were reduced to the

baser plunder of brass, lead, iron, and copper: whatever had escaped the Goths and Vandals was pillaged by the Greek tyrants; and the emperor Constans, in his rapacious visit, stripped the bronze tiles from the roof of the Pantheon. [28] The edifices of Rome might be considered as a vast and various mine; the first labor of extracting the materials was already performed; the metals were purified and cast; the marbles were hewn and polished; and after foreign and domestic rapine had been satiated, the remains of the city, could a purchaser have been found, were still venal. The monuments of antiquity had been left naked of their precious ornaments; but the Romans would demolish with their own hands the arches and walls, if the hope of profit could surpass the cost of the labor and exportation. If Charlemagne had fixed in Italy the seat of the Western empire, his genius would have aspired to restore, rather than to violate, the works of the Cæsars; but policy confined the French monarch to the forests of Germany; his taste could be gratified only by destruction; and the new palace of Aix la Chapelle was decorated with the marbles of Ravenna [29] and Rome. [30] Five hundred years after Charlemagne, a king of Sicily, Robert, the wisest and most liberal sovereign of the age, was supplied with the same materials by the easy navigation of the Tyber and the sea; and Petrarch sighs an indignant complaint, that the ancient capital of the world should adorn from her own bowels the slothful luxury of Naples. [31] But these examples of plunder or purchase were rare in the darker ages; and the Romans, alone and unenvied, might have applied to their private or public use the remaining structures of antiquity, if in their present form and situation they had not been useless in a great measure to the city and

its inhabitants. The walls still described the old circumference, but the city had descended from the seven hills into the Campus Martius; and some of the noblest monuments which had braved the injuries of time were left in a desert, far remote from the habitations of mankind. The palaces of the senators were no longer adapted to the manners or fortunes of their indigent successors: the use of baths [32] and porticos was forgotten: in the sixth century, the games of the theatre, amphitheatre, and circus, had been interrupted: some temples were devoted to the prevailing worship; but the Christian churches preferred the holy figure of the cross; and fashion, or reason, had distributed after a peculiar model the cells and offices of the cloister. Under the ecclesiastical reign, the number of these pious foundations was enormously multiplied; and the city was crowded with forty monasteries of men, twenty of women, and sixty chapters and colleges of canons and priests, [33] who aggravated, instead of relieving, the depopulation of the tenth century. But if the forms of ancient architecture were disregarded by a people insensible of their use and beauty, the plentiful materials were applied to every call of necessity or superstition; till the fairest columns of the Ionic and Corinthian orders, the richest marbles of Paros and Numidia, were degraded, perhaps to the support of a convent or a stable. The daily havoc which is perpetrated by the Turks in the cities of Greece and Asia may afford a melancholy example; and in the gradual destruction of the monuments of Rome, Sixtus the Fifth may alone be excused for employing the stones of the Septizonium in the glorious edifice of St. Peter's. [34] A fragment, a ruin, howsoever mangled or profaned, may be viewed with pleasure and

regret; but the greater part of the marble was deprived of substance, as well as of place and proportion; it was burnt to lime for the purpose of cement. [341] Since the arrival of Poggius, the temple of Concord, [35] and many capital structures, had vanished from his eyes; and an epigram of the same age expresses a just and pious fear, that the continuance of this practice would finally annihilate all the monuments of antiquity. [36] The smallness of their numbers was the sole check on the demands and depredations of the Romans. The imagination of Petrarch might create the presence of a mighty people; [37] and I hesitate to believe, that, even in the fourteenth century, they could be reduced to a contemptible list of thirty-three thousand inhabitants. From that period to the reign of Leo the Tenth, if they multiplied to the amount of eighty-five thousand, [38] the increase of citizens was in some degree pernicious to the ancient city.

[Footnote 27: Flaminius Vacca (apud Montfaucon, p. 155, 156. His memoir is likewise printed, p. 21, at the end of the Roman Antica of Nardini) and several Romans, doctrinâ graves, were persuaded that the Goths buried their treasures at Rome, and bequeathed the secret marks filiis nepotibusque. He relates some anecdotes to prove, that in his own time, these places were visited and rifled by the Transalpine pilgrims, the heirs of the Gothic conquerors.]

