

extravagant in Mr. Stevens' appeal. Similar calculations have been made and published over and over again. In every instance the success or failure of the proposal has been limited, as Mr. Stevens limits it, by the qualifying little particle "if." What we have to say about it, is that the subject is well worthy of serious consideration. All this, and much more, may be accomplished within the next ten years "if the Lord will."

Brieflet No. 16.

IN ROME—THE VATICAN PALACE.

THIS immense pile of buildings adjoining St. Peter's is at once the official residence of the head of the Roman Catholic Church, the fountain-head of ecclesiastical authority,* and a repository of the largest and most valuable collection of art-treasures and antiquities in the world. The length of the main building is 1151 feet, and its breadth, 767 feet. It is many stories in height, and is said to contain 11,000 chambers. The small part of it occupied by the Pope is never seen except by those who are admitted to special audiences, and is very plainly furnished. The famous *Vatican Library* occupies a fine suite of rooms, one of which is 1000 feet long. The collection of printed books, though very valuable, is comparatively small, not exceeding 100,000 volumes. But there is a large collection of rare manuscripts—25,000, it is said. Among these are many ancient versions of the Bible, in the Hebrew, Syriac, Arabic and Armenian languages. One of these is so large it requires two men to carry it, and so valuable, that its weight in

gold has been offered for it. The *Picture Galleries* are remarkable for their magnificent embellishments and the rare excellence of some of the paintings. *Raphael's* "TRANSFIGURATION" is considered the greatest painting not only in Rome, but in the world. It is a double picture, representing two distinct occurrences described by three of the evangelists. The upper half portrays our Lord floating in the air—Moses and Elijah on either side—Peter, James, and John prostrate on the mount. You must study this picture Bible in hand, to see what a faithful translation it is of the original. Mark the radiant figure of the Saviour, the ineffable grace depicted in His countenance, His raiment "white and glistening;" the angelic expression of adoration given the two heavenly visitants, contrasted with the dazed appearance of the disciples awaking from their heavy slumber and with their hands shading their eyes from the insufferable brightness. Then, at the foot of the mountain, examine that other wonderful group. See the vacant, unearthly stare of the lunatic boy, the imploring faces of his parents, who brought him to the disciples,—"and they could not cure him!" One is turning over the pages of the Book of the Law, but no help is there, while another, with uplifted hand points to the glorified Redeemer—the Great Physician. Here, too, are weeping females, contemptuous Jewish rabbi, learned scribes, and supercilious, self-righteous pharisees. It is a wonderful picture. Dr. Schaff calls it "the sublimest conception of human genius, which, multiplied in tens of thousands of copies, will continue to preach to admiring beholders in all the earth the best sermon on this supernatural event." It is *Raphael's* masterpiece—his last work. He died before it was fully completed, aged only thirty-seven! This picture was carried off by Napoleon to Paris, and, for a short time, adorned the walls of the Louvre, but when the time of retribution came it was restored to its original owners. Another painting in the Vatican, almost equally celebrated, is the "Last Communion of St. Jerome" by *Domenichino*, in which angels are hovering over the scene, waiting to waft the spirit of the dying saint from his bed on the cold ground to his mansion in the skies. The *Sistine Chapel*, of which so much has been

*THE VATICAN COUNCIL is the name given to the last oecumenical Council of the Roman Catholic Church, held in St. Peter's, Rome, Dec. 8th, 1869, to October 29th, 1870, and which adjourned *sine die* in consequence of the interruption caused by the Franco-Prussian war, immediately after the passage of the decree on Papal Infallibility. The attendance was the largest known in the history of councils, numbering 764 delegates. THE SACRED COLLEGE OF CARDINALS, when full, consists of six Cardinal Bishops, fifty Cardinal Priests, and fourteen Cardinal Deacons—seventy in all. It performs, as a body, only one function—that of electing the Pope, who must be an Italian and at least fifty-five years old. The administration of the laws and usages of the church devolves upon the "CONGREGATIONS," or committees of Cardinals, cloven in number, named after the different departments to which their jurisdiction extends, as for example the congregation of the Inquisition, of the Ritual, of the Propaganda, of Indulgences and Sacred Relics, &c.