

Castle of St. Angelo was near. The length of the Vatican Palace is 1151 feet, by 767. It has eight grand staircases, twenty courts, and eleven thousand chambers. Its courts, gardens, and galleries are the finest in the world, and its library the most valuable in existence. No books or manuscripts are visible; they are all inclosed in cabinets, where are books almost innumerable, and manuscripts of the New Testament and other ancient works of the early and the middle ages. Besides these, in the varied rooms and halls of the library are paintings of the great masters and statues of the old sculptors.

In the building behind the Triclinium, attached to a convent of Passionist Monks, and erected by Fontana for Sixtus V., is preserved the Santa Scala. This famous stair-case, supposed to be that of the house of Pilate, ascended and descended by our Saviour, is said to have been brought by Helena, mother of Constantine the Great, from Jerusalem, and has been regarded with especial reverence by the Roman Church for fifteen hundred years. In 897 it was injured and partly thrown down by an earthquake, but was re-erected in the old Lateran Palace, whence it was removed to its present site on the demolition of that venerable building. Clement XII. caused the steps to be covered by a wooden casing, which has since been repeatedly worn out by the knees of ascending pilgrims. Apertures are left through which the marble steps can be seen. Two of them are said to be stained by the blood of the Saviour.

Between the statues of "Ecce Homo" and "The Kiss of Judas" the pilgrims kneel to commence the ascent of the Santa Scala. The effect of the stair-case on Good Friday, with the figures ascending on their knees in the dim light, and the dark-vaulted ceiling covered with faded frescoes, is exceedingly picturesque.

It was up those stairs Martin Luther was ascending on his knees, burdened with the weight of sin, and anguished with a heart of sorrow, when about midway the ascending steps, a voice rang through his ear and thrilled his soul—"The just shall live by faith." It was the battle-cry of freedom coming down the ages. A new vision of mercy dawned upon his soul, and the simple plan of salvation unfolded before his mind. He rose erect with a new mysterious power in his heart, and returned to proclaim *salvation by faith*. As he lifted his voice and opened