[Footnote 28: Omnia quæ erant in ære ad ornatum civitatis deposuit, sed e ecclesiam B. Mariæ ad martyres quæ de tegulis æreis cooperta discooperuit, (Anast. in Vitalian. p. 141.) The base and sacrilegious

Greek had not even the poor pretence of plundering a heathen temple, the Pantheon was already a Catholic church.]

[Footnote 29: For the spoils of Ravenna (musiva atque marmora) see the original grant of Pope Adrian I. to Charlemagne, (Codex Carolin. epist. lxvii. in Muratori, Script. Ital. tom. iii. P. ii. p. 223.)]

[Footnote 30: I shall quote the authentic testimony of the Saxon poet, (A.D. 887--899,) de Rebus gestis Caroli magni, l. v. 437--440, in the Historians of France, (tom. v. p. 180:)

Ad quæ marmoreas præstabat Roma columnas,
Quasdam præcipuas pulchra Ravenna dedit.
De tam longinquâ poterit regione vetustas
Illius ornatum, Francia, ferre tibi.

And I shall add from the Chronicle of Sigebert, (Historians of France, tom. v. p. 378,) extruxit etiam Aquisgrani basilicam plurimæ pulchritudinis, ad cujus structuram a Roma et Ravenna columnas et marmora devehi fecit.]

[Footnote 31: I cannot refuse to transcribe a long passage of Petrarch (Opp. p. 536, 537) in Epistolâ hortatoriâ ad Nicolaum Laurentium; it is so strong and full to the point: Nec pudor aut pietas continuit quominus impii spoliata Dei templa, occupatas arces, opes publicas, regiones urbis, atque honores magistratûum inter se divisos; (habeant?) quam

unâ in re, turbulenti ac seditiosi homines et totius reliquæ vitæ consiliis et rationibus discordes, inhumani fderis stupendà societate convenirent, in pontes et mnia atque immeritos lapides desævirent. Denique post vi vel senio collapsa palatia, quæ quondam ingentes tenuerunt viri, post diruptos arcus triumphales, (unde majores horum forsitan corruerunt,) de ipsius vetustatis ac propriæ impietatis fragminibus vilem quæstum turpi mercimonio captare non puduit. Itaque nunc, heu dolor! heu scelus indignum! de vestris marmoreis columnis, de liminibus templorum, (ad quæ nuper ex orbe toto concursus devotissimus fiebat,) de imaginibus sepulchrorum sub quibus patrum vestrorum venerabilis civis (cinis?) erat, ut reliquas sileam, desidiosa Neapolis adornatur. Sic paullatim ruinæ ipsæ deficiunt. Yet King Robert was the friend of Petrarch.]

[Footnote 32: Yet Charlemagne washed and swam at Aix la Chapelle with a hundred of his courtiers, (Eginhart, c. 22, p. 108, 109,) and Muratori describes, as late as the year 814, the public baths which were built at Spoleto in Italy, (Annali, tom. vi. p. 416.)]

[Footnote 33: See the Annals of Italy, A.D. 988. For this and the preceding fact, Muratori himself is indebted to the Benedictine history of Père Mabillon.]

[Footnote 34: Vita di Sisto Quinto, da Gregorio Leti, tom. iii. p. 50.]

[Footnote 341: From the quotations in Bunsen's Dissertation, it may be

suspected that this slow but continual process of destruction was the most fatal. Ancient Rome eas considered a quarry from which the church, the castle of the baron, or even the hovel of the peasant, might be repaired.--M.]

[Footnote 35: Porticus ædis Concordiæ, quam cum primum ad urbem accessi vidi fere integram opere marmoreo admodum specioso: Romani postmodum ad calcem ædem totam et porticûs partem disjectis columnis sunt demoliti, (p. 12.) The temple of Concord was therefore not destroyed by a sedition in the xiiith century, as I have read in a MS. treatise del' Governo civile di Rome, lent me formerly at Rome, and ascribed (I believe falsely) to the celebrated Gravina. Poggius likewise affirms that the sepulchre of Cæcilia Metella was burnt for lime, (p. 19, 20.)]

[Footnote 36: Composed by Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., and published by Mabillon, from a MS. of the queen of Sweden, (Musæum Italicum, tom. i. p. 97.)

Oblectat me, Roma, tuas spectare ruinas:
Ex cujus lapsû gloria prisca patet.
Sed tuus hic populus muris defossa vetustis
Calcis in obsequium marmora dura coquit.
Impia tercentum si sic gens egerit annos
Nullum hinc indicium nobilitatis erit.]

