

1 half past nine, Mrs. Van, Martha and I, with our guide & carriage, drove to the church of "S.  
2 Pietro in Vincoli," founded by Eudoxia in 442. Built as a receptacle for the chains of St. Peter,  
3 they were found in the Mamertine prison and presented to Eudoxia by Pope Leo the 1<sup>st</sup>. The  
4 church is much modernized but many of the older parts remain. The nave and aisles are  
5 separated by 20 antique Doric columns. The church contains several interesting monuments,  
6 one of them designed by Michael Angelo in memory of Pope Julius 2<sup>nd</sup>. The monument  
7 contains three large niches. In the central niche is the statue of Moses, of colossal size, in  
8 sitting posture. This celebrated statue is considered as the masterpiece of Angelo. He was so  
9 enamored with this work, that on its completion he struck the statue a whack! on the knee with  
10 his mallet and said "Why don't you speak?" A slight crack in the knee is pointed out to prove  
11 the truth of this silly story. It is true enough that the statue is life-like and might have imposed  
12 upon Michael, although he had known it ever since it was a rough block of marble. The  
13 venerated chains are kept in a golden casket in a double doored iron safe in a small fire proof  
14 room and are exhibited only on the 1<sup>st</sup> of August, and then only to the devoutly pious (so says  
15 our guide book), but it happened that a very devout French gentleman with his wife and two  
16 daughters had by some means obtained special permission to see the sacred relics, and our  
17 wide awake guide being acquainted with the sacristan obtained permission for us to slip in with  
18 the devout party – and in we went. The sacristan unlocked the iron doors and drew out the  
19 gaudy casket on a sort of folding rail way. The casket was wrapped in folds of crimson cloth  
20 embroidered with gold. After removing the wrapping, a sliding door in the casket was opened  
21 and a fold of the cloth arranged on the threshold of the door to keep the chain from coming in  
22 contact with any thing that might injure its sanctity. Then a priest came in dressed like a circus  
23 clown. He commenced mumbling over some Latin, the pious party kneeling. In a few minutes  
24 the priest put his hand into the casket and drew out a very natural looking ore chain having  
25 prongs at one end, much like a pair of large calipers. One of the ladies then stepped up on a  
26 platform in front of the priest, and he applied the calipers so that a point touched each temple.  
27 Looked as if he was taking the dimension of her head. She devoutly kissed the joint of the  
28 instrument which by the movement had been brought close to her lips. She then handed the  
29 priest a string of beads which he rubbed against the chain and then held the bunch of beads in  
30 his hand within the casket. He then returned the beads to the lady, and she stepped down  
31 from the platform. The other ladies went through the same performance, beads and all. The  
32 old gentleman – ditto – less the beads, which I suppose he did not happen to have with him. I  
33 was so full of fun that I was obliged to leave before the party broke up, but was gratified that  
34 we had seen these sacred chains and the everlasting nonsense connected with them. I suppose  
35 that a hundred years ago, the writer of a page like this, if found in this city, would have a hot  
36 time of it – around a stake. Next visited the "Baths of Titus, or Neros house," the baths having  
37 been built on top of Neros house, the walls of which are used as a foundation for the baths.  
38 The ruins are of great extent. Maecenas once had a villa on this spot which Nero used as a part  
39 of his "Golden Palace." We were shown some mosaic floors which formed a part of the  
40 Maecenas villa. Titus in the year 80 erected his sumptuous baths, called "Thurmae." They  
41 were enlarged by Domiticus & Trajan. The earlier structure of Nero is readily distinguished