

Hotel d'Angleterre. Rome. March 8. 1866

My dear Mamma

Yesterday morning we went to St Peters ascended the Dome and got into the ball, all very easy and safe; the views from the top Gallery are very fine and it is only then that one can see how St Peters towers over everything else in Rome. Looking down into the interior from the inside galleries, all the people and everything below look dwarfed most curiously. A great many people were there "doing" the Dome. Then we went to the Mosaic studio to see the construction of the large mosaics for new churches. For both these sights a special order is required which I got at the British Consuls. Then we visited once more the Vatican Pictures, and went to see a new giant gilt Hercules lately found in Pompeys Theatre, but it is much broken. Then to see the Rossignoli Palace in which is Guido's celebrated "Aurora" which with the Cenci seems the most favourite subject for copying in Rome. Finally we visited the Colonna Gardens where there are some gigantic carved blocks, the remains of a

temple of the sun as well as various odds and ends of old sculpture. Slabs with "Dis Manibus" &c seem common everywhere. We called on the Muthanks but they were all out. As we were coming home we saw in a shop window what appeared to be an unusually good copy of the "Cenci"; on looking close at it, it proved to be a mosaic; it is wonderful to what perfection they have brought mosaic-copying at Rome.

9th. Yesterday morning I went to the Lateran Museum but found little of interest there; some copies of frescoes from the catacombs, and some very pretty clay groups and figures of American Indians by a Dresden artist named Ettrich, were the most interesting objects. In the afternoon Dawson and I were joined by a Revd Mr House, when we walked off on a long tour beginning with the "Tomb of the Scipios," underground vaults and passages with some few inscriptions and other remains, very curious, but as the darkness was only dispelled by a wax-taper carried

by each, of course we could see but little.
Then we continued our walk, passing under
the Arch of Drusus at the Sebastian
gate, out to the Church and Catacombs
of St. Sebastian, here a monk supplied
us with wax tapers and led the way
down into the catacombs, they were exactly
what I had expected, underground pas-
sages cut in soft rock, of great extent
and very intricate. Niches for bodies
(all now removed) lined the passages vaults
and small chambers; then ^{we} visited the tomb of C. Metellus.
The Papal Zouaves in gray and red dress
may be seen about the city in all direc-
tions; they do not contrast favourably with
the smart, tight-built little French Soldiers.
I have never noticed any of the Popes Swiss
Guard about the town; are they not allowed
out in uniform? The Roman Newspapers
seem very wretched - they are mere fly leaves
with scarcely anything in them. Almost
all the notices on the walls are headed
S. P. Q. R., which looks strange on the
posters! The Italians shine greatly as

pastrycooks in the variety, excellence and cheapness of all that is in that line.

We always resort now to ~~Pastries~~ the confectioners for lunch instead of cafés.

Rome seems very well supplied with water. I never saw so many fountains anywhere but the water, though clear, is almost too soft. The Pincian Hill is now laid out as a park and in the afternoons is crowded with carriages and promenaders; it is nicely laid out and the views from it over the city are very good. They call Genoa a city of Palaces but Rome deserves that title quite as much, in almost every street one gets views into columned court-yards, often with garden and a fountain in the centre. There does not seem to be a single good street in the City unless perhaps the Corso and that is a narrow and rather irregular; ~~city street~~ street; however it is generally gay enough. To day it has been raining off and on most of the day and I only got a walk in the Corso and on the Pincian Hill.