[Footnote 37: Vagabamur pariter in illâ urbe tam magnâ; quæ, cum propter

spatium vacua videretur, populum habet immensum, (Opp p. 605 Epist. Familiares, ii. 14.)]

[Footnote 38: These states of the population of Rome at different periods are derived from an ingenious treatise of the physician Lancisi, de Romani Cli Qualitatibus, (p. 122.)]

IV. I have reserved for the last, the most potent and forcible cause of destruction, the domestic hostilities of the Romans themselves. Under the dominion of the Greek and French emperors, the peace of the city was disturbed by accidental, though frequent, seditions: it is from the decline of the latter, from the beginning of the tenth century, that we may date the licentiousness of private war, which violated with impunity the laws of the Code and the Gospel, without respecting the majesty of the absent sovereign, or the presence and person of the vicar of Christ. In a dark period of five hundred years, Rome was perpetually afflicted by the sanguinary quarrels of the nobles and the people, the Guelphs and Ghibelines, the Colonna and Ursini; and if much has escaped the knowledge, and much is unworthy of the notice, of history, I have exposed in the two preceding chapters the causes and effects of the public disorders. At such a time, when every quarrel was decided by the sword, and none could trust their lives or properties to the impotence of law, the powerful citizens were armed for safety, or offence, against the domestic enemies whom they feared or hated. Except Venice alone, the same dangers and designs were common to all the free republics of Italy; and the nobles usurped the prerogative of fortifying their houses, and

erecting strong towers, [39] that were capable of resisting a sudden attack. The cities were filled with these hostile edifices; and the example of Lucca, which contained three hundred towers; her law, which confined their height to the measure of fourscore feet, may be extended with suitable latitude to the more opulent and populous states. The first step of the senator Brancaleone in the establishment of peace and justice, was to demolish (as we have already seen) one hundred and forty of the towers of Rome; and, in the last days of anarchy and discord, as late as the reign of Martin the Fifth, forty-four still stood in one of the thirteen or fourteen regions of the city. To this mischievous purpose the remains of antiquity were most readily adapted: the temples and arches afforded a broad and solid basis for the new structures of brick and stone; and we can name the modern turrets that were raised on the triumphal monuments of Julius Cæsar, Titus, and the Antonines. [40] With some slight alterations, a theatre, an amphitheatre, a mausoleum, was transformed into a strong and spacious citadel. I need not repeat, that the mole of Adrian has assumed the title and form of the castle of St. Angelo; [41] the Septizonium of Severus was capable of standing against a royal army; [42] the sepulchre of Metella has sunk under its outworks; [43] [431] the theatres of Pompey and Marcellus were occupied by the Savelli and Ursini families; [44] and the rough fortress has been gradually softened to the splendor and elegance of an Italian palace. Even the churches were encompassed with arms and bulwarks, and the military engines on the roof of St. Peter's were the terror of the Vatican and the scandal of the Christian world. Whatever is fortified will be attacked; and whatever is attacked may be destroyed. Could the

Romans have wrested from the popes the castle of St. Angelo, they had resolved by a public decree to annihilate that monument of servitude. Every building of defence was exposed to a siege; and in every siege the arts and engines of destruction were laboriously employed. After the death of Nicholas the Fourth, Rome, without a sovereign or a senate, was abandoned six months to the fury of civil war. "The houses," says a cardinal and poet of the times, [45] "were crushed by the weight and velocity of enormous stones; [46] the walls were perforated by the strokes of the battering-ram; the towers were involved in fire and smoke; and the assailants were stimulated by rapine and revenge." The work was consummated by the tyranny of the laws; and the factions of Italy alternately exercised a blind and thoughtless vengeance on their adversaries, whose houses and castles they razed to the ground. [47] In comparing the days of foreign, with the ages of domestic, hostility, we must pronounce, that the latter have been far more ruinous to the city; and our opinion is confirmed by the evidence of Petrarch. "Behold," says the laureate, "the relics of Rome, the image of her pristine greatness! neither time nor the Barbarian can boast the merit of this stupendous destruction: it was perpetrated by her own citizens, by the most illustrious of her sons; and your ancestors (he writes to a noble Annabaldi) have done with the battering-ram what the Punic hero could not accomplish with the sword." [48] The influence of the two last principles of decay must in some degree be multiplied by each other; since the houses and towers, which were subverted by civil war, required by a new and perpetual supply from the monuments of antiquity. [481]

[Footnote 39: All the facts that relate to the towers at Rome, and in other free cities of Italy, may be found in the laborious and entertaining compilation of Muratori, Antiquitates Italiæ Medii Ævi, dissertat. xxvi., (tom. ii. p. 493--496, of the Latin, tom.. p. 446, of the Italian work.)]

[Footnote 40: As for instance, templum Jani nunc dicitur, turris Centii Frangipanis; et sane Jano impositæ turris lateritiæ conspicua hodieque vestigia supersunt, (Montfaucon Diarium Italicum, p. 186.) The anonymous writer (p. 285) enumerates, arcus Titi, turris Cartularia; arcus Julii Cæsaris et Senatorum, turres de Bratis; arcus Antonini, turris de Cosectis, &c.]

[Footnote 41: Hadriani molem.... magna ex parte Romanorum injuria.... disturbavit; quod certe funditus evertissent, si eorum manibus pervia, absumptis grandibus saxis, reliqua moles exstisset, (Poggius de Varietate Fortunæ, p. 12.)]

[Footnote 42: Against the emperor Henry IV., (Muratori, Annali d' Italia, tom. ix. p. 147.)]

[Footnote 43: I must copy an important passage of Montfaucon: Turris ingens rotunda.... Cæciliæ Metellæ.... sepulchrum erat, cujus muri tam solidi, ut spatium perquam minimum intus vacuum supersit; et Torre di Bove dicitur, a boum capitibus muro inscriptis. Huic sequiori ævo, tempore intestinorum bellorum, ceu urbecula adjuncta fuit, cujus mnia et

turres etiamnum visuntur; ita ut sepulchrum Metellæ quasi arx oppiduli fuerit. Ferventibus in urbe partibus, cum Ursini atque Columnenses mutuis cladibus perniciem inferrent civitati, in utriusve partis ditionem cederet magni momenti erat, (p. 142.)]

[Footnote 431: This is inaccurately expressed. The sepulchre is still standing See Hobhouse, p. 204.--M.]

[Footnote 44: See the testimonies of Donatus, Nardini, and Montfaucon. In the Savelli palace, the remains of the theatre of Marcellus are still great and conspicuous.]

[Footnote 45: James, cardinal of St. George, ad velum aureum, in his metrical life of Pope Celestin V., (Muratori, Script. Ital. tom. i. P. iii. p. 621, l. i. c. l. ver. 132, &c.)

Hoc dixisse sat est, Romam caruisee Senatû
Mensibus exactis heu sex; belloque vocatum (vocatos)
In scelus, in socios fraternaque vulnera patres;
Tormentis jecisse viros immania saxa;
Perfodisse domus trabibus, fecisse ruinas
Ignibus; incensas turres, obscuraque fumo
Lumina vicino, quo sit spoliata supellex.]

[Footnote 46: Muratori (Dissertazione sopra le Antiquità Italiane, tom. i. p. 427--431) finds that stone bullets of two or three hundred pounds'

weight were not uncommon; and they are sometimes computed at xii. or xviii cantari of Genoa, each cantaro weighing 150 pounds.]

[Footnote 47: The vith law of the Visconti prohibits this common and mischievous practice; and strictly enjoins, that the houses of banished citizens should be preserved pro communi utilitate, (Gualvancus de la Flamma in Muratori, Script. Rerum Italicarum, tom. xii. p. 1041.)]

[Footnote 48: Petrarch thus addresses his friend, who, with shame and tears had shown him the mnia, laceræ specimen miserable Romæ, and declared his own intention of restoring them, (Carmina Latina, l. ii. epist. Paulo Annibalensi, xii. p. 97, 98.)

Nec te parva manet servatis fama ruinis
Quanta quod integræ fuit olim gloria Romæ
Reliquiæ testantur adhuc; quas longior ætas
Frangere non valuit; non vis aut ira cruenti Hostis,
ab egregiis franguntur civibus, heu! heu'
--------Quod ille nequivit (Hannibal.)
Perficit hic aries.]

[Footnote 481: Bunsen has shown that the hostile attacks of the emperor Henry the Fourth, but more particularly that of Robert Guiscard, who burned down whole districts, inflicted the worst damage on the ancient city Vol. i. p. 247.--M